



**STATEMENT OF THE D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE D-8  
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN TEHRAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF  
IRAN ON 30<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 2019**

**The Honorable Minister of Science, Research and Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran,**

**Distinguished Ministers of Education/Higher Education/ Heads of Delegation,**

**The Chancellor of Bu-Ali Sina University,**

**The Executive Director of the D-8 International University,**

**Members of the Board of Directors,**

**Members of the University Council,**

**Focal Points of the D-8 International University,**

**Distinguished Academics,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is with gratitude to Allah that I wish to warmly welcome everyone to the inaugural meeting of the Board of Trustees of the D-8 International University. I hope we will have fruitful deliberations today.

I wish to profoundly thank the Ministry of Science and Technology as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran for their untiring efforts towards the establishment of the D-8 International University. In the same vein, I wish to express our deep appreciation to the Chancellor of the Bu-Ali Sina University, the Executive Director of the D-8 International University and his team for the wealth of experience, hard work and ability for the establishment of the University. The fact that the initiative is taking off the ground within such a short period of time, is commendable.

We are also grateful to the founding university, the Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamedan for establishing a solid foundation for the take off of the D-8 International University. We are happy to be associated with

this prestigious institution that is named after Abu Ali Al-Hussain Ibn Abdullah Ibn Sina, the most widely known intellectual figure concerned with science in Islamic civilization. He is a celebrated medico, thinker, encyclopedist, theologian, scientist and astronomer of the medieval Hellenistic Islamic tradition. Because of his outstanding intellectual accomplishments and unassailable contributions, this Muslim philosopher-scientist and intellectual pillar of universal appeal is called the “Prince of Science” and “Father of Modern Medicine”. His great works that were documented in over 450 publications and treatises were major contributions to science and were reference materials for over 400 years. For Ibn Sina, acquiring education is of utmost importance. And that grasping the logic and the comprehensible is the first step towards determining the fate of one’s soul, thereby deciding human action. His theory of knowledge is based on four faculties: sense perception, retention, imagination and estimation. We pray that this intellectual icon will serve as a shining example for our students so that they can also excel and be beacons for successive generations. His words of wisdom, that is “there are no incurable diseases- only the lack of will. There are no worthless herbs- only the lack of knowledge” should be “The motto” to motivate us all to strive for excellence in building a world-class reputation for our University.

**Distinguished Academics,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The establishment of the D-8 International University in order to promote research and innovation has been in the pipeline for a long time. However, it was in the D-8 Roadmap (2008-2018) which highlights the “promotion of cooperation on science and technology with the aim of institutionalizing the subject of cooperation through establishment of research centers of D-8 institute/university” that gave impetus to its establishment. The university is aimed at strengthening cooperation

among Member-States through inter-university and student exchanges in order for the Member States to achieve an acceptable international share of these exchanges. It also aims at promoting values such as learning, scholarship, research, academic independence, science and technology development, peaceful coexistence among religions and peace and prosperity.

I also wish to use this medium to thank the higher education authorities of the Member-States for their commitment to sponsor at least five post graduate students to undertake studies in the fields of science and technology at our esteemed university that is located in the historic city of Hamedan. This will provide the nucleus of our alumni and thus the more the merrier. Member States shall also be obliged to contribute to the improvement of the international status of the university in the international academic community, especially their own academic communities, by assessing their educational degrees and academic certificates through corresponding authorities.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The D-8 International University aspires to be an incubator of world-class scientists and inventors in the mold of Bu-Ali Sina, the renowned scientist and polymath of the golden age era. It is my belief that there are thousands of Bu-Ali Sina in today's world waiting to be discovered, nurtured and assisted to be great scientists and inventors. We have a sea of young pathfinders and boundary pushers of high moral qualities, outstanding intelligence, sound character and capacity for leadership that can be groomed to achieve transcendent personal development through quality education and the finest intellectual tradition that the D-8 International University seeks to offer.

