

Statement
by
Dr. Seyed Ali Mohammad Mousavi D-8 Secretary General at
5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment 17 December 2014, Istanbul - Turkey

*His Excellency Mr. Mohamad Balta,
Deputy Minister of Environment and Urbanization of the Republic of Turkey*

H.E. Dr. Shamil Aleskerov ECO Secretary General,

*Her Excellency Madam Masomah Ebtekar
Vice Minister and Head of the Ministry of Environment of Iran*

*Ministers and Head of Delegations,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a great honor and pleasure for me to be with you all at the *5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment* meeting.

First of all, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the government of Republic of Turkey, especially Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) for the invitation to this important meeting.

Secondly, I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the people and the government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the occasion of brutal terrorist attack happened yesterday on a school.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

To begin with, I would like to briefly highlight about the D-8 Organization and its activity. The idea of the establishment of D-8 Organization goes back to *the Cooperation for Development Conference*, held in October 1996 in Istanbul at the initiative of Merhum Professor Necmettin Erbakan, then Prime Minister of Republic of Turkey. Subsequently, D-8 Organization was officially established through the Istanbul Declaration of Summit of Heads of State/Government at the 1st D-8 Summit on 15 June 1997.

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D-8 is an intergovernmental organization and currently consists of eight developing countries, namely the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Arab Republic of Egypt, Republic of Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Turkey.

D-8 is based on friendship, solidarity and pursuit of sustainable economic growth, endowed with abundant human and natural resources, aspires to become a dynamic economic grouping promoting sustainable development of its member states.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me now turn to the issue of our meeting today. Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of environmental dimensions such as climate change, air pollution, water availability and quality, and land-use change. Strategies are needed to strengthen developing countries' resilience to these impacts while at the same time energizing collective efforts to achieve sustainability of environment.

Increasing industrialization by developing countries to meet their needs will lead to higher energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas (GG) emission in these countries. Furthermore, climate change is not only an environmental problem but also poses a risk to development if not addressed effectively. The adverse impacts of climate change, for instance decreased precipitation in arid and semi-arid areas, will disproportionately affect poorer countries with economies dependent on natural resources-related sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The D-8, as intergovernmental cooperation has experienced several challenges in terms of environmental issues and climate change related with the sustainability of food security in D-8 national level. In this sense, D-8 Organization has addressed environmental area in its Charter as one of areas cooperation among D-8 countries. The governments and private sectors in D-8 Member States commit to promote and enhance cooperation in this sector through creating the right condition and institutional frameworks as a foundation upon which to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources, including investment in clean energy infrastructure.

The D-8 organization has vital modality as economic grouping to provide insight and stimulate discussion among all stakeholders on the best strategies and policies to overcome the obstacles of environmental issues among D-8 countries. Subsequently, D-8 would like to take opportunity, in the near future, to have mutual collaboration with Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in this area, which is also mentioned in Memorandum of Understanding between two organizations signed in 2011.

Designing policies which address two or more goals at once namely environmental, social and economic can help to multiply the benefits of policy action. Needless to say that exploring some opportunities for maximizing the benefits of combining climate changes action with biodiversity protection, health and green growth are also imperative for policymakers in addressing the challenges on environmental problems.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Indeed, the D-8, as one of economic grouping, is focusing increasingly on quality growth in its various activities, including environment sustainability. In this context, the D-8 Countries has started to explore which factors are necessary to ensure that national competitiveness remains sustainable over the longer term. Subsequently, D-8 Countries has presented their preliminary thoughts on understanding and measuring quality growth through a competitiveness lens by defining

sustainable competitiveness in economic, social, and environmental terms.

I would like to conclude that due to current global environmental challenges, developing countries need to seek innovative ways to sustain their economies through green-economy policies. The vision needs to address concerns for environmental sustainability - both domestically and internationally to remain competitive. All these dimensions need to be organized in a coherent agenda.

Once again, I would like to thank to the government of Republic of Turkey, especially Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Secretariat for this invitation and I wish you all success in your endeavors and deliberations.

Thank you very much for your attention.