

**Statement by the D-8 Secretary-General at the UCLG-MEWA Urban Mobility  
Şanhurfa Summit  
on 21 November 2018 in Şanhurfa, Turkey**

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*Esteemed Participants,*

I would like to say that it is a great honour for me to be given the opportunity to address this prestigious Summit and would like to thank UCLG-MEWA Secretary General, Mr. Mehmet Duman for his kind invitation. With an estimated history of 13.000 years and a rightful reputation as the glorious “City of Prophets”, I believe that Urfa deserves to be the birthplace of a thorough discussion on the future of “brand cities”. In this respect, I hope that our deliberations today will stir new projects and proffer innovative solutions to the challenges regarding urban mobility, transportation, finance and governance, all of which bear significance for the lives of our citizens and the future of our economies.

My organization, the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation, is an intergovernmental organization founded in 1997 by eight developing countries namely, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey. The aim of our Organization is to increase economic cooperation among our Member States in order to boost economic growth and sustainable development and promote the well-being of our citizens. In doing so, we have focused our attention to six priority areas, namely Agriculture, Trade, Transportation, Industry, Energy and Tourism. We attribute equal importance to each of these sectors and work assiduously towards increasing cooperation at all levels. However, we have realized that the transportation sector is unique for that **it singlehandedly shows the level of economic and social development in a country.**

As global studies suggest, there exists a causal relation between the quality and quantity of transportation infrastructure of a nation and its level of economic development. In this vein, high density transport infrastructure is associated with better connectivity, better networks and hence increased economic opportunities and reduced costs of movement of goods and people for the overall economy. Given this direct linkage between transportation policy and national development, **D-8 promotes increasing access to existing transportation networks and creating non existing ones** in all Member States, from the urban level to as high as the international level.

As for the intranational level, allow me to elaborate on one of the most recent and most ambitious endeavours of our Organization, **namely the creation of a network of D-8 airports**. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2018 we signed a Letter of Intent with Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen Airport (ISG) which identified ISG as the first Designated Airport of the D-8. Through the LoI, ISG pledged to promote people to people and business to business contacts as well as tourism and travel facilitation among D-8 Member States in addition to providing fast track and lounge services that will improve the transportation experience of D-8 citizens. We hope that this initiative will become the first stepping stone of a much wider aviation network among D-8 Member States and will lay the foundations for the D-8 Airport Association.

Another such initiative at intranational level is the forthcoming **Ministerial Meeting on Transportation** which will be held in Turkey in the first half of 2019. Over the past years, civil aviation has been the most active and result-oriented sectoral track of cooperation among Member States and it has yielded concrete outcomes for the Organization. The Ministerial Meeting will evaluate past success in civil aviation as well as uncover the untapped potential in maritime cooperation. It is my fervent hope that the meeting will successfully come up with a roadmap for the future and will represent D-8's commitment to foster cooperation in transportation at the highest level.

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In the past 20 years, the D-8 transportation partnership has mainly persisted at the international level. That is mainly because linking the urban space of countries spreading across three continents has been perceived as a major challenge. Today, with an inventive mindset, newly available tools and innovative funding mechanisms, **this is a challenge we are willing to take**. With the 9<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit held in October, 2017 in Turkey, our Organization has entered into the project implementation phase under which we realized that **we are not impeded by the limits posed by geography**. Instead, through know-how, experience and best-practice sharing, all Member States and in turn the citizens of D-8 can benefit from the innovative and cutting-edge solutions created in one another.

Allow me to elaborate on some of the successful initiatives from the local governments and municipalities of Member States. In July 2017, local councils in Selangor, Malaysia decided to go digital by introducing a mobile application that enables users to pay for parking without having to look for coupon agents or parking machines. Among others, Sepang Municipal

Council, Shah Alam City Council, Ampang Jaya Municipal Council and the Kuala Langat District Council (MDKL) initiated the “**FlexiParking**” app, developed by a Malaysian tech company, Leading Innovative Technologies and Systems Sdn Bhd (LiTS). With a practical one-click interface and thousands of users, the application represents a highly smart solution to urban space challenge.

Another such solution is the “Navigator” application initiated by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. The application provides an integrated platform for various purposes, enabling users to learn about traffic congestion, the best public transportation option, pharmacies on duty and live occupancy at the parking lots. “**Navigator**” is one of the most comprehensive applications in Turkey and has become indispensable for the everyday lives of 15 million citizens.

The last example, which I believe deserves particular attention is “**BERIDE**” from Jakarta, Indonesia. The platform provides an opportunity for city residents to freely give ideas about the surrounding city environment and acts as a forum for people who want to learn many things from the ideas that are uploaded. It is not only a smart solution but also a way to promote inclusive decision making at the urban level.

We know that **despite being regionally apart, our problems are very much similar** and a smart solution in one of our Member States can inspire such a solution in another city, regardless of the distance in between. With this in mind, I would like to once again reiterate that the D-8 Secretariat is eager to bring relevant stakeholders together for know-how, information and experience sharing.

Last but not least, I also would like to say that as D-8, we are eager to support the bright and young minds of our Member States since they hold the key to a smart and sustainable future. With the D-8 Project Support Fund and co-funding mechanisms along with the Islamic Development Bank, we are aiming to finance projects, including ones related to urban mobility and transportation, that will improve the lives of our citizens.

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With an estimated GDP of USD 38 trillion, the D-8 is poised to become the third biggest economy of the world in 2050, a development that should necessitates the smart and sustainable

transformation of our cities. I am hopeful that this conference will mark the adoption of a new and fresh viewpoint for our Member States and the developing world as a whole.

I thank you very much for your attention.