In the same vein, the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation attaches great importance to research and innovation through

collaboration among universities in D-8 Member-States. This idea is seen as the most promising way to strengthen innovation in the economy as it increases the flow of knowledge across sectors and stimulate further research and development investments and activities. It is against this background that the Secretariat established the D-8 Network of Pioneers of Research and Innovation (D-8 NPRI) with a view to bringing D-8 Member States' researchers, government and semi-government research institutions, industrial research institutes and research in D-8 universities under one umbrella. So far, 21 universities have been nominated by five Member-States for participation in the network. We hereby call upon Member-States that are yet to submit their lists of participating universities to kindly do so in order for the programme to take off.

Through this network, D-8 will expand the level of innovation in its Member-States to enable the economic growth essential for sustainable development. The mechanism of NPRI will identify research and development capabilities and exchange research outcomes with industries in Member-States, extend laboratory facilities to the Member-States researchers and students, conduct joint research projects on industrial areas, and institute research fellow exchange programme among universities in D-8 Member-States and the D-8 International University. The universities can also have a pool and engage with the private sector under D-8 CCI as well as the proposed D-8 Industrial Park. Hence, the D-8 will engage universities and encourage them to tremendously build their capacities in science and technology where they do not exist and where they do exist, to improve them significantly. By doing this, the universities will also address the problem of talent shortage that is bedeviling the D-8 Member-States. Therefore, I wish to solicit for the doctrinal commitment and active participation of the Member-States in both the D-8 International University project and the NPRI network.

**Distinguished Academics,**

## **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At this juncture, I wish to seize this opportunity to bring to your attention the fact that in the last one year, the D-8 Secretariat has introduced many new initiatives in addition to the six sectoral tracks that we are working on, namely Agriculture and Food Security, Industry and SME, Energy, Transportation, Trade and Tourism. These new initiatives include the D-8 Industrial Parks that are to be established in each Member-State in order to fast track industrial development and skills acquisition in a wide spectrum of areas. The Secretariat is working with the Turkish Technic and the well renowned developer called Polaris Park in this regard. There is another initiative called D-8 Payment Card developed by KOMEPS FinTech Company of Malaysia in order to facilitate intra D-8 trade and expatriate remittances across national frontiers. We have also introduced the network of D-8 Designated Airports with a view to facilitating people to people contact as well as promoting tourism.

The D-8 Health Partnership and Social Protection Programme has also been launched with its secretariat in Abuja, Nigeria. The programme is geared towards incorporating health programmes into D-8 portfolio and accelerating health and health-related Sustainable Developing Goals (SDGs) of Member-States. It includes a bundle of priority interventions as well as structural and delivery parameters that align with the core mandate of the D-8 and leverages on the individual strengths in the group. The programme is aimed at increasing investment in healthcare and social safety net programmes for the vulnerable. We believe that health, nutrition and human capital development have direct impact on trade and governance through their effects on workers' productivity and competitiveness. It is envisaged that the programme will address low coverage of basic healthcare services, suboptimal healthcare outcomes, poor quality of care and inadequate protection from financial risk as a result of the cost of care.

Furthermore, Pakistan has recently designated its Centre for Advanced Studies in Agriculture and Food Security located in Faisalabad as “D-8 Research Centre”. The institute will now work to develop innovative solutions to the emerging challenges in agriculture, food and nutritional security. It will serve as a research and development hub to help institutions of D-8 countries to build their capacity in research, academics and outreach, and adopt latest technologies and innovations.

The D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation has also entered into agreement with Al-Hidayah Group of Malaysia to establish the D-8 Creative Economy and Financial Centre in Kuala Lumpur with a view to improving the standard of living, eradication of poverty and development of sustainable programme in the D-8 Member-States. We have also established the Project Support Fund in order to finance the conduct of prefeasibility and feasibility studies for the implementation of projects and programmes which can bring benefits to the D-8 Member-States equitably and to explore opportunity and new markets for the private sector of the D-8 Member-States. We therefore wish to call on our young entrepreneurs to take advantage of this facility and turn their promising ideas into profitable enterprises.

**Distinguished Academics,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On a final note, I want to thank the Member-States for their unwavering commitment and unalloyed support to the D-8 International University project. I urge you to sustain the tempo and to continue to accord the university the serious attention that it deserves.

To inspire us more, let me quote another word of wisdom for Ibn Sina “The knowledge of anything, since all things have causes, is not acquired or complete unless it is known by its causes”. I leave it to you to ponder upon it.

I thank you very much for your attention.