

**Report of the
Third D-8 Senior Ministerial Meeting on Tourism
05 August 2023 Bhurban, Murree, Pakistan**

The Third D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism was held on 05 August 2023 in Bhurban, Murree, Pakistan. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Awn Chaudry, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports of Pakistan and Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), Mr. Aftab Ur Rehman Rana, and attended by Ministers and Heads of Delegations from D-8 Member States. List of participants is attached as **Annex I**.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome remarks H.E. Awn Chaudry, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports of Pakistan

The Honourable Advisor to the Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports of Pakistan, H.E. Awn Chaudry, welcomed the delegates to the meeting and briefed on Pakistan's efforts to promote its tourism. He emphasized the crucial role of the tourism sector in the sustainable development and economic growth of the Member States. He also encouraged the Member States to further strengthen their existing cooperation in the tourism sector. His statement is attached as **Annex II**.

The D-8 Secretary-General, H.E. Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, in his opening statement, presented the progress of the D-8's tourism cooperation and recalled the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on various aspects, particularly on tourism cooperation. He also underscored the importance of implementing the D-8 Comprehensive Strategy on Tourism Cooperation and the Crescent Moon Initiative, which the D-8 ministers responsible for tourism adopted in their Second meeting in Kuala Lumpur in 2019. He emphasized the novelty of those initiatives in turning the challenges posed by the pandemic into opportunities. His statement is attached as **Annex III**.

Agenda Item 2: Consideration and Adoption of the Draft Agenda

The Meeting considered and adopted the agenda. The adopted agenda is attached as **Annex IV**.

Agenda Item 3: Business Arrangements

Pakistan, as the host country, briefed the meeting on the business arrangements of the meeting

Agenda Item 4: Statements by Ministers of Tourism of D8 Member States/Heads of Delegation

The Ministers and Heads of the Delegation from the Member States delivered their statements.

The Statements are attached as **Annex V**.

Agenda Item 5: Consideration and Adoption of the Islamabad Declaration on D-8 Tourism Cooperation 2023

The Chair presented the text of Islamabad Declaration on Tourism Cooperation 2023 to the Meeting.

The Meeting considered and endorsed the Islamabad Declaration on Tourism Cooperation 2023.

The adopted Declaration is attached as **Annex VI**.

Agenda Item 6: Consideration and Adoption of the Joint Media Statement

The Chair presented the draft 'Joint Media Statement', which was finalized at the Fourth D-8 Senior Officials Meeting.

The Meeting deliberated and endorsed the Joint Media Statement. The endorsed statement is attached as **Annex VII**.

Agenda Item 7: Information Sharing

Private Sector Cooperation.

The Chairman of Pakistan Association of Tour Operators delivered a detailed presentation on tourism potentials in Pakistan.

The representative of the private sector exchanged ideas and views to the meeting and proposed the following:

- 1- Exchange of training programs on tourism and hospitality amongst relevant authorities of D-8 Member States
- 2- Formation of an Expert Working Group on Investment, Education and Tour Operation. This Expert Working Group should meet on regular periodical basis at least twice a year either virtually or in person.

Agenda Item 8: Other Matters

There were no discussions under this agenda item.

Agenda Item 9: Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

The Secretariat will liaise with member states, seeking the next volunteer to host the Fourth Ministerial Meeting and its preceding Senior Officials Meeting on Tourism.

Agenda Item 10: Consideration and Adoption of the Report

The report of the Third D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism was considered and adopted.

Agenda Item 11: Closing Remarks

The Secretary-General thanked the participants for their efforts to come up with the excellent outcomes of the

meeting and praised the Chairman for competently handling the proceedings of the Meeting.

He also appreciated and thanked the Government of Pakistan and PTDC for the excellent arrangements of the Meeting.

In the same vein, the Chairman commended the delegates for their constructive contributions and expressed his satisfaction with the outcome of the meeting. He also urged them to ensure effective and timely implementation of the decisions taken under the 'Islamabad Declaration on Tourism Cooperation 2023' and to follow-up on outstanding issues.

All Delegates attending the Ministerial meeting expressed their gratitude and thanked the Chairman for effectively presiding over the meeting. They also expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Pakistan for its hospitality and excellent meeting arrangements. They also praised the role of the Secretariat in preparing the documents of the meetings.

The meeting was closed on 05 August 2023.

LIST OF ATTENDEES FOR 3RD D-8 MINISTERIAL MEETING

5 August 2023

Sr	Name	Designation	Country/ Organization	Contact Details
1.	Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam	Secretary General	D-8 Secretariat	
2.	Ahmar Ismail	Director - I	D-8 Secretariat	
3.	Muhammad Bilal Khan	Executive Assistant	D-8 Secretariat	
4.	Mr. Awn Chuadhry	Minister (Advisor to PM on Sports & Tourism)	Pakistan	md@tourism.gov.pk +92 300 9742158
5.	Mr. Aftab-Ur-Rehman Rana	Senior Official – MD PTDC	Pakistan	md@tourism.gov.pk +92 300 9742158
6.	Mr. Mohammad Abdullah Al Mamum	Director – International Organizations Wing	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Bangladesh	dirio@mofa.gov.bd
	Mr. Yusran Hadromi	Charge D'Affaires/Head of Delegation	Indonesia	axelsyah.miraza@kemlu.go.id
7.	Mr. Axelsyah R Miraza	Third Secretary	Indonesia	axelsyah.miraza@kemlu.go.id
8.	Mr. Zulfikar Alamsyah	Technical Staff	Indonesia	axelsyah.miraza@kemlu.go.id
9.	H.E. Seyed Ezzatollah Zarghami	Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts	Iran	Mqasemi917@gmail.com; cc: Nasrin.azimipanah@gmail.com
	H.E Mr Reza Amiri Moghadam	Ambassador to Pakistan	Iran	Mqasemi917@gmail.com;

				cc: Nasrin.azimipanah@gmail.com
10.	Mr. Mehdi Dehghan	Manager of Protocol	Iran	Mqasemi917@gmail.com; cc: Nasrin.azimipanah@gmail.com
11.	Mr. Hossein Mostafa Lou	Executive Advisor to the Minister	Iran	Mqasemi917@gmail.com; cc: Nasrin.azimipanah@gmail.com
12.	Mr. Mohammad Ghasemi	Deputy General Director of Ministerial and International affairs	Iran	Mqasemi917@gmail.com; cc: Nasrin.azimipanah@gmail.com
13.	Mr. Hadi Golriz	Third Secretary	Embassy of Iran in Pakistan	Mqasemi917@gmail.com; cc: Nasrin.azimipanah@gmail.com
14.	Mr. Sadegh Ghorbani	Senior Expert, Office for Multilateral and International Economic Cooperation	Iran	Mqasemi917@gmail.com; cc: Nasrin.azimipanah@gmail.com
15.	Mr. Amr Abdallah Mohammed Morsey	Counsellor	Embassy of Egypt in Pakistan	pakegyptembassy@gmail.com
16.	Mr. Muhammad Azhar bin Mazlan	High Commissioner	High Commission of Malaysia	mwislamabad@kln.gov.my mdazhar@kln.gov.my
17.	Muhammad Zulasri Rosdi	First Secretary	High Commission of Malaysia	mwislamabad@kln.gov.my mdazhar@kln.gov.my
18.	Mr. Muhammad Bello Abiyo	High Commissioner	Nigeria	tafida07@gmail.com
19.	Mr Mohammed Tafida	Minister Counsellor	Nigeria	tafida07@gmail.com
20.	Ms. Emel Derinoz Tekin	First Counsellor of the Embassy / Charge d'Affaires	Turkye	emel.derinoz@mfa.gov.tr
21.	Mr. Hammad Shamimi	Additional Secretary - III	Cabinet Division	aleem5000@gmail.com

