

**Statement by the D-8 Secretary-General at
the Workshop on Exchange of Information on Rural Development Policies**

14-15 May 2015, Ankara, Turkey

His Excellency,

President of Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution (ARDSI) of Republic of Turkey, Mr. Ali Recep NAZLI

His Excellency,

Director General of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Ambassador Musa KULAKLIKAYA

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to be in this very important gathering, *the Workshop on Exchange of Information on Rural Development Policies*. This gathering is a unique platform to coordinate and integrate the rural development of the D-8 Member States in a concerted manner and subsequently, contribute to the food security and living standards.

On behalf of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (the D-8), I would like to cordially welcome you all to this workshop. To begin with, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Republic of Turkey, especially to the Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution (ARDSI) for this well-prepared Workshop, providing us with this wonderful venue in the capital city of Ankara. I would also like to express my appreciation to all delegates here, whose dedication and support has made this workshop possible.

Distinguished Delegates,

Agriculture and rural development play a central and strategic role around the world, particularly in developing countries including D-8 countries. Indeed, it is the key to economic growth, generating incomes, improved living standards, poverty eradication, and enhanced food security. It is utmost essential to create approaches to refocus policy, investments and partnerships on inclusive and sustainable rural transformation.

Distinguished Delegates,

As part of collective efforts in enhancing D-8 rural development, the D-8 and Turkey's Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution (ARDSI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 18 March 2015. The MoU is aimed to improve regional knowledge base and promote joint efforts in the area of rural development, provides general framework for rural development cooperation through carrying out cooperation for the transfer of knowledge and experience.

In this context, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for close partnership with ARDSI and state that this MoU will provide a general framework to facilitate collaboration and cooperation in promoting and undertaking issues of mutual interest on rural development in member countries. D-8 countries should take necessary measures in line with a transformation of rural spaces, productive sectors and societies. To promote this objectives, it is required a new development paradigm that empowers rural people to play their economic, social and environmental roles to the full. Furthermore, I would also like to encourage D-8 Member States to utilize the MoU for further collaboration with ARDSI. The D-8 Member States may have cooperation in capacity building, technical assistance and project implementation in the near future.

Distinguished Delegates,

In view of the foregoing and taking into account the outcomes of this workshop, there is a need for the strategic objectives and action-plan of the state of our cooperation in rural development among D-8 Member States. In order to do so, I hope that this workshop provide policies and programmes that integrate the elements of capacity building, information and knowledge into comprehensive approaches for D-8 rural development cooperation. This should involve partnerships at all stages and ensure the

participation of private and public stakeholders.

Last but not least, I would like to express, once again, my deep thankfulness and high appreciation to the Government of Republic of Turkey, the Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution (ARDSI) in particular, for their timely initiative to bring the delegates from the D-8 countries to this important gathering.

I wish all the success of this workshop and thank you for your kind attention.