

**Statement On behalf of Dr. Seyed Ali Mohammad Mousavi D-8 Secretary-General at
Evaluation Meeting for D-8 Countries on Newborn Resuscitation Programme, Breast Milk
Trainings and Maternal-Child Health**

10-14 November 2014, Ankara, Turkey

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is indeed an honor for me to be associated with this new but very important meeting. The *Evaluation Meeting for D-8 Countries on Newborn Resuscitation Programme, Breast Milk Trainings and Maternal-Child Health* is a unique initiative to accelerate the joint efforts toward attainment of our common development objectives. Health is one of the areas of cooperation within the D-8 Organization, as envisaged in the D-8 Roadmap. It is very encouraging to note that the programme is widely participated by our Member States.

On behalf of the Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation (the D-8), I would like to welcome you all to this meeting.

To begin with, I deeply appreciate and thank the Government of the Republic of Turkey, the Ministry of Health in particular, for this all-encompassing and well-organized meeting and for the warm hospitality.

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,**

Even today, millions of stillbirths and newborn deaths result from many of the preventable causes. Every year nearly 40% of all under-five child deaths are among newborn infants and babies in their first 28 days of life or the neonatal period. The vast majority of newborn deaths take place in developing countries where access to health care is yet to reach a satisfactory level. Most of these newborns die at home, without skilled care that could have greatly increased their chances for survival.

Statistics shows there is a great need for post-natal care as well. Home visits by a skilled health professional immediately after birth up to one week can increase newborn survival rates. Some of the D-8 Member States, like Bangladesh, have provided home visits through their national health system, which is considered as a significant step toward post natal care.

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,**

Reducing child mortality is one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the United Nations. Figures attest that our Member States are progressing well to achieve the target of reducing child mortality. According to the statistics given by World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (UN MDG) the child Mortality in the D-8 Member States has reduced in general and with the rates given as below in 2013:

Bangladesh: 33 per 1,000
Egypt: 19 per 1,000
Indonesia: 25 per 1,000
Iran: 14 per 1,000
Malaysia: 7 per 1,000
Nigeria: 74 per 1,000
Pakistan: 69 per 1,000
Turkey: 17 per 1,000

It is encouraging to note that our Member States are investing significantly and improving fast in the post-natal care. However, despite all the clear and rapid progress, much more needs to be done to address postpartum complications both to the mother and the newborn, including innovative strategies, in order to increase demand for, access to and use of newborn and postpartum care among high risk populations. Therefore, this timely initiative of Newborn Resuscitation Programme, Breast Milk Trainings and Maternal-Child Health is very helpful in strengthening our efforts.

The 4-day programme has been designed in such manner as participants may share their best medical practices, experiences and interact among themselves with ease and cordiality. The particular importance to give increased attention to timely and effective resuscitation process, breast-feeding and nutritional care immediately after birth to both mother and the newborn has been sequentially touched upon in the programme for maximum efficacy. I have also noticed that the last day of the programme has reserved a slot for Q&A session which would be extremely helpful for exchange of views and information. I would further propose that the organizers request the participants to provide a feedback on the benefits they have accrued from this specialized programme.

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to, once again, thank the Government of Turkey, especially the Ministry of Health for their warm hospitality and arrangements of this meeting and wish this event a great success.

I thank you for your audience.