22.	Dr. Asima Rabbani	DG (OIC & ED)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	
23.	Mr. Saadiq ur Rehman	Director Airport Services	Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority	+92 300 8240038
24.	Mr. Omair Khattak	Deputy Director	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa culture and tourism authority	omair11@gmail.com +92 321 9590009
25.	Mr. Asif ullah	Secretary	Tourism Department, Gilgit Baltistan	auk494@gmail.com +92 355 5999102
26.	Ms. Midhat Shahzad	Secretary	Tourism Department, Azad Jammu & Kashmir	midhat.secy@gmail.com midhatak@yahoo.com +92 345 5777784
27.	Mr. Wahid Arjumand Zia	GM Operations	Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab	gmoperationstdcp@gmail.com gmo@tdcp.gop.pk +92 300 4583070
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29.	Mr. Syed Feyyaz Shah	Managing Director	Sindh Tourism Development Corporation	omair11@gmail.com +92 321 9590009
30.	Mr. Umar	Secretary	Pakistan Association of Tour Operators (PATO)	pato.secretariat@gmail.com +92 313 5009980
31.	Mr Azmat Hussain	Vice president	Pakistan Association of Tour Operators (PATO)	pato.secretariat@gmail.com +92 332 8501039

32.	Mr. Athar Jamil	Head of Department of Tourism	Riphah International University	
33.	Mr. Ashfaq Ahmed Looher	General Manager	PTDC	info@tourism.gov.pk
34.	Mr. Adil Zaidi	Manager (Accounts)	PTDC	info@tourism.gov.pk
35.	Mr. Muhammad Shabbir	Assistant Engineer	PTDC	info@tourism.gov.pk
36.	Mr. Mukhtar Ali	Manager (TIC's)	PTDC	Mukhtar.ptdc@gmail.com +92 322 5336020
37.	Ms. Sadia Nauman	Manager (P&P)	PTDC	managerpi@tourism.gov.pk +92 324 5250168
38.	Mr. S.W.A Jaffery	PS to APM	Pakistan	info@tourism.gov.pk
39.	Ms. Namrah Shariq	Program Officer (Print & Electronic Media)	PTDC	ammedia@tourism.gov.pk +92 331 6822227
40.	Mr. Ikram Fareed	Cloud Engineer	PTDC	amdigi@tourism.gov.pk +92 304 0639535
41.	Mr. Muhammad Asim	Assistant IT	PTDC	info@tourism.gov.pk
42.	Mr. Majid Ali	IT Officer	PTDC	info@tourism.gov.pk

Mr. Chairman, Excellences, Respected Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

Asalam o Allikum!

- It is a matter of great pleasure and honour for me to be part of today's important meeting of D8 Organization for Economic Cooperation on tourism promotion. First of all, I take this opportunity to thank the Secretary General of D8 and all of you for taking time out of your busy schedules to attend this meeting.
- Pakistan assigns great importance to its membership of D8 Organization of Economic Cooperation. All the member countries of D8 possess huge potential of tourism due to the grate natural, culture and historical tourist assets available in these countries. We can use this great potential of tourism for the socio economic development, people to people contact and for the promotion of peace at national, regional and international levels.
- In line with D8 tourism strategy, Pakistan is in the process of implementing a comprehensive Tourism Promotion National Action Plan. Under this initiative, various short-term, mid-term and long term interventions have been planned to make tourism in Pakistan an engine of economic growth and sustainable development.
- Presently, Tourism in Pakistan is contributing 3.7% in GDP but it has potential to contribute more than 10% in our national GDP and generate more than 6 billion dollars annually only from foreign tourism only. Moreover, it has potential to generate many more jobs for unemployed youth of this country. It is for this reason that our government has assigned priority to make tourism an important pillar of socio-economic development in Pakistan.
- Our government has started the process of rightsizing of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation to make it an effective arm of federal government to promote tourism at national level. To promote private sector investment in tourism sector, we have

adopted policy to encourage private sector investors by offering PTDC properties on long lease to develop quality tourist resort.

- The federal government has also improved cooperation with the provincial governments and working on developing master plans of different tourist resorts at new locations and conducted joint tourism marketing events. Our Provincial Tourism Departments are working very hard to develop new tourist resorts and improving the existing tourist spots. A number of new locations have been finalized to develop integrated tourism zones of modern lines. Improving the quality standards of tourism services and developing capacity of human resource in tourism sector are also our priority areas.
- I am pleased to inform you that yesterday, honourable Prime Minister of Pakistan has also launched Pakistan Tourism Brand in a high level ceremony at PM House. The purpose of this effort is to promote the image of Pakistan as a one of the most tourist friendly destination at global level.
- I am pleased to inform that PTDC has started national tourism training program is now conducting various training workshops for tour guides, tour operators and hotel staff all over Pakistan. We are working on improving our tourist visa issuance mechanism. Already citizens of 192 countries can apply for tourism visa online and very trying our best to further improve the visa issuance process.
- In order to improve the tourist flow among the member countries, we need to see that how we can better facilitate the movement of tourists among the D8 Member States by providing better air connectivity. For this purpose, we may also introduce economical air fares for the citizens of the member states to encourage them to visit each other countries.
- We also need to adopt more tourist friendly visa policies for the citizens of Member States to promote people to people contact.

- Difference of languages is also a barrier in communication. We need to help each other to develop multilingual tourism promotion material in print and in electronic forms to better communicate with each other.
- There is great potential to develop cooperation in training of human resource in tourism and hospitality sector. For this purpose, the member countries may offer scholarships to the young students in their respective tourism training institutions.
- Moreover, we need to promote the exchange program among the tour operators, investors and tourism professionals of the D8 Member Countries to develop cooperation and collaboration among them. We also need to arrange travel related exhibitions and road shows in member countries to create awareness of tourism potential of the member countries. I am sure these steps will greatly help in developing cooperation in the field of tourism among the member countries.

Mr. Chairman,

I am confident that by working together, we can realize this objectives of D8 Tourism Strategy through active and effective engagement of all the Member Counties.

I hope this meeting will pave the way to jointly work for the sustainable development of tourism in all the member countries.

Thank you all and looking forward to a positive outcome of this meeting.

**STATEMENT BY THE D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL,
AMBASSADOR ISIAKA ABDULQADIR IMAM, FOR THE THIRD
D-8 MINISTERIAL MEETING ON TOURISM COOPERATION,
AUGUST 5, 2023, BHUBHAN, MURREE, PAKISTAN**

**H.E. Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan
on Tourism and Sports,**

Honourable Ministers of D-8 Responsible for Tourism,

D-8 Ambassadors to Islamabad,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalam Alaikum

I am honored to be among the distinguished Delegates attending the **Third D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism**, here in this vibrant city of Murree in Pakistan. This would be my first time of participating in this ministerial meeting on tourism, since I assumed duty as Secretary General of D-8 Organization in January 2022. Therefore, I feel delighted meeting all our Honourable Ministers, Excellencies and other distinguished delegates.

I want to convey my utmost gratitude to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded me and my delegation. I also want to thank the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) for the excellent preparation and organization of this Meeting.

