

**STATEMENT BY  
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DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL (MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS)  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AT THE 20<sup>TH</sup> D-8 COUNCIL OF MINISTERS  
DHAKA, BANGLADESH  
27 JULY 2022**

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**AGENDA 4: STATEMENT BY THE HEADS OF DELEGATION**

**His Excellency Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen (Ab-Dul Mo-a-Men)  
Minister of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

**His Excellency Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam  
(Isi-a-ka Ab-dul Ka-dir I-mam)  
Secretary General of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation**

**The Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegation,  
Distinguished D-8 Commissioners,  
Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen.**

**Introduction**

- 1. First and foremost, let me thank the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the excellent hospitality and arrangements extended to me and my delegation.**
- 2. I take this opportunity to congratulate all D-8 Member States on the celebration of our D-8 Silver Jubilee, a 25 year milestone of**

**strategic partnership, constructive engagement and steady cooperation.**

- 3. Allow me to extend the warm greetings and best wishes of my Foreign Minister Dato' Sri Saifuddin Abdullah to His Excellency Dr. Abdul Momen for hosting this D8 Session as well as, to the distinguished members of the D-8 Council of Ministers. Minister Saifuddin extends also his wish for a fruitful and productive discussion today.**
- 4. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam (Isi-a-ka Ab-dul Ka-dir I-mam) as you take on the heavy responsibility of the new Secretary-General of D-8.**
- 5. With Ambassador Imam's wide knowledge and experiences, Malaysia is confident that the D-8 will continue to prosper and flourish as a progressive organisation that promotes economic cooperation.**

**Excellencies,**

- 6. The convening of the 20<sup>th</sup> D-8 Council of Ministers is timely as we take stock of the progress made by the Organisation over the past 25 years.**
- 7. We sincerely hope that today's session will enable us to push forward our Leaders' aspirations, as envisaged and adopted stipulated in the Dhaka Declaration 2021 and D-8 Decennial Roadmap 2020-2030.**

8. Malaysia firmly believes that the D-8, with 1.1 billion of combined populations and 4.9 per cent of the world GDP, has an attractive, strong and viable economy, trade and investment platform.
9. Nevertheless, considering the sluggish post-pandemic economic recovery, it is obvious that revitalising our economies would require effective collaboration and coordinated efforts across all D-8 six (6) priority areas of cooperation.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

10. To speed up our post-pandemic economic recovery plan, Malaysia would like to propose three (3) key areas in which we must work together.

**Key Area No. 1- Full implementation of the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (D-8 PTA)**

11. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely disrupted the economic and investment activities among the D-8 countries.
12. Existing trade tariffs and barriers, compounded by the effects of the pandemic and regional conflicts, have disrupted Member States' supply chain and economic activities.
13. These challenges have indirectly impacted our progress in reviving the post-pandemic economy.

14. In this regard, Malaysia strongly urges the Member States to expedite the ratification process of the D-8 PTA to allow the full implementation of its initiatives.
15. We believe the full implementation of the PTA in this challenging time is crucial.
16. For Malaysia, we have gazetted the D-8 PTA Offer List on 5 December 2013, and we are ready to implement the D-8 PTA fully.
17. In addition to that, we acknowledge that Bangladesh's Special Economic Zone, when realised, would add significant value to the D-8 PTA.

Excellencies,

**Key Area No 2: Enhance the participation of the Private Sector**

18. The role of our private sectors are vital to D-8. They are the catalyst of nations' economies and development.
19. Henceforth, governments are expected to create and implement new opportunities and conducive investment infrastructures for the private sector.
20. As a matter of fact, this has been the main reason for establishing D-8 i.e. the pioneer group of our D-8 Leaders recognised the wisdom to diversify and create new platform and opportunities in trade relations.

21. In this regard, Malaysia would like to encourage the D-8 Secretariat to continuously support private sector initiatives, especially in revitalising the D-8 post-pandemic economy.
22. Malaysia believes that the D-8 needs to strengthen its existing policies and frameworks on private sector initiatives so that they remain relevant in the post-pandemic era.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

**Key Areas No 3: Poverty Eradication Strategy post-Pandemic**

23. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the lives and livelihood of our peoples; causing serious economic downturn, which lead to poverty.
24. It is obvious that many of us continue to face-off struggle with poverty issues due to the pandemic.
25. For Malaysia, we uphold the Keluarga Malaysia i.e the “Malaysian Family” concept, which emphasises inclusivity, common ground and contentment, and learning from the values of overcoming problems and challenges as a family.
26. Having witnessed the pandemic on a global scale and experienced it at the local level, the pandemic has uncovered and reinforced the need for individuals, communities and businesses to band together collectively in times of crisis.

27. The same family-like unity could apply to the D-8 Member States i.e as we now enter the endemic stage.
28. By 2025, Malaysia aims to achieve zero hardcore poverty and a decent standard of living for all Malaysians, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, and location.
29. To achieve this, the Government has launched the “Malaysian Family Hardcore Poverty Eradication Programme”.
30. Our concept of hardcore poverty eradication is in line with the D-8's aspirations to address the issue of income disparities and improve the people's living standards.

Excellencies,

31. Moving forward, as we celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-8 this year, the idea of expanding membership to friendly countries that share common affinities with all D-8 Member States is a worthwhile endeavour.
32. In this connection, Malaysia welcomes the Republic of Azerbaijan's membership application into the D-8 family. We believe that expanding the membership in the D-8 Organization would enrich, widen and deepen further our economic and trade cooperation and activities with each other, particularly in the era of the post-COVID-19 pandemic.

**33. Nevertheless, Malaysia is of the view that it is important for an organisation like the D-8 to have a standard guideline on new membership, to ensure consistency on the criteria and modalities for accession of new Members and observers into the organization.**

**34. In conclusion, I want to reaffirm Malaysia's full commitment to the D-8 and we stand ready to cooperate with the D-8 Member States on all areas of priority to ensure the prosperity of our economies and the living standards of our people.**

**Thank you.**

**Prepared by:**

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