

Statement by the Chair

Excellency, Distinguished delegates,

While the D-8 is celebrating the 25th Anniversary of its establishment achieving notable landmarks in forging economic cooperation, new countries are expressing their desire to become member to this organization. We, the member states happily welcome the idea of creating new partnerships and accession of new members and observers for the further enlargement of the organizations. It has been echoed multiple times in Commission Meetings and Working group meetings. It is also discussed repeatedly in all these forums to finalize the criteria and modalities for accession of new members and observers. In doing so, we have gathered here in the 2nd Working group Meeting today. I am sure that during today's meeting, member countries will come up with concrete proposals for consideration in the upcoming 46th Commissions meeting.

In this regard, I thank the D-8 Secretariat for preparing and circulating an updated concept note and the Working Paper incorporating the chronological developments and views of the member states received so far. As we examine the views received from the member states, it is evident that there is not much disagreement on the modalities of the accession of new members and observers, however, we would really need to work on finalizing the criteria to allow a country or organization to become a member or observer. We look forward receiving kind views of the member states so that we can formulate a well-defined and well-accepted criteria for accession of new members and observers.

In this connection, Bangladesh would like to underline the following broad points:

1. Firstly, D-8 was established with a view to enhance economic, social, social, technical and scientific ties among the member states. Therefore, attaining this core objective should be one of the major criterions while granting membership or observer status to a country or organization. In this regard, we may think of formulizing a quantitative criterion, for example determining a minimum per capita income, Gross National Income, Overall trade Volume and Volume of Trade with D-8 countries. We believe it will help us accepting the most relevant country as a new member/observer in terms of martializing its core objective of strengthening economic cooperation.

2. Secondly, Bangladesh is of the view that at first stage, we should consider granting observer status to a country for a specific period, it could be for two years, and later we can decide on granting membership to that country.
3. Thirdly, D-8 is already in the process of finalizing Preferential Trade Agreement which has been agreed after long negotiation process. The criteria should also reflect how a new member would be integrated in the trade deal and other instruments.
4. Finally, level and engagement of participation in D-8 meetings by the observers, who ultimately become a member of the organization, must be well defined and it should be well reflected in the updated Rules of Procedure of the D-8.

Excellency, distinguished delegates

We are happy that new countries are expressing their desire to become member to this Organization which demonstrates that D-8's importance and relevance as an organization. Therefore, we must try to create an avenue to welcome new country or organization to become part of our organization. I am sure, today's meeting will bring fruitful outcome with our combined efforts.

I thank you all.