May I also take this opportunity to express my immense gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Muhammed Shehbaz Sharif, the Honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan, and His Excellency Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, for their strong support for the Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation. As a founding member of the D-8 Organization, Pakistan has been active in all our programs and activities.

I want to also use this opportunity to congratulate the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the launch of 'Tourism Brand Pakistan initiative', which took place yesterday in Islamabad. This

is another landmark initiative of Pakistan to further boost tourism and unlock the potentials in the sector.

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The essence of our gathering here today is to discuss about Tourism industry and the immense potential it holds to significantly transform the socio-economic development in the D-8 Countries.

Our recent experience has taught us that tourism is most prone to disruption. The Covid-19 pandemic wrought havoc and grind the tourism industry to a halt. We have witnessed how cities that used to be bustling with activities became quiet from lockdown imposed to curb the spread of the pandemic. We have seen how lives and jobs were lost because of the effect of Covid-19. However, we must express our gratitude to Almighty Allah that things are looking up as the sector begins to recover gradually.

As tourism begins its recovery, this meeting becomes even more crucial since we need to strengthen our cooperation to accelerate the process of recovery. We must devise a means to create a resilient tourism industry and take advantage of its potential for economic and social transformation. To achieve this, we must strengthen our cooperation in the areas of tourism for mutual benefits of all members of D-8 Group.

As a background therefore, I am pleased to report that we have recorded some modest progress in the following areas, since the last D8 Ministerial Meeting held in 2019 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

- Establishment of D8 Tourism Portal
- D8 Designated Airports
- D8 Payment Card

The Secretariat, in line with the Decision of the Second Ministerial Meeting, activated two tabs under the D-8 Tourism Portal on the D-8 Website. The Portal has been ready since 2020. It will serve as an information gateway for all activities and information on D-8 Tourism. To maximize the D-8 tourism portal, I call upon all member states to submit the list of relevant tourist agencies to the Secretariat to be listed in the Portal. The portal aims to bring benefits to both our external partners and us. I also invite all Member States to nominate contact persons for better coordination and cooperation.

With regard to the D-8 Designated Airports, I am pleased to note that four airports have been designed as D8 Airports, namely, the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi, Pakistan. The Sabiha Gokcen International Airport, in Istanbul, Türkiye. The Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, in Abuja, Nigeria and the Soekarno-Hatta

International Airport in Jakarta, Indonesia. I thank the Governments of Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Türkiye for designating those airports. I wish to use this medium to call other Member States to follow suit, as this initiative will assist in promoting people-to-people and business-to-business contacts.

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

While badly affected by the pandemic, the tourism sector has shown the strongest potential to re-emerge from its devastating effect. Therefore, this noble Ministerial Meeting can provide policy guidance to share best practices and leverage our collective strength to revitalize the sector, in the post-pandemic era.

Indeed, some of our Member States have shown potential for tourism growth, spurred by unique cultural, historical, and natural attractions. Countries like Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Türkiye, are world-

renowned tourist destinations, with established foundations and infrastructure. Their tourism industry contributes to their economies significantly, while their respective rebound is also remarkable. Other member countries are also showing remarkable growth in their tourist arrivals and revenues since 2022.

Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen, we need to maintain and increase the momentum to return to the 2019 figure in 2024. And we can do this through the following four key action points:

- Optimizing our potential in **Cultural Heritage, Natural Beauty, Religious Tourism and Medical Tourism** as well as **Hospitality Industry.**
- Relaxing our visa regime to enhance Business **Travel.**
- Enhancing **Marketing Efforts.**
- Implementing the **D-8 Comprehensive Strategy on Tourism** and the **Crescent Moon Initiative,** adopted at the Kuala Lumpur Meeting, as well as the soon-to-be-adopted **Islamabad Declaration 2023.**

We can also focus on the low-hanging fruits in tangible projects and programs such as organizing **capacity-building programmes, joint cultural events, travel fairs and exhibitions**. As we stand at the threshold of this new era, I therefore urge all Member States to accelerate implementing those strategies and innovative measures to foster tourism growth. By pooling our collective resources, knowledge, and expertise, we can use tourism as a critical driver of sustainable development, economic resilience, and cultural understanding among our nations.

To conclude, **Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen**, from today's meeting **our** immediate goal is to grow the tourism sector to be at par with -- and even surpass -- the pre-pandemic situation. We have the tools at hand. What is left to do is to implement them. As the Secretary-General of this noble Organization, I will incessantly knock on your doors to ensure effective collaboration.

My office will keep on communicating with yours to jointly implement this Meeting's decisions. I am optimistic that we can reach the 500 billion US Dollars intra-trade target, set by our leaders well before the 2030 deadline, if we are committed and strive to implement our decisions. I trust we can drive this Meeting's purpose to lay a stronger foundation for our collective efforts in tourism cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.

**3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation, Bhurbhan, Pakistan
05 August 2023**

AGENDA

OPENING SESSION

1. Opening Remarks and Introduction

- Welcoming remarks by host country, Pakistan – Chairperson PTDC/ Minister of Pakistan
- Opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, D-8 Secretary General

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- The Chairperson may wish to brief the agenda for consideration and adoption by the Meeting.

3. Business Arrangements

- Pakistan, as the host country, may wish to brief on business arrangements for the Meeting.

4. Statements by Ministers of Tourism of D8 Member States/Heads of Delegation

- The Ministers may wish to provide key strategic insights with regard to tourism development of their respective countries.

5. Consideration and Adoption of the Islamabad Declaration on D-8 Tourism Cooperation 2023

- The Meeting may wish to consider and endorse the Islamabad Declaration on D-8 Tourism Cooperation 2023 .

6. Consideration and Adoption of the Joint Media Statement

- The Meeting may wish to consider and adopt the Joint Media Statement of the 3rd D8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism held in Bhurbhan, Pakistan on 04 August 2023.
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INFORMATION SHARING

7. Private Sector Session

- Representatives from private sectors (Pakistan International Airlines, Expedia or any other related agency) may wish to brief the meeting on the travel and tourism trends in D8 countries.
- The Representatives from the private sectors may wish to present updates and deliver a short presentation outlining the key issues and trends impacting tourism.
- The Ministers may wish to discuss with the private sectors' representatives to encourage them to participate in the implementation of the establishment of D-8 Tourism Strategic Plan.

OTHER MATTERS AND CLOSING SESSION

8. Other Matters

- The Meeting may wish to discuss any other matters.

9. Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

- The Chairperson may wish to invite D-8 Secretary General to brief the Meeting on the 4th D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation.

10. Consideration and Adoption of the Report

- The Meeting may wish to consider and adopt the Report of the 3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism.

11. Closing Remarks

- The Chairperson may wish to deliver the closing remarks.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Assalmu Alaikum and a very Good Morning!**

Distinguished Audience,

It is my great honour and privilege to be a part of “4th D-8 Senior officials and 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Tourism”. I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the host country for organising this high level meeting. Tourism for the D8 countries is an industry that holds immense potential with vast possibilities of contributing to their respective national economies and manifold increase in their domestic social environment. I take this opportunity to appreciate the presence of the esteemed ministers and senior officials and hope to hear from the august gathering about their contribution in aligning the efforts to support the sector’s development among the member states and beyond towards a safer, more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

D-8 is a vibrant group of 8 friendly developing countries who have huge potential in tourism. This potential in turn will affect the domestic

economy, employment generation and relationship bondage through the collective efforts of the member states.

