



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

#### **OFFICIAL INAUGURATION OF THE D-8 HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMME (D-8 HSP) OFFICE IN NIGERIA**

**12 NOVEMBER 2020**

*The D-8 Health and Social Protection Programme (D-8 HSP) Office was commissioned in Abuja, Nigeria at a ceremony attended by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*

The specialized agency of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation, Health and Social Protection Programme (D-8 HSP) Office in Abuja, Nigeria, was officially inaugurated on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2020. The inauguration ceremony was carried out by the Honourable Minister of State for Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Ambassador Zubairu Dada. The event was also attended physically by ambassadors and high commissioners of D-8 Member States accredited to Nigeria and officials of the D-8 Health Office and the Secretary-General of D-8 Organization, Ambassador Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari and officials of the D-8 Secretariat virtually. Furthermore, representatives of Ministry of Health of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as well as representatives from the Islamic Development Bank, World Health Organization and Zenith Bank participated in the opening ceremony.

The ceremony commenced with the ribbon-cutting which marks the official opening of the D-8 Health and Social Protection Programme Office and the touring of the premises by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs as well as ambassadors and high commissioners of the D-8 Member States and officials of Programme and other participants.

The event continued with the statement of the D-8 Secretary-General, speech of the Honourable Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and remarks of the D-8 HSP Global Programme Director.

In his statement, the Secretary-General expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the Government and good people of Nigeria for providing assistance and support to the activities of the D-8 Health and Social Protection Programme. He also outlined the progress recorded by the Programme so far and emphasized its crucial importance for all D-8 Member States.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, on his part, appreciated the officials of the Health Programme and congratulated D-8 Member States for this important initiative. He also emphasized the crucial importance of this initiative which is relevant and timely, in view of the current global health challenges. Moreover, he expressed his hope that D-8 Member States will continue to share experiences and transfer knowledge in a bid to have a healthy population that would not only promote economic development but also reduce poverty.

In his closing remarks, the Global Programme Director thanked the Member States, especially the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for their kind and valuable assistance and support for this sectoral track and called on Member States to work with the D-8 HSP Programme team towards the achievement of the enumerated noble objectives.

The ceremony ended with a family photo of the guests.

The D-8 Health and Social Protection Programme (D-8 HSP) was established in 2018 in order to support Member States to improve health services and uplift living standards of their citizens by eliminating hunger, poverty and diseases in accordance with the United Nations SDGs 1, 2, and 3. The Programme team is also saddled with the responsibility to identify opportunities for joint action, implementation, learning and collaboration across seven areas of focus, namely Health Essential Services and Support System, Health Workforce Governance and Quality of Care, Shaping Markets and Enhancing Trade in Health, Non-communicable Diseases, Social Protection, Innovative and Sustainable Financing and Data for Performance Tracking and Impact.

Istanbul, 12 November 2020