Esteemed Guests,

The D-8 Comprehensive strategy on tourism and Crescent Moon Initiative taken on 20 November 2019 in Kuala Lumpur is an important white paper on tourism collaboration and development among the member states. Both papers can play a vital role for creating synergy among the member states on tourism. We have to work closely to implement this strategy paper. From Bangladesh end, we have implemented several aspects-

- Devising thematic tourism guidelines like eco-tourism, riverine tourism, wildlife tourism etc. in coordination with different public departments like Archeology, Forest etc.
- Coordination initiatives are taking among public stakeholders like Bangladesh Investment Development Authority, International Organizations like World Bank and other domestic investors to foster the investment process
- Social Media Marketing are fostering to reach Bangladesh throughout the world
- Tour operators are creating attractive tourism packages on Sundarbans, Backwater, City tour etc.

- Hotels and Airlines are offering special offers to domestic and international tourists
- **Policies and strategies have been developed** to ensure sustainable tourism
- Destination Management Organization (DMO) is on the way of implementing in different tourism destinations of Bangladesh
- Coordinated initiatives have been taken to develop some endanger destination like Saint Martin, the only coral island of Bangladesh
- Year-round capacity building activities among different stakeholders like tour operators, tour guides, street food vendors, employees of hospitality industries are carried out
- To foster the cross border and regional tourism, B2B program were carried out in south Asian cluster

Distinguished Guests,

The present Government of Bangladesh is working relentlessly for the development of the country and to turn Bangladesh into a developed and prosperous nation by 2041, inspired by the spirit of the great liberation war to build the '**Golden Bangla**', the dream of our Father of the Nation, **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**. Tourism is recognized as the most labor intensive and largest service industry in the world today. In

the current context of Bangladesh, the importance of tourism is essential for the inclusive economic growth of the country. The government is working with utmost importance to formulate private sector development friendly activities and policies to successfully manage the country's inclusive economic growth activities by harnessing the immense potential of tourism.

Distinguished participants,

Bangladesh is a lovely land with enormous potential of tourism. Although this country is small in size, it has been equipped with a variety of tourists destinations like hills, sea beaches, islands, heritage sites, bio-diversity, and also a very vibrant and well-known art and heritage. Bangladesh is blessed with the world's largest mangrove forest Sundarbans, world's largest unbroken sandy sea beach Cox's Bazar and amazing coral island on the Bay of Bengal called Saint Martin Island. The UNESCO world heritage sites include the sixty domes mosque in Bagerhat, the ancient education center of Buddhism called the Paharpur Buddhist relics and the Sundarbans. Our rich culture, life style and food habit of ethnic group will enrich tourist experiences.

Distinguished Delegates,

About 15 million people in Bangladesh are involved in the tourism industry and almost 2.9% of the population earns their livelihood through tourism. The contribution of the tourism sector to the GDP is 3%. The recent developments in infrastructure have opened up to newer, greater, and more innovative possibilities for the tourism sector in Bangladesh. The Padma Bridge has ensured road and rail connectivity with the southern part of the country, the Dhaka Metro rail project, once completed will facilitate faster and easy transport within the capital city. The faster expressways in different regions of the country will connect the country with the Asian Highway. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel will ensure faster and efficient connectivity between Chattagram, the commercial capital and Cox's Bazar, the tourism capital as well as with the other parts of the country. All these infrastructure development projects have been designed to ensure faster, safer, and more reliable movement of people and goods within the country, which we believe will open a new doorway for the tourism and hospitality sector of the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh is a fresh tourism destination. It has a vast prospect to developing tourism as it has attractive, unadulterated natural beauty, heroic historical background, and archeological resources to experience. But this potential can be converted into a reality through product development, dynamic marketing and promotion of the tourism products

and services. We want to promote our initiatives widely with the support of our D8 friends.

Distinguished Delegates,

Bangladesh is on the verge of finishing the tourism master plan that include short-, mid- and long-term plan to achieve economic and social development through tourism. Tourism Master Plan cluster Bangladesh into 8 regions where product development, infrastructure development, marketing and promotion, Investment plan and project proposal are prioritized. Within 2041, Bangladesh will attract 5.69 million international tourist, 10% contribution to national GDP from tourism sectors. Affiliation with international organization and group will provide the best opportunity to further development of tourism sector. Holistic approach from D-8 member states are required to make tourism one of the value creation sector.

Tourism has always provided us with endless opportunities. In this regard, I would like to emphasize on the fact that we should aim to taking our cooperation into a higher ground than now. We should diversify the areas of our cooperation.

Before I conclude, I take this opportunity to reiterate the critical role that we all have to play in a coordinated strategic way to contribute in policy

making and regulation to move forward for value generation through tourism.

Thank you.

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**His Excellency Advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Tourism and Sports, Awn CHAUDRY,
Distinguished Secretary General Isiaka Abdulqadir IMAM
Distinguished Ministers,
Distinguished Guests,**

On behalf of Minister of Culture and Tourism of Republic of Türkiye, His Excellency Mehmet Nuri ERSOY, I am pleased to address you on the occasion of the 3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation of the Economic Cooperation Organization of Developing Eight Countries (D-8).

I would like to express my sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr. Awn CHAUDRY for his kind invitation and generously providing all conditions to get together. Certainly, Pakistan is not just any country for us, rather it is our brothers' homeland.

To His Excellency, Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam as the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization of Developing Eight Countries (D-8), I would like to thank you for this meeting that brought us together.

Distinguished Participants,

Since our last meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia by the end of 2019, our world has witnessed an unprecedented crisis challenging our economies severely, while tourism sector has been directly affected due to travel restrictions. The humanitarian crisis affecting people's lives, has inevitably triggered a global economic crisis.

If you allow me, I would like to share some important cornerstones of Türkiye's strategic roadmap in this challenging period, which ended with safe and sustainable recovery of our sector.

Türkiye has made ground-breaking progression since 1960s in tourism planning, diversification of tourism as maritime, culture, winter, gastronomy and health tourism, infrastructure for accessibility and investments, tourism risk management, development of qualified human resources as well as institutionalization of actors in public and private sector, which made Türkiye one of the leading players of the global tourism. We reached a milestone of almost 52 million visitors travelling to Türkiye by the end of 2019 with around 30 billion \$ revenue just before the pandemic outbreak.

In Türkiye, immediate professional intervention against the pandemic, on time start of the comprehensive economic stability shield package and solid public health system backed by newly built high capacity city hospitals and qualified

human resources, have played an important role to cope with the negative impacts of Covid-19 pandemic.

Along with monetary and fiscal measures taken to mitigate the negative impacts of Covid-19 pandemic on tourism industry, by June 2020 “Safe Tourism Certification Programme” has been immediately launched by our Ministry in collaboration with Ministry of Health, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and private sector stakeholders.

The Programme has provided a framework and broad range of measures for the fulfilment of the highest level of health and hygiene requirements at airports, transportation and accommodation facilities, restaurant and cafes, theme parks, culture, art and conference services.

The Program has 4 main pillars; health and safety of the passengers, health and safety of the employees, precautions taken in terms of transportation vehicles and precautions taken at facilities and as of today, more than 12.000 facilities have been either certified or under certification process and they were inspected regularly both by the accreditation institutions and by the Ministry.

As one of the first examples in the world, Programme significantly contributed to strengthening resilience of the tourism sector and rebuilding traveler confidence.

In this period, one of the most important actor has been the Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency, which was established in 2019 just before the Covid-19 outbreak. The Agency brings public authorities and private businesses together in the decision processes and targets to increase the rate of tourism investments in the national economy, raise the quality of services with short, medium and long-term communication and marketing activities. Having public and private partnership in the management of the Agency, enables the tourism sector to achieve synergy in creation of innovative solutions to current challenges like the Covid-19 pandemic and creates a suitable environment for a quick sector recovery.

Thanks to these timely interventions, in 2020, Türkiye’s tourism industry retained its resilience and received 16 million international tourists.

Thanks to all measures, despite the global crisis, in 2021 Türkiye hosted more than 30 million visitors and received about 24.5 billion \$ tourism revenue.

The number of tourists coming to Türkiye in 2022 compared to the previous year; It increased by 75% and became 51 million 369 thousand 26 people.

While the tourism income of our country increased by 53.4 percent in 2022 compared to the previous year, it increased to 46 billion 284 million 907 thousand

dollars; Türkiye hosted 22 million 945 thousand 402 visitors in the first 6 months of 2023.

The success has not been a coincidence. First of all the Presidential Electoral System accelerated the inter-institutional cooperation. Then our Ministry's central administrative core has been strengthened with the establishment of Tourism Promotion and Development Agency and affiliated institutions such as cultural diplomacy centers Yunus Emre Institutes and foreign-aid assistance provider Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency. This holistic approach we adopted has ended up with innovative and inclusive policies and followed by success in numbers.

In 2023, another innovative step has been taken and Sustainable Tourism Certification Program has been started to transform sustainability standards of Turkish tourism.

Our country became a party to the Paris Climate Agreement in 2021 and this year Türkiye signed a cooperation agreement with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) for its national sustainable tourism program and certification of accommodation sector has been restructured accordingly to environmental, economic and administrative sustainability criteria.

Türkiye is the first government in the world to develop a mandatory national program with the GSTC and the transformation includes creating mandatory national Standards for Accommodations and Travel Agencies.

Türkiye has accepted sustainable tourism as the tourism of the future. Türkiye aims to leave a lasting legacy, an unspoiled and healthy world to future generations with its sustainability projects, and to make Türkiye a more sustainable tourism destination.

Brothers and Sisters,

Türkiye, as one of the founding states of D-8 has treated it as an indispensable platform for dialogue and cooperation. Needless to say, ongoing friendly and ancient dialogue between our countries is among our major strengths.

Thanks to this proximity and backing, we have the opportunity to exist side by side in one of the most strategic and challenging regions of the world and to become stronger together.

D-8 offers us significant opportunities to come together and take the further steps. In order for the D-8 Region to reach the commercial volume it deserves in the growing global tourism and travel sector and in response to the triple crisis, Covid,

Climate and War, it is time to develop joint projects that are up-to-date, innovative, data-based and aiming for profit for all parties.

We believe that the implementation of the Comprehensive Tourism Strategy developed within the D-8 Vision provides us with a solid framework for our lasting and tangible cooperation. The common objectives envisaged in this context can be achieved through the implementation of activities selected with the support of the Member States as well as the capacity of the Secretariat and the Tourism Working Group.

In addition, I believe that private sector actors are important in the implementation of this strategy and it would be beneficial for us to identify activities to strengthen our public-private sector dialogue in the field of tourism and travel.

We also would like to suggest to consider engaging with UNWTO, WTTC and other travel and tourism organizations in order to further expand the scope and visibility of our projects.

Moreover, I believe that the Islamabad Declaration to be adopted will be an important reference document and I would like to state that we are ready to show the will required for this document to evolve into concrete projects.

Distinguished Ministers;

Today world travel and tourism sector not talking only recovery, but rather discussing transformation to a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive sector for people, planet and welfare.

From our side, I would like to sincerely note that Türkiye is ready to make the necessary contribution to our cooperation not only through the core units of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, but also with our affiliated institutions and organizations operating in various fields all over the world like TİKA and Yunus Emre Institutes.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to stress that we will continue to work devotedly towards the unity and solidarity of D-8.

Concluding my speech, I convey my earnest wishes to all esteemed participants. In the upcoming period, as always, we will work closely with our counterparts aiming to strengthen brotherly ties and construct the future together underneath a single roof.

Thank you.

Speech of H.E Min. Issa
3rd Ministerial Meeting on Tourism of D8
5th of August 2023

***Honorable Chairperson Mr. Chaudhry, Advisor to the prime
Minister of Pakistan on Tourism and Sports***

Honorable Ministers

Secretary General of the D8

Ladies and Gentlemen

***Let me at the outset add my voice to the previous
speakers in expressing my gratitude to the government and
people of Pakistan for the warm reception and the generous
hospitality***

***It gives me great pleasure to join you in the 3rd
Ministerial Meeting on Tourism of the D8, this organization
which gathers a number of friendly countries that share
many human values and beliefs.***

***Our meeting today is an expression of the importance
given by our countries to tourism sector as a key vehicle of***

sustainable development and economic growth... but also it gives us a chance to enlarge and deepen the existing cooperation among the Member States in this vital sector.

The tourism industry at the global and regional levels is witnessing promising signs of recovery after the exceptional circumstances that afflicted the industry in connection with the outbreak of COVID 19....

And as you may know, the Middle East region witnessed strong performance during the past months, and succeeded in restoring pre-pandemic numbers in the first quarter of this year, according to reports issued by the UNWTO... this exceptional performance is driven by the huge increase in demand and the easing of travel restrictions in the region.

However, the continuity of this increase in demand needs huge investments to enhance environmental sustainability and the use of new and renewable energy resources in tourist establishments and means of tourism transportation, as well as the diversification of our tourism patterns and

destinations in a manner that guarantees the sustainability of all these patterns.

In this context, I am glad to share with you some very promising figures for the tourism sector in Egypt this year.. in the first half of this year we received more than 7 million tourists, heading towards a record in the Egyptian tourism sector history with more than 15 million by the end of the year.. with a perspective of an annual increase between 25% and 30% in the coming 5 years to reach 30 million tourists by 2028.

Drastic changes were introduced in the last decade with the aim of empowering the private sector as the leader of this sector while reinforcing the role of the government as a strong regulator and catalyst for the industry. Egypt invested massively in the tourism infrastructure.. hotels .. roads .. preservation of our unique cultural heritage.. training and capacity building... and we are willing to share our experiences with our brothers and sisters in the D8 countries.

Dear Colleagues

Egypt participated thoroughly in the joint efforts deployed by the member states and the secretariat to prepare the “Comprehensive Strategy on Tourism Cooperation” and the “Crescent Moon Initiative”, adopted in November 2019 at the Second Ministerial Meeting in Kuala Lumpur... and we hope that these initiatives will constitute a proper platform for the exchange of best practices and streamline the mobility of people and the flow of investments among our countries in tourism sector.

In this context, the initiative of establishing a Tourism Fund within D-8 in cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank and other national and international banks and funds, can be a strong asset to support tourism infrastructure development and business among our member states.

In addition to that, Egypt is willing to encourage D-8 Tourism cooperation at international tourism fairs, as well as the organization of D-8 travel fairs and exhibitions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Emerging as one of the fastest growing sectors of the global economy ... Currently among the top economic sectors of the world, and one of the biggest employer of labor worldwide, Tourism industry offers a unique opportunity for the future of our societies ...

A dynamic private sector- led industry based on efficient governance frameworks and appropriate skills, can create unprecedented economic opportunities for our nations

Before I conclude, I am sure that the success stories recorded by some of D8 Member States could be replicated by other members, given the huge potential they have

Many Thanks for the government of Pakistan for organizing this important meeting and wish you all, Dear Colleagues, very fruitful discussions



**NASKAH TAPPING MENPAREKRAF
INTERVENSI DALAM 3RD D-8 MINISTERIAL MEETING
BHURBHAN-MUREE, PAKISTAN
5 AGUSTUS 2023/ 11:45 - 12:30 (UTC+5)**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS OF TOURISM OF D8 MEMBER STATES/HEADS
OF DELEGATION
“KEY STRATEGIC INSIGHTS WITH REGARD TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT”**

DEAR DELEGATES/ EXCELLENCIES/ LADIES/ AND GENTLEMEN//

THE TOURISM SECTOR IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN INDONESIA// DESPITE THE POSITIVE RISE IN THE NUMBERS/ THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IS FACING VARIOUS CHALLENGES/ ESPECIALLY POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC//

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY WILL REQUIRE INNOVATION/ ADAPTATION/ AND COLLABORATION// INDONESIA BELIEVES THAT THE D-8 COUNTRIES CAN TRANSFORM THOSE CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH COOPERATION//

IN ADDITION TO THESE MEASURES/ D-8 COUNTRIES CAN ALSO COOPERATE TO PROMOTE QUALITY TOURISM// QUALITY TOURISM IS TOURISM THAT IS SUSTAINABLE/ RESPONSIBLE/ AND INCLUSIVE// LESS CROWD/ LONGER LENGTH OF STAYS/ MORE EXPENDITURE//

INDONESIA HIGHLY SUPPORTS QUALITY TOURISM THROUGH OUR TOURISM VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM THAT BENEFITS LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT// WE ENCOURAGE D-8 COUNTRIES TO COLLABORATE TO MAKE THE TOURISM INDUSTRY A FORCE FOR GOOD AMONG MEMBER COUNTRIES//

BY WORKING TOGETHER/ D-8 COUNTRIES CAN RESHAPE TOURISM FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT, AND INCLUSIVE FUTURE//

INDONESIA WILL ALWAYS BE OPEN FOR COOPERATION//

THANK YOU//

AGENDA ITEM 5: Statements by Ministers of Tourism of D-8 Member States/Heads of Delegation (5 mins each)

SPEAKING NOTES

**Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,
Assalamualaikum,**

- **First and foremost, it is my great pleasure and honour to address you on the occasion of the 3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation, which comes at an opportune time for the global tourism industry as it undergoes a rapid recovery.**
- **After three long years, travel and tourism is now recovering rapidly, gaining momentum following the W.H.O.'s recent declaration, bringing the COVID-19 global health emergency to a symbolic end in May 2023.**
- **It is encouraging that international arrivals have reached 80% of pre-pandemic levels in the first quarter of 2023, according to the World Tourism Barometer. Although recovery in Asia remains a year behind other regions, tourism continues to**

BRIEF AND SPEAKING NOTES

3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation

5 August 2023, Bhurbhan, Pakistan

grow from strength to strength as an important driver in accelerating overall growth. In fact, according to The World Bank, tourism's robust performance in the region has supported growth in related sectors such as real estate, transport, and trade.

- It follows that our current priority for tourism as a vulnerable industry to crisis events must be geared towards strengthening resilience and preparedness for new or unforeseen challenges. We must be ready to capture growth opportunities and invest in the new capabilities and hardware for the long term.**
- Towards this end, Malaysia had the pleasure of co-organising the 6th World Tourism Conference (WTC) 2022 themed 'Tourism Futures Reimagined' in partnership with UNWTO on 28-30 November 2022 in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. Some key takeaways and recommendations from the expert speakers and delegates of the WTC 2022 include:**
 - The increasingly blurred boundaries between work, home, leisure and travel require greater cross-collaboration with transport, health, security, cities and urban systems for greater liveability and quality of life, for both visitors and residents alike;**
 - Successful efforts by governments and destinations have reached out beyond the sphere of tourism in offering flexible immigration policies, investing in health and education services, and enhancing economic opportunities for women, among other initiatives which contribute towards strengthening social protection;**
 - The importance of a human-centred approach to rebuilding resilience, particularly in addressing the skilled labour shortages which have affected the tourism sector's ability to**

BRIEF AND SPEAKING NOTES

3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation

5 August 2023, Bhurbhan, Pakistan

meet surging pent-up demand; and

- **To emulate best practices in corporate governance and sustainability assessment tools such as E.S.G., which is still not yet implemented by many tourism-related small businesses and micro enterprises in developing countries.**
- **Malaysia looks forward to advancing regional and international cooperation in these areas by continuing to work closely with organisations such as UNWTO, APEC, D-8 and IORA, and strongly recommends continued engagement and sharing of knowledge among members, particularly in the areas of Muslim-Friendly Tourism and other emerging niche areas of growth, digitalisation, technology adoption and sustainable tourism investments for the industry to emerge stronger and more resilient to future disruptions.**
- **With that, Malaysia wishes to thank the D-8 Secretariat and the Government of Pakistan for the excellent arrangements taken in preparation for today's meeting and looks forward to working closely together to advance tourism cooperation among the D-8 countries.**

Thank you.

STATEMENT DELIVERED
BY
HIS EXCELLENCY
AMBASSADOR MOHAMMED BELLO
ABIOYE
HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

ON THE OCCASION OF THE
3RD MINISTERIAL MEETING ON
TOURISM
ON FRIDAY 4TH AUGUST 2023
IN BHURBAN, MUREE,
PAKISTAN

Excellencies Ministers of Tourism

Mr. Chairman

Secretary-General of the D-8

Excellencies, Ambassadors/High Commissioners present

Distinguished Representatives and Delegates from D-8 Member States

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me start by thanking the participants of the just concluded 4th Senior Officials Meeting for fruitful deliberations, the outcome of which produced a draft declaration in the buildup to the Ministerial Meeting. Worthy of commendation also are the host Ministry of Foreign Affairs, D-8 Secretary-General, the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), and the D-8 Secretariat for successfully hosting and organizing this important auspicious event.

The tourism industry makes significant contributions to economies that implement sound policies which create enabling environments for its sustenance as it boosts revenue, creates jobs, and instills a sense of cultural exchange between peoples of the world. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) the tourism industry could play a crucial role in the revival of the economy as it offers immense potential for growth, innovation, and product diversification within the ecosystem.

The tourism industry in Nigeria is at its modest stage of development and this is where the enhancement of international cooperation comes into play, attaching importance to capacity building on the D-8 platform. In recent years, Nigeria in a bid to advance its tourism industry, has embarked on infrastructural development by building and improving roads, seaports and other transport networks leading to tourist destinations, particularly in remote areas, to ease access for tourists it has also upgraded and expanded its major airports to accommodate more international flights and improve passenger experience.

Nigeria remains committed to objectives set out by the Crescent Moon Initiative and the Comprehensive Tourism Strategy, both serving as frameworks for international cooperation in the tourism industry. In line with the initiative of the D-8 designated Airport in each member state for the promotion of people-to-people and business to business contacts as well as tourism and travel facilitation among member states, the Nigerian Government has conceived the idea of building an aerotropolis in the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja which will showcase Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and tourism potential while boosting businesses and investment.

On this note, my delegation wishes to underline the importance it attaches to tourism cooperation being promoted among D-8 Member States and would like to reiterate its commitment to fulfilling its obligations as member state of the organization.

I thank you all.

Speech by H.E. Seyed Ezzatollah Zarghami, Honorable Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr. Chairman/Honorable ministers/Distinguished guests/Excellecies

Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset, I would like to extend my best gratitude and appreciation to the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, especially my colleague, H.E. Mr. Awn Chaudhry, the Honorable Adviser to Prime Minister on Sport and Tourism and his colleagues in Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation for their warm and friendly hospitality, and holding successfully the 3rd D-8 Ministerial meeting on Tourism.

I also express my thanks to H.E. Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the distinguished Secretary General of D-8 and his colleagues in the secretariat for organizing this valuable meeting and to all delegations for active participation.

The Islamic Republic of Iran as one of the member states of D-8 has been very active and done its best toward the main objectives of the organization. Hosting the 1st D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism in 2008 and 2nd D-8 Meeting on Tourism Cooperation in 2013 is the testimony of this claim. I hope, we together can discuss tourism related issues of Member States to witness a better future for the tourism development in these countries.

All D-8 members are Islamic countries and this makes better understanding, more clear orientation and integrated goals and missions

for us. Hence, I will make my speech and addresses mostly focusing on this important reality.

Tourism has been one of the fastest growing economic sectors and an important driver of economic growth in recent years; so that prior to the pandemic, through its direct, indirect and induced impacts, accounted for more than 33 million jobs and 10% of global GDP. But the notable point is that it has some spiritual dimensions besides economic impacts, strongly emphasized by Islam.

In this regard, the holy Qur'an, in its different verses, advises us to travel to other lands in order to reach a better understanding of the world around, observe the way of living in the other states and learn lessons from other lives. In the other words, **the soul of these verses is focusing on paying special attention to human intangible heritage.** In fact, this dimension of tourism is so valuable that it can foster an effective platform for promoting cultural exchanges, strengthening solidarity and creating peace among all nations.

We live in the world where a growing number of countries have been victim of extremism, violation and terrorism for long time. As you are fully aware terrorism cannot be tackled by security or military means alone and we need some special and different mechanism to combat this sinister phenomenon. This mechanism is nothing except tourism diplomacy; as it paves the way for more interaction between nations and brings peace, stability and security for the region and the world.

Also, the rise of Islamophobia has subjected Muslims to racial discrimination, negative stereotyping and stigmatization. As a result, Muslims have touched the feeling of insecurity in their daily lives and

face denial of their basic human rights. Meantime, tourism is the most effective way to remove this fake negative image by introducing the real nature of Islamic countries.

Achieving a brilliant future for D-8 countries is possible only through the realization of unity, convergence, and collaboration among them. Increasing cultural, economic and commercial cooperation in different areas and strengthening the related infrastructures are what the Member States need today. With no doubt tourism is one of the most important areas of this cooperation.

D-8 member states have high potentials and capacities for different kinds of tourism such as religious and pilgrimage tourism, health tourism, nature and ecotourism, cultural tourism, sport tourism, maritime tourism and so on. But, in my opinion, considering that all D-8 members are Muslim; Halal and Muslim friendly tourism can be considered as competitive advantages for promoting intra-D-8 tourism flows.

Tourism is the right of all people of the universe. therefore, it is necessary that world community including D-8 countries will provide the needed conditions appropriately for all the people in the world so that they can visit all tourism destinations and don't get deprived of this right. This is the concept referred to as the Accessible Tourism by World Tourism Organization. By accessible tourism, it is meant that travel should be accessible for all people with any age, gender, social class, income and physical ability.

One of the ways to promote accessible tourism is visa openness. Thus, it is recommended that easing visa procedures for the member states in form of simplification or exemption as an intra D-8 agreement will be put on the main agenda. This idea can be even developed into D-8 visa regime by approval of the ministries of foreign affairs. Another manifestation of

accessible tourism is budget travel package that can specifically encourage family-oriented tourism.

Moreover, mechanism of selecting and declaring D-8 tourism city annually can provide a unique opportunity for the member states to introduce and brand their tourism destinations through a healthy competition. Therefore, I would like to suggest D-8 secretariat to develop and implement this mechanism.

Fortunately, some of D-8 member states are among the global leading and thriving tourism destinations and could exchange their experiences and know-how with other countries during training courses. In this regard, establishing D-8 training center or institute that can serve virtually or in-person is suggested.

I deeply believe that we, as the representatives of D-8 members, can help tourism to be fostered and promoted in the member states, hand with hand with each other and hereby witness security, stability, peace, prosperity and well-being for the society. For this purpose, relying on “D-8 Comprehensive strategy on Tourism” and “Crescent Moon Initiative” is strongly recommended.

Again, wishing fruitful discussions during the working sessions of the Conference, I would like to highly appreciate the efforts of the organizers of this event.

ISLAMABAD DECLARATION ON D-8 TOURISM COOPERATION 2023

We, the Ministers of Tourism and Heads of Delegations from the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Arab Republic of Egypt, Republic of Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and Republic of Turkiye, convened on 5 August 2023 for the Third D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism, with the purpose of reaffirming our commitment to promoting tourism cooperation.

Building upon the commitment we made at the Second D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism in November 2019 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, we aim to **Enhance** cooperation in promoting tourism, culture, and socio-economic activities, ultimately leading to economic prosperity and the well-being of our people.

We **Commend** Pakistan for its relentless efforts in revitalizing one of the most important sectors of cooperation among D-8 Member States and its dedication to translating existing cooperation into tangible outcomes.

We **Recognize** the crucial role of governments and the private sector as catalysts and facilitators in promoting tourism cooperation and socio-economic growth. To facilitate such cooperation, we emphasize the importance of enhancing commercial activities, including the development of tourism infrastructure through private sector investment promotion and capacity building tourism human resource among D-8 Member States.

Recognizing the global developments on tourism and their impact on national economies, we **Emphasize** the need for better coordination and closer engagement at the level of public and private sectors of D-8 Member States.

Furthermore, we **Reaffirm** our determination to mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has significantly affected tourism jobs and businesses, as well as combat the impacts of climate change. We are committed to joint efforts aimed at effective adaptation to climate change and reducing vulnerability among the people of Member States, particularly in light of global warming and its repercussions on emerging economies focussing on sustainable development of tourism.

Given the current collaboration among D-8 Member States, we **Emphasize** the importance of further deepening existing relationships and expanding the scope of tourism cooperation into new areas of interest.

We hereby,

1. Affirm to implement the D-8 Comprehensive Strategy on Tourism and Crescent Moon Initiative.
2. Welcome the deliberations and decisions of the Senior Officials Meeting and expressed commitment to implement the decisions taken.
3. Agree to embrace the application of new technologies to further integrate tourism into the digital economy; including linking all Member States national tourism websites to the D-8 portal on tourism with a view to encourage exchange of best practices and knowledge sharing.

4. Welcome the organization of joint cultural events, road shows and producing tourism documentaries as they will be significantly helpful to all D-8 Member States.
5. Appreciate the designation of D-8 Airports by some member states in relation to the Kuala Lumpur Declaration 2019 and encourage other member states to consider designating airports and also mandate the Secretariat to prepare a report on the latest status of the implementation of the idea and provide recommendations on how to implement it effectively.
6. Welcome the enhancement of D-8 Tourism cooperation at international tourism fairs and to organize travel fairs and exhibitions among Member States.
7. Encourage the establishment of an online platform to promote and market handicrafts and local products.
8. Recognize the need to promote the role of SMEs in tourism cooperation, feasibility of establishing tourist accommodations, eco-tourism initiatives and potentials, Muslim Friendly Tourism, health tourism, adventure and city tourism, pilgrimage tourism, etc.
9. Recognize the need for Member States to facilitate tourist visa process in conformity with national regulations, taking into account the D-8 Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen.
10. Direct the D-8 Secretariat to consult with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and other international financial institutions on establishing funding facilities to support the D-8 Project Funding Programme on tourism cooperation.
11. In-line with the strategic direction of the D-8 Comprehensive Strategy on Tourism direct the Secretariat to prepare the draft mechanism for choosing D-8 Tourism City of the year until the next D-8 Senior Officials meeting on Tourism.
12. Direct the Secretariat to organize Forum on Investment promotion in the tourism sector on annual basis.
13. Agree to hold D-8 Tourism Ministerial Meeting every two years and more frequent experts' meetings to follow up on the implementation of the D-8 Comprehensive Strategy and to discuss and adopt relevant decisions on tourism cooperation within member States.

Ministers and Heads of delegation attending the Third D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism expressed heartfelt appreciation for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made by the Government of Pakistan especially His Excellency Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports, Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Joint Media Statement
3rd Ministerial Meeting preceded by 4th Senior Officials Meeting
on Tourism Cooperation, Pakistan, 4-5 August 2023

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan convened the Third D-8 Ministerial and Fourth Senior Officials Meetings on Tourism in Bhurban, Murree, Pakistan, on 4-5 August 2023. The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) was the leading institution in hosting both the meetings in cooperation with the D-8 Secretariat.

Ministers responsible for tourism, D-8 Ambassadors in Islamabad, Senior Officials from D-8 Member States as well as key representatives from private sector of Pakistan participated in the Meetings. They engaged in fruitful discussions on advancing tourism cooperation among D-8 Member States.

H.E. Awn Chaudry, the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports of Pakistan and the Chairman of the PTDC, chaired the Ministerial session.

In his welcome remarks, H.E. Awn Chaudry briefed the meeting on Pakistan's efforts to promote its tourism. He emphasized the crucial role of the tourism sector in the sustainable development and economic growth of the Member States. He also encouraged the Member States to further strengthen their existing cooperation in the tourism sector.

Bangladesh recalled the proposition of devising thematic tourism guidelines such as ecotourism, riverine tourism, wildlife tourism. In particular, Bangladesh is working on devising the thematic guidelines in coordination with different agencies. It also stressed the need of D8 member states to organize collaborative efforts, in this regard.

The Egyptian Minister of Tourism and Antiquities underscored that the Middle East region witnessed strong performance during the past months, and succeeded in restoring pre-pandemic numbers in the first quarter of this year, according to reports issued by the UNWTO. He also highlighted his country's efforts to promote tourism industry which led to a record growth in the Egyptian tourism history with more than 7 million tourists in the first half of 2023, with a prospect of an annual growth between 25-30% in the coming 5 years. He praised the new initiatives proposed by

the Secretariat to enhance cooperation among D8 countries and expressed Egypt's willingness to share its experiences in the field of management and training in the tourism sector.

H.E. Sandiaga Salahudin Uno, Minister for Tourism and Creative Industry of Indonesia, encouraged the D-8 countries to collaborate and promote quality, inclusive, and sustainable tourism that benefits local communities and protect the environment.

H.E Syed Ezzatollah Zarghami, Minister for Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of the Islamic Republic of Iran, stated that the holy Qur'an, in its different verses, advises us to travel to other lands in order to reach a better understanding of the world, observe the way of living in other states and learn lessons from other human beings. In other words, the soul of these verses focuses paying special attention to intangible human heritage. In fact, this dimension of tourism is so valuable that it can foster an effective platform for promoting cultural exchanges, strengthening solidarity and creating peace among all nations. The rise of Islamophobia has subjected Muslims to racial discrimination, negative stereotyping and stigmatization. As a result, Muslims are experiencing insecurity in their daily lives and face denial of their basic human rights. Under such circumstances, tourism is the most effective way to remove these negative stereotypes by showcasing the real face of Islamic countries.

He also stated that the mechanism to annually select and declare a *D-8 Tourism City* can provide a unique opportunity for member states to introduce and brand their tourism destinations through a healthy competition. Therefore, the Honourable Minister suggested D-8 Secretariat to develop and implement this mechanism.

Malaysia stated that it looks forward to advancing regional and international cooperation in tourism by continuing to work closely with organizations such as UNWTO, APEC, IORA and D-8 and strongly recommends continued engagement and sharing of knowledge among members, particularly in the areas of digitalization, technology adoption and sustainable tourism investments, as well as emerging niche areas of growth, such as *Muslim Friendly Tourism*, for the industry to emerge stronger and more resilient to future disruptions.

High Commissioner of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to Pakistan stated that it remains committed to objectives set out by the *Crescent Moon Initiative* and the *Comprehensive Tourism Strategy*, both serving as frameworks for international cooperation in the tourism industry. In line with the initiative of the *D-8 Designated Airports* in member states for the promotion of people-to-people and business to business contacts as well as tourism and travel facilitation, the Nigerian Government has taken the initiative of building an *aerotropolis* in the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja, which will showcase Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and tourism potential while boosting businesses and investment.

His Excellency Mr. Nadir Alparslan, Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism of Türkiye highlighted Türkiye's strategic roadmap in sustainable tourism, as the very first country in the world launching a sustainable tourism program at the national level. Deputy Minister also addressed the need for close cooperation between public and private sectors as a key to success and expressed readiness of his Ministry and affiliated institutions, including TİKA and Yunus Emre Institutes, for joint projects within D-8 framework.

Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 Secretary-General, presented the progress of the D-8's tourism cooperation and recalled the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on various aspects, particularly on tourism cooperation. He also underscored the importance of implementing the *D-8 Comprehensive Strategy on Tourism Cooperation* and the *Crescent Moon Initiative*, which the D-8 ministers responsible for tourism adopted in their Second meeting in Kuala Lumpur in 2019. He emphasized the novelty of those initiatives in converting the challenges posed by the pandemic into opportunities.

Underlining that tourism is one of the D-8's priority areas, the D-8 Secretary-General elaborated further on tourism's significance for D-8 Member States' economic recovery. He provided an overview of the Secretariat's efforts at promoting tourism cooperation, such as establishing collaboration with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and other international and regional organizations.

The D-8 Secretary-General also lauded the idea of D-8 Designated Airports by the D-8 Member States as a means to promote people-to-

people and business-to-business interactions and facilitate tourism and travel among all Member States.

The D-8 Secretary-General requested the Ministers to provide policy guidelines to support the organization's objective in the tourism sector. He suggested tangible programs, such as exchange of information, ideas, and best practices and increasing member-state cross-border investments to develop the tourism sector. The ultimate goal, he added, is to create world-class tourist destinations in all of the D-8 Member States.

Third Ministerial Meeting also deliberated and subsequently adopted the *Islamabad Declaration on Tourism Cooperation 2023*. The Declaration delineates member states' commitments and policy guides to implement the *D-8 Comprehensive Strategy on Tourism* and *Crescent Moon Initiative*. The Declaration also mentions the need for an adequate adaptation to climate change to strengthen the Member States' resilience against global warming and its repercussions.

The Ministers and Heads of Delegation also agreed to convene their 4th Meeting at a time and date to be conveyed through diplomatic channels. The Meeting concluded with the adoption of its Report and the closing remarks of the Chairman of the Meeting and the D-8 Secretary-General.

The Ministers and Heads of Delegation attending the Third D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made by the Government of Pakistan, especially His Excellency Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports, as well as the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan.