

**Report**  
**The Third Meeting of the D-8 Trade Ministers Council (3<sup>rd</sup> D-8 TMC)**  
**Hosted by the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Dhaka, 5 March 2024**

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the D-8 Trade Minister Council (TMC) in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 5 March 2024. Delegates from the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and the Republic of Türkiye attended the meeting. The list of participants is enclosed in **Annex 1**.

**Agenda Item - 1: Opening Remarks by the Chair**

The Chair of the Meeting, H.E. Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, officially opened the Meeting. In his opening remarks, the Chair highlighted the Meeting will serve as a testament to the collective efforts of the D-8 Member States in promoting trade cooperation to achieve sustainable development goals. The statement of the Chair is attached as **Annex-2**.

**Agenda Item - 2: Remarks by the D-8 Secretary General**

In his remarks, H.E. Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam presented a progress report on the D-8 activities on trade cooperation. He also briefed the Meeting on the proceeding and outcome of the Seventh Session of the Supervisory Committee of the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement, which was held in Dhaka the previous day. The D-8 Secretary-General's statement is attached as **Annex-3**.

**Agenda Item - 3: Adoption of the Draft Agenda**

The Meeting considered and adopted the draft Agenda. The agenda is attached as **Annex-4**.

**Agenda Item - 4: Statement by the Heads of Delegations**

The Heads of Delegations of the D-8 Member States delivered their respective country statements. The statements are attached as **Annex-5**.

**Agenda Item - 5: Adoption of the reports of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Supervisory Committee Meeting**

The Council adopted the reports of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Supervisory Committee Meeting that were held in Ankara, Türkiye, 24 October 2018, virtually on 26 January 2021, and virtually on 4 March 2024, respectively. The adopted Reports are attached as follows:

**Annex- 6: 5<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting Report (<http://developing8.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SUPERVISORY-MEETING.rar> )**

**Annex-7: 6<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting Report ( <https://developing8.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Report-of-the-6th-Supervisory-D-8-PTA.rar> )**

**Annex- 8: 7<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting Report**

**Agenda Item - 6: Adoption of the Protocol to the D-8 PTA on Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM)**

The Council adopted the D-8 PTA on Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) which shall be annexed to and form an integral part of the D-8 PTA. The DSM will subsequently be ratified by the Contracting Members. The Adopted DSM protocol is attached as **Annex-9**.

**Agenda Item - 7: Adoption of D-8 Trade Facilitation Strategy (TFS) Paper**

The Council adopted the Paper on D-8 Trade Facilitation Strategy (TFS), a non-legally binding document related to the D-8 PTA which aims to promote intra D-8 trade through facilitating trade and customs procedures of the D-8 Member States. This TFS will be subsequently implemented by the Contracting Members. The adopted TFS paper is attached as **Annex-10**.

**Agenda Item - 8: Adoption of the “Dhaka Trade Declaration” by the D-8 Trade Ministers**

The Council adopted the ‘Dhaka Declaration on Trade Cooperation,’ which is attached as **Annex-11**.

**Agenda Item - 9: Date & venue of the 4<sup>th</sup> D-8 Trade Ministers Council**

Egypt is looking forward to holding the 4<sup>th</sup> TMC under its Presidency in a date and location that would be agreed upon at a later stage.

**Agenda Item - 9: Any Other Business**

The Delegate of Türkiye informed the meeting that his country will host a Trade Negotiation Committee of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Istanbul on 11 June 2024. He then proposed to organize an unofficial gathering of the D-8 Trade/Commerce Ministers on the sideline of the aforesaid event.

**Agenda Item - 10: Adoption of the Meeting Report**

The Meeting considered and adopted the Report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> D-8 TMC.

### **Agenda Item - 11: Closing Session**

The D-8 Secretary-General conveyed profound gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for hosting the meeting and congratulated H.E. Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Commerce, for his effective and able chairing of the 3<sup>rd</sup> D-8 TMC.

In his Closing Remarks, H.E. Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP, Hon'ble State Minister, expressed his profound gratitude and appreciation to all delegates for their fruitful discussions and commended the constructive outcome of the deliberations.

The Delegates conveyed their appreciation to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the excellent arrangements for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the D-8 TMC and thanked the host for the warm welcome and generous hospitality. The Delegates also expressed their sincere appreciation to the D-8 Secretary-General and his team for assisting the preparation of the meeting.

**List of Delegation**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> D-8 Trade Ministers Council**  
**5 March 2024**

Country	Name and Ministry
Bangladesh	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>H.E. Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP (Head of Delegation)</b>  Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Commerce  <a href="mailto:ps2minister@mincom.gov.bd">ps2minister@mincom.gov.bd</a></li> <li>2. <b>Mr. Tapan Kanti Ghosh</b>  Senior Secretary, Ministry of Commerce  <a href="mailto:secy@mincom.gov.bd">secy@mincom.gov.bd</a>; +880 1714051401</li> <li>3. <b>Mr. Noor Md. Mahbubul Haq</b>  Additional Secretary (FTA), Ministry of Commerce  <a href="mailto:noor.mahbub@gmail.com">noor.mahbub@gmail.com</a>; +88 0171 1566961</li> <li>4. <b>Mr. Shish Haider Chowdhury, ndc</b>  Member (Additional Secretary)  Bangladesh Tariff and Trade Commission  <a href="mailto:Shish1965@gmail.com">Shish1965@gmail.com</a>; +8801819225594</li> <li>5. <b>Mr. Md. Abdus Samad Al Azad</b>  Joint Secretary (FTA-1), Ministry of Commerce  <a href="mailto:alazad69@gmail.com">alazad69@gmail.com</a>; +88 01715017316</li> <li>6. <b>Ms. Mahbuba Khatoon Minu</b>  Deputy Secretary (FTA-6), Ministry of Commerce  <a href="mailto:mahbuba.8033@gmail.com">mahbuba.8033@gmail.com</a>; +8801706364964</li> <li>7. <b>Mr. Md. Ziaur Rahman</b>  Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  <a href="mailto:io1@mofa.gov.bd">io1@mofa.gov.bd</a>; +8801719577194</li> </ol>
Egypt	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>H.E. Omar M.E.A. Fahmy</b>  The Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the People's Republic of Bangladesh</li> <li>2. <b>Mr. Mina Makary</b>  Second Secretary  The Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Dhaka  <a href="mailto:minamakary@hotmail.com">minamakary@hotmail.com</a></li> </ol>

Indonesia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>H.E. Heru Hartanto Subolo (Head of Delegation)</b> Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the People's Republic of Bangladesh</li> <li>2. <b>Mr. Gangsar Kurniawan</b> Trade Negotiator, Ministry of Trade</li> <li>3. <b>Mr. Mohamad Iqbal Djamil</b> Trade Negotiator, Ministry of Trade</li> <li>4. <b>Mr. Catur Atmo Siswo N.</b> Trade Negotiator, Ministry of Trade</li> <li>5. <b>Mr. M Robbi Firly Harkha</b> Attache, Economic Affairs, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Dhaka</li> <li>6. <b>Mr. Sapto Rudiyanto</b> Staff, Economic Affairs, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Dhaka</li> </ol>
Iran	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Mr. Seyed Mohammad Sadegh Ghanadzadeh (Head of delegation)</b> Deputy of Trade Promotion Organization Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade</li> <li>2. <b>Mr. Hadi Talebian Moghadam</b> Director General of Indian Subcontinent Office of TPO <a href="mailto:htmoghaddam@yahoo.com">htmoghaddam@yahoo.com</a> Phone: +98 902 158 03 79</li> <li>3. <b>Mr. Mostafa Yektafar</b> Expert of Legal Vice Presidency <a href="mailto:mostafa.yektafar@yahoo.com">mostafa.yektafar@yahoo.com</a> Phone: +98 913 791 22 72</li> <li>4. <b>Mr. Behzad Azarsa</b> Senior Expert Multilateral &amp; International Economic Cooperation Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> <li>5. <b>Mr. Hossein Kabirifard</b> Liaisons &amp; Public Relations of TPO</li> </ol>

Malaysia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Mr. Jaya Singam A Rajoo (Head of Delegation)</b> Senior Director Multilateral Policy and Negotiations Division Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) <a href="mailto:jaya@miti.gov.my">jaya@miti.gov.my</a> / +6012-285 6840</li> <li><b>2. Mr. Wan Ahmad Farhan, Member</b> Assistant Director Bilateral Economic and Trade Relations Division Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) <a href="mailto:wanfarhan@miti.gov.my">wanfarhan@miti.gov.my</a> / +6017-377 2522</li> </ol>
Nigeria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. H.E. Amb. Nura Abba Rimi (Head of Delegation)</b> Permanent Secretary Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment.</li> <li><b>2. Mr. Felix Charles Nwachinemere</b> Assistant Director Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment.</li> <li><b>3. Mr. Mohammed Khalilu</b> Personal Assistant to the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment.</li> </ol>
Pakistan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. H.E. Dr. Diyar Khan (Head of Delegation)</b> Director General, SIFC and ED Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> <li><b>2. Dr. Mohammad Adnan</b> Joint Secretary, Foreign Trade-I Ministry of Commerce</li> <li><b>3. Mr. Abdullah Khan Tareen</b> Section Officer (North East Asia) Ministry of Commerce</li> </ol>
Turkey	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. H.E. Mustafa TUZCU (Head of Delegation)</b> Deputy Minister of Trade Head of Delegation</li> <li><b>2. Ms. Aylin BEBEKOĞLU</b> Deputy Director General Delegate <a href="mailto:bebekoglua@trade.gov.tr">bebekoglua@trade.gov.tr</a>; 00905334661504</li> </ol>

	<p><b>3. Ms. Ayşegül DEMİR</b> Trade Expert Delegate, <a href="mailto:agbala@trade.gov.tr">agbala@trade.gov.tr</a>; 00905333838532</p> <p><b>4. Mr. Nurullah Asım AKBULUT</b> Trade Expert, Delegate <a href="mailto:akbulutn@trade.gov.tr">akbulutn@trade.gov.tr</a>; 00905054406784</p> <p><b>5. Mr. Gökhan KARACA</b> Chief of Staff for Deputy Minister Delegate <a href="mailto:karacago@trade.gov.tr">karacago@trade.gov.tr</a>; 00905076424686</p>
D-8 Secretariat	<p><b>1. Amb. Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam (Head of Delegation)</b> Secretary-General <a href="mailto:Isiaka.imam@developing8.org">Isiaka.imam@developing8.org</a></p> <p><b>2. Mr. Punjul Setya Nugraha</b> Director for Economy, Implementation and External Relations <a href="mailto:Punjul.nugraha@developing8.org">Punjul.nugraha@developing8.org</a></p> <p><b>3. Mr. Md Biplob Tarafder</b> Program Officer <a href="mailto:Biplob.tarafder@developing8.org">Biplob.tarafder@developing8.org</a> +905365044842</p>

**Mr. H.E. Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Commerce, Bangladesh makes his statement for the 3<sup>rd</sup> D-8 TMC]**

**Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem ...**

**Hon'ble Trade Ministers of Member States**

**Hon'ble Secretary General of D-8 H.E. Ambassador Ishaka A. Imam**

**Excellencies and Ambassadors of Member States**

**Distinguished Delegates**

**Colleagues**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**As-salamu alaykum and very good morning**

Let be begin by welcoming you all to this historic city of Dhaka. I believe you are enjoying the spring weather and your stay in Dhaka.

**Excellences,**

I feel honored to preside this prestigious ministerial council under the article 13 of the D-8 Charter and article 28 of the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement. First of all I welcome all of the distinguished delegates attending the 3<sup>rd</sup> Trade Ministers Council. This was a long waited event and I am happy too see it happening with the presence of the Member States. This reflects the commitment of the Member States to carry forward the objectives and aspirations of the D-8.

On this occasion I firmly remember the memory of our Father of Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who envisioned a united Muslim Brotherhood while joining the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 1974 which ushered the platform for today's Developing 8. It is also a pleasure that his able daughter Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh H.E. Sheikh Hasina, MP is the current chair of D-8 forum, under whose charismatic leadership Bangladesh has been able to conclude the internal procedures for adoption of D-8 PTA. .



## **Excellences,**

This auspicious gathering of D-8 Trade Ministers' Council is very significant at this crucial moment when the global economy is facing severe challenges due to Russia-Ukraine conflict, recent unrest in middle-east areas and above all the Gaza crisis. I firmly believe that under the dynamic leadership of the present Chairman, we would be able to overcome the challenges through effective functioning of D-8 platform. Hopefully this Trade Ministers' Council will help us consolidate and strengthen trade and investment relation among the Member States.

## **Hon'ble Ministers/Heads of Delegations**

You must know that Bangladesh completed all necessary internal procedures on 21 July 2022 to implement the D-8 PTA that was the most important agenda of the Developing 8. We congratulate the other notifying countries like Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia and Türkiye. We also felicitate the rest Member States who are on the eve of completing their internal procedure to implement the D-8 PTA. I am definite that the effectuation of D-8 PTA will help harmonizing intra-country trade, liberalize the barriers and stimulate trade and economic cooperation among the Member States. We are fortunate enough that the D-8 PTA became effectuated during the chairmanship of Bangladesh after 27 years of the establishment of Developing -8 in the year 1997.

## **Distinguished Delegates**

Let me have the pleasure to briefly touch upon recent development achievements of Bangladesh that has been growing steadily during the last decade. We are proud and happy that Bangladesh will graduate from the LDC by 2026. During the last fiscal year, we have achieved 6.03% growth in GDP despite of global economic crisis. I firmly believe that this Trade Ministers Council will work at a more assertive level for enhancement of trade, services, investment, small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurship, agriculture, intra-regional tourism etc.

## **Excellences,**

As we gather here today, guided by the overarching theme of "Inclusive Trade for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals," we are reminded of our shared commitment to harnessing trade

as a catalyst for sustainable development. This theme underscores the imperative of creating a more inclusive trading system that empowers underrepresented groups such as small and medium enterprises (SMEs), youth, women entrepreneurs, and small-scale industries. By enhancing their participation in international trade, we can unlock the treasure of greater economic growth, foster entrepreneurship and advance towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Hon'ble Ministers/Heads of Delegations**

Finally I render thanks to the trade negotiators of the Members States including D-8 Secretariat and appreciate the pains they underwent for the D-8 PTA negotiation, finalization of Trade Facilitation Strategy (TFS) Paper and Protocol on Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM). Without their immense support and contribution, it would not possible to bring these agreement, strategy paper and protocol into reality. I am optimistic that new negotiation will start soon to expand the coverage of the trade agreement very soon.

I am looking forward for successful complementation of this 3rd Trade Ministers Council and "Dhaka Declaration on Trade" outcome guiding our future for greater prosperity.

Thank you very much.

Joy Bangla

**Statement by the D-8 Secretary-General, Ambassador  
Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the D-8  
Trade Ministers Council hosted by the People's Republic  
of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 5 March 2024**

***Esteemed Chair, the Honourable State Minister for  
Commerce of Bangladesh,***

***Honourable Ministers/State/Deputy Ministers of the D-8  
Member States,***

***Distinguished Delegates,***

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

I am honoured to be here today, at this Third Session of the D-8 Trade Ministers Council, hosted by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

My gratitude goes to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and particularly to the Ministry of Commerce, for their unwavering commitment to hosting this Meeting.

I congratulate them on the excellent arrangements made for this meeting and for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded me and my delegation.

Allow me also to express my profound appreciation to all esteemed delegations of the D-8 Member States, for attending this crucial meeting.

***Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.***

It has been eight years since the last session of the D-8 Trade Ministers' Council was held in Pakistan in 2016. Therefore, this

Session is a long time coming and its importance for our trade cooperation cannot be overemphasized.

I also welcome the theme of this Session, “**Inclusive Trade for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**,”. It underscores the importance of developing a more inclusive trading system to ensure increased participation from underrepresented sectors, like small and medium enterprises (SMEs), small-scale start-ups, small and medium-scale industries as well as youth and women entrepreneurs, in the international trading system, including the D8.

***Mr. Chair,  
Distinguished Delegates,***

As you are all aware, the primary objective of the D-8 organization for Economic Cooperation is to enhance intra-trade relations among its member countries. At the onset of the organization the

intra-trade figure was only 14 billion US Dollars in 1997. To harness our immense trade potential, the D-8 Members signed the **“Preferential Trade Agreement”** and the **“Multilateral Agreement on Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters”** in 2006. Those two instruments entered into force in 2011.

However, sadly to note, that twelve years after the entry into force of the D-8 PTA and the D-8 Customs Agreement, we are yet to reap their full benefits, as the D-8 intra-trade volume stood at an abysmal level of 170 billion USD in 2022. While it represents a significant increase from the 1997 figure, it does not reflect the true potential of the D-8 intra-trade.

Therefore, it is high time for us to expedite action on the implementation and organization wide-operationalization of the D-8 PTA, to achieve the intra-trade target set by our leaders in the

2030 Decennial Roadmap, which is that D-8 intra-trade should be at least 10% of the total trade volume by 2030 or USD 500 billion.

***Mr. Chair,  
Distinguished Delegates,***

Permit me to inform you, Excellencies, that the Supervisory Committee of the D-8 PTA organized its Seventh Session successfully, yesterday. The meeting deliberated on the operationalization of the D-8 PTA. Highlights of some of the crucial decisions taken by the Supervisory Committee, that would need the kind approval of this Noble Council, are as follows:

- i. **First**, the Supervisory Committee was of the view that the D-8 PTA must be operationalized by as many Contracting Members as possible to make it beneficial.
  
- ii. **Second**, all member states agreed in principle to increase the coverage of the offer lists. However, the member states were also of the view that the agreement must be

implemented first by all member states. Then the modalities of increasing coverage of the offer lists be discussed.

- iii. **Third**, the Supervisory Committee also endorsed the **Dispute Settlement Mechanism** protocol and the **Trade Facilitation Strategy** paper, to be adopted by this noble Council today.

The Dispute Settlement Mechanism protocol and the Trade Facilitation Strategy paper, to be adopted by this noble Council today, are crucial for the smooth functioning of the D-8 PTA. On this note, I would like to congratulate the Member States for concluding the negotiations over these two documents, after a total of 13 rounds of negotiation, spanning more than eleven years. The finalized text of those two documents has been presented before the esteemed delegates.



***Mr. Chair,***

***Distinguished Delegates,***

The Supervisory Committee also did a tremendous job by finalizing the draft text of the '**Dhaka Declaration on Trade Cooperation,**' which will serve as the outcome of this Ministerial Session.

The Declaration, presented before you, outlines the action plans for Member States, for the next phase of our trade cooperation.

Most notably, it underlines the following needs: -

- i. For a study to be commissioned by the Secretariat to explore the ways and means for the expansion of the PTA and submit its findings to the next Supervisory Committee Meeting.
- ii. The need to review the existing offer list and expand them to an assertive level to make the D-8 PTA to be more

incentivizes for trade by the business communities in our Member States.

- iii. To establish a D-8 database of non-tariff barriers and a work program for the removal of the para-tariffs and non-tariff barriers in conformity with the national commitment in other relevant international and regional institutions.
- iv. A study for exploring the potential sectors for trade in services in the next phase of cooperation.
- v. Needs assessment, including financing and technical assistance, for capacity-building programs.

To conclude, **Mr. Chair and Distinguished Delegates**, I wish to proffer few recommendations to the Council to assist us in operationalizing the D-8 PTA successfully, in order to grow our trade cooperation agenda:

- i. **Training and Capacity Building:** To implement the D-8 PTA successfully, we must enhance the capacity of the relevant officials of the Member States. Therefore, we need the support of our Member States for capacity-building programs to facilitate sharing of experiences and the best practices. The D-8 Secretariat is already in discussion with some international organizations and other Partners such as UNCTAD, WIPO and ICDT to capitalize on their resources and technical assistance for the benefit of the Member States.
  
- ii. **Sensitization Program on the D8 PTA:** To implement the D-8 PTA successfully, we need to publicize the D8 PTA in our respective countries. Not many business entities in our Member States, who are the main stakeholders of this agreement, know the D-8 PTA exists. Therefore, we must introduce PTA and its benefits to a broader audience through sensitization programs. Through this Council, I wish to call upon the Member States to organize sensitization programs, in their countries, to sensitize the private sectors and business people about the D-8 PTA and its products list.

Finally, I believe that this August gathering will set a new milestone for the next phase of our trade cooperation. On this note, **Mr. Chair, Distinguished Participants**, I wish us a successful deliberation, for today's Session.

I thank you for your kind attention.

**The Third Meeting of the D-8 Trade Ministers Council  
(3<sup>rd</sup> D-8 TMC)  
Hosted by the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Dhaka, 5 March 2024**

**Agenda**

- Agenda Item - 1: Opening Remarks by the Chair**
- Agenda Item - 2: Remarks by the D-8 Secretary General**
- Agenda Item - 3: Adoption of the Draft Agenda**
- Agenda Item - 4: Statement by the Heads of Delegations**
- Agenda Item - 5: Adoption of the reports of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Supervisory Committee Meeting**
- Agenda Item - 6: Adoption of the Protocol to the D-8 PTA on Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM)**
- Agenda Item - 7: Adoption of D-8 Trade Facilitation Strategy (TFS) Paper**
- Agenda Item - 8: Adoption of the “Dhaka Declaration on D-8 Trade Cooperation” by the D-8 Trade Ministers**
- Agenda Item - 9: Date & venue of the 4<sup>th</sup> D-8 Trade Ministers Council**
- Agenda Item - 10: Any Other Business**
- Agenda Item - 11: Adoption of the Meeting Report**
- Agenda Item - 12: Closing Session**

**Statement by the HoD of the member States**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Trade Minister Council**

**5.(A). Statement by the HoD of Indonesia**

**Statement by the H.E. Heru Hartanto Subolo**  
**Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Bangladesh**  
**(Head of Delegation) of Indonesia**

*Assalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh, may peace be upon us;*

*H.E. Mr. Ahasanul Islam Titu, Honorable State Minister, Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of Bangladesh;*

*H.E. Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, Secretary General of the D-8;*

*Distinguished Honorable Ministers and Representative delegates of the D-8 Member States;*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

**Good morning,**

*I would like to express at the outset, our heartfelt gratitude to the Government and the people of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for their warm hospitality in hosting this auspicious 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of D-8 Trade Ministers' Council (TMC). It is with great pleasure and gratitude that we finally gather here today, overcoming the delays that have hindered our progress. This meeting is a testament to our collective commitment to strengthening economic cooperation within the D-8 community. I also would like to express our appreciations to the D-8 Secretariat team for their efforts to efficiently organize this meeting.*

*First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the positive outcomes of the Seventh Session of the Supervisory Committee on the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) held just one day before this gathering. The Supervisory Committee's dedication and hard work have paved the way for the successful implementation of the D-8 PTA. We commend the collaborative spirit displayed during the discussions and the consensus reached on crucial matters.*

*Secondly, let me also take this opportunity to convey the words of regret from Minister Zulkifli Hasan, who is unable to join us at this meeting due to unforeseen situation on the domestic trade agenda.*

***Distinguished delegates,***

***Ladies and gentlemen,***

*Trade plays a crucial role in facilitating economic growth and development while also fostering relationships between nations. The interconnected nature of the underscores the importance of maintaining open, fair, and transparent trade practices.*

*PTA plays a significant role in promoting trade relations between specific countries. By providing preferential treatments, eliminating trade barriers and promoting economic integration, PTA contributes to economic stability, growth, and increased opportunities for businesses and consumers alike.*

*As we navigate the complexities of today's world, it is essential to recognize the importance of PTA, as powerful tools in driving progress and creating a more interconnected and prosperous global community.*

*On that note, as part of Global South we must ensure that that right to development and industrialization remain resonates deeply in today's world. It is essential to recognize and support the aspirations of countries in the Global South to achieve sustainable development through industrialization.*

*Let us embrace the importance of the Global South's right to development and industrialization as a fundamental principle of global solidarity and progress.*

***Distinguished delegates,***

***Ladies and gentlemen,***

*I would like to reiterate Indonesia's unwavering support and emphasis on the D-8 PTA. We have attached significant importance to this agreement, and I am pleased to announce that Indonesia has completed all necessary internal procedures for the ratification of the PTA. As a testament to our commitment, Indonesia submitted its official notification to the D-8 Secretariat at the end of last year, along with all the requisite supporting documents.*

*I am pleased to note that we will adopt two documents that will facilitate the smooth implementation of the D-8 PTA. Firstly, adoption of the Trade Facilitation Strategy (TFS) paper, which will provide a roadmap for enhancing trade procedures, reducing barriers, and streamlining customs processes within the D-8 region. Secondly, adoption of the Protocol on Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM), which will serve as a framework for resolving trade-related disputes that may arise among member states. These documents are essential tools for ensuring the success and sustainability of our trade endeavors.*



*Furthermore, I believe ensuring transparency and easy accessibility to the product lists covered under the PTA is paramount in facilitating seamless trade activities among businesspersons. In this regard, we advise that D-8 to explore the establishment of an online platform that would provide convenient access to information and resources, including the scope of products under PTA, for the business communities.*

***Distinguished delegates,***

***Ladies and gentlemen,***

*I call upon the member states to capitalize the full potential of the D-8 PTA and reaping the benefits it offers. Let us seize this moment to reaffirm our commitment to the D-8 PTA and work together to create a more vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous D-8 community.*

*Thank you.*

## 5. (B) Statement by the HoD of Malaysia

### COUNTRY STATEMENT BY MALAYSIA

#### THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MEETING OF THE TRADE MINISTERS COUNCIL OF THE D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

*“Theme: Inclusive Trade for Achieving the Sustainable Development  
Goals”*

**5 MARCH 2024**

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His Excellency Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP

Hon. State Minister for Commerce

People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Chair of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the D-8 Trade Ministers Council (TMC)

Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the D-8 Member States

His Excellency Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam

Secretary General, Developing Eight Organization for Economic  
Cooperation (D-8)

Distinguished Delegates,

A very good morning to all.

Malaysia would like to express at the outset, our sincere appreciation to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for hosting this 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of D-8 Trade Ministers Council (TMC) and the warm hospitality extended to our delegation. I would also like to thank the D-8 Secretariat for their efforts in organising this meeting and bringing us together at this lovely venue in the capital city of Dhaka.

I wish to convey the warm greetings from Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry of Malaysia, The Honourable Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz. He is unable to join us here today due to prior committed engagements.

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

Twenty-seven years ago, a shared vision of developing closer economic alliance had motivated the leaders of our countries to gather in Istanbul, Türkiye, to lay the foundation of the Developing-Eight, and join forces to foster economic, trade and technological cooperation among the Member States. Developing such cooperation among countries of similar background, economies and size, was an endeavour in step with the spirit of our times.

Since its inception in 1997, D-8 has fostered economic prosperity among its Member States, establishing itself as a valuable platform for dialogue and collaboration on issues of mutual interest in the six priority areas of cooperation, namely, trade, tourism, agriculture and food security, industrial cooperation, and energy and minerals. Through a number of successful

collaborative projects and initiatives, the D-8 has delivered tangible benefits for our people, businesses, and private sectors. Malaysia is proud to be a part of this collective journey.

As one of the founding Member States of the D-8, we have always placed a high importance to the organisation since its very inception and actively participate in all of its activities firmly believing in its potential. It is our conviction that enhanced and meaningful cooperation among D-8 Member States will be immensely beneficial to the socio-economic development of all Member States.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Economic integration among D-8 Member States will spur development through trade and investment, potentially alleviating poverty and lifting millions of people into a brighter and more prosperous future. D-8 boasts enormous potential for development fuelled by its diverse strengths: the vast natural resources of its Member States, varied human capital with a population of over 1 billion, and a thriving economy spanning three continents amounting to USD5.5 trillion. With a total trade volume of USD2.45 trillion in 2022, the D-8 currently account for 7 per cent of global trade. The fact that it includes the leading economies in every corner of the Islamic geography adds a special importance to the D-8. This unique landscape positions D-8 for an unparalleled economic cooperation.

The D-8 Member States are also among OIC's leading countries in terms of technological and economic development levels, commercial potential and

population. Therefore, our profound historical, cultural, and religious links can be a powerful foundation for building a brighter economic future together.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Malaysia recognises trade as a veritable instrument for global and regional cooperation. It is also a powerful engine for sustainable economic growth and inclusive development, both individually and collectively which the D-8 must not fail to take advantage of. Unlike many trading blocs, D-8 Member States often produce non-competing commodities, allowing us to establish a complementary economy where Member States can exchange diverse goods and services, fostering mutual benefit and reducing reliance on external markets.

It is in this spirit that the target of enhancing the intra-trade between our Member States to the level of USD500 billion by 2030 was set. Although intra-D-8 trade has been fluctuating in recent years, yet to achieve the target and to rapidly realize the true potential our block possesses, we have made significant strides in this endeavour.

The implementation of the D-8 PTA is of paramount importance in bringing demonstrable benefits to D-8 Member States, owing to its critical role in intensifying intra-D-8 trade through the exchange of trade preferences among the D-8 PTA Contracting Members. Malaysia commends the significant progress made in the 7<sup>th</sup> Supervisory Committee Meeting held yesterday as highlighted by H.E. Ambassador Isiaka in his remarks earlier. This would undoubtedly aid us in meeting our goal of increasing the intra-D-

8 trade which currently stands at 7 per cent, to the 10 per cent goal by 2030, as envisaged in the D-8 Decennial Roadmap 2020-2030.

In the context of the shifting global trade dynamics and current global economic uncertainties, the D-8 PTA will also serve as a solid foundation for strengthening trade relations and cooperation among D-8 Member States, resulting in major economic benefits. Lower tariff concessions, elimination of non-tariff barriers and para-tariffs, as well as harmonisation of goods regulations will enable us to reap the benefits of greater market access for goods and services, creating a more predictable and secure environment for sustainable trade growth among the D-8 PTA Contracting Members.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to share that under the leadership of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, The Rt. Hon. Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, in 2023, Malaysia managed to increase its total trade with D-8 Member States to USD35.19 billion (RM160.49 billion) from USD34.37 billion (RM142.56 billion) recorded in 2021. This represents 6.09 per cent of Malaysia's trade in goods with the world.

The D-8 PTA will allow Malaysian exporters to benefit from preferential tariff treatment in D-8 markets and vice-versa. It is hoped that other D-8 Member States will follow suit and expedite full implementation of the D-8 PTA in order to enjoy the preferential treatment the Agreement has to offer, as well as to open up new markets for mutual benefit, and also strengthen the

camaraderie among D-8 Member States, ushering in a new era in our economic relations and expanding our current cooperation.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

After over 25 years of existence, D-8 still lives up to its name and remains the fastest developing group of countries. Yet there are untapped potentials, a significant portion of which will be realised only by the full implementation of the D-8 PTA. PricewaterhouseCoopers has projected that by 2050, D-8 Member States will rank among the top 24 economies of the world and, with a combined GDP of USD38 trillion, the D-8 could become the world's third largest economy.

Malaysia would once again like to thank the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the D-8 Secretariat for hosting today's meeting. And our gratitude to the D-8 Secretary General for his leadership.

Thank you.

**Report**  
**The 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the Supervisory Committee on the D-8 PTA (7<sup>th</sup> SC)**  
**Hosted by the People’s Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Dhaka, 4 March 2024**

The Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh hosted the Seventh Session of the Supervisory Committee of the Preferential Trade Agreement among D-8 Member States (SC PTA) in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 4 March 2024. Delegates from the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and the Republic of Türkiye attended the meeting. The list of participants is enclosed in **Annex 1**.

**Agenda Item – 1: Opening by the Chair**

The Chair of the 7<sup>th</sup> Supervisory Committee Meeting, Mr. Noor Md. Mahbubul Haq, Additional Secretary (FTA), Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, officially opened the meeting. The Chair’s opening remarks are enclosed as **Annex 2**.

**Agenda Item - 2: Remarks by the D-8 Secretary General**

Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 Secretary General, briefed the Meeting on the progress made since the Sixth Session of the SC PTA, particularly on the status of implementation of the Preferential Trade Agreement Among D-8 Member States (D-8 PTA). The D-8 Secretary-General’s statement is enclosed as **Annex 3**.

**Agenda Item - 3: Adoption of the Agenda**

Under this agenda item, the Chair proposed to add one additional agenda item under item- 13 (Election of the Chair of the Supervisory Committee). The Meeting agreed to add the proposed item and adopted the Agenda. The adopted Agenda is attached as **Annex 4**.

**Agenda Item - 4: Statements by the Heads of Delegation**

The Heads of Delegations of Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Türkiye delivered their respective remarks. The statements appear in **Annex 5**.



**Agenda Item - 5: Discussion on the issues related to the status of the implementation of the D-8 PTA**

The Meeting noted with appreciation the shared views from the member states on the need to expedite the operationalization of the D-8 PTA. It also congratulated the contracting members who have completed all their internal procedures concerning the implementation of the PTA, namely Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, and Türkiye.

The Meeting then discussed the existing status of the implementation of the D-8 PTA as reflected in the implementation checklist. The D-8 Member States updated the Meeting on their respective status of implementation as follows:

Egypt is working on the procedures related to finalizing the ratification of the D-8 PTA.

Malaysia will submit the specimen of CoO in green guilloche paper by the end of March 2024.

Nigeria is in the final stage of completing its internal procedures including issuing gazette notification. It is expected to be completed by the end of June 2024. Further, it will update the specimen signs and customs stamps by the end of April 2024 and designate the focal point soon after the meeting.

Pakistan discussed the existing offer lists of the member states with its business community. The business community of Pakistan is of the view that the existing concession lists are not motivating enough for them as they have better concessions available under other trade agreements with many member states of the D-8. Therefore, Pakistan will complete the necessary procedures for the operationalization of its part of the PTA as a ‘Single Undertaking’ after finalizing its offer lists in consultation with its business community.

The latest status of implementation along with the commitment made by the member states during the meeting is attached as **Annex 6**.

**Agenda Item - 6: Discussion on setting up a cut-off date for the operationalization of the D-8 PTA**

The Meeting had an extensive discussion on the proposed cut-off date for the operationalization of the PTA. The comments from the member states are reflected as follows:

Bangladesh urged to set an indicative date so that the Member States with pending status may feel obligated to complete their pending procedures by that stipulated date.

Egypt believes that this decision comes at an early stage regarding Egypt’s status concerning the ratification of the D-8 PTA.

Indonesia urged the member states to maintain the cut-off date set by the member states in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Customs Official Meeting which is 31 October 2022, as setting a new cut-off date requires them to revise their gazette notification.

Iran has no objection to any specific cut-off date.

Malaysia concurs with the view of the Secretary-General and highlighted that there is no provision in the D-8 PTA with regard to setting a specific cut-off date for the implementation of the PTA. The implementing Member states may start operationalization of this agreement as soon as they are ready, others may come on board as soon as their internal procedures are completed.

Nigeria has no objection to setting a cut-off date. However, the date should be practical for them to complete their necessary internal procedures.

Pakistan concurs with the view of Malaysia and was of the view that there is no need to set the cut-off date, the implementing member states may start operationalization of the agreement among themselves, and the others may join as soon as their internal procedures are completed.

Türkiye highlighted that maintaining the first cut-off date set by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Trade Ministers Council, they are implementing the PTA from 01 July 2016. The delegate of Türkiye further opined that the Contracting Members may start implementation of the PTA immediately after their gazette notifications.

Given the above discussion, the Meeting opined that the five Contracting Members i.e., Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, and Türkiye may start implementation and operationalization with immediate effect if not already done so.

Egypt, Nigeria, and Pakistan would complete their necessary internal procedures and start implementation of the PTA when they are ready.

#### **Agenda Item - 7: Discussion on the Offer Lists for the D-8 PTA**

##### **(i) Broadening the coverage of Offer Lists:**

The D-8 Secretary-General highlighted that existing offer lists from the Member States under the D-8 PTA comprised least or non-traded items that bear little significance for their national economies. This makes it harder for the existing PTA to reach an assertive level.

In order to boost intra D-8 trade, all member states agreed in principle to increase the coverage of the offer lists. However, the member states were also of the view that the agreement must be implemented first by all member states. Then the modalities of increasing coverage of the offer lists be discussed.

**(ii) Transposition of Offer Lists:**

The delegates from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, and Türkiye updated the meeting that they have already transposed the offer lists into the HS 2022 and deposited the transposed offer lists to the Secretariat.

Nigeria and Pakistan informed the meeting that their customs tariff is already in HS 2022, and they will submit the offer list in HS 2022 when the time comes.

The Meeting tasked the Secretariat to follow up the submission of the offer list.

**Agenda Item - 8: Discussion on Capacity Building for implementation of D-8 PTA**

There was a consensus in the Meeting regarding the need for capacity building of the relevant officials of the Member States. The Meeting tasked the Secretariat to conduct a country-specific need assessment including the possible sources of financing and technical assistance.

**Agenda Item - 9: Adoption of the reports of the Customs Officials and Technical Meetings**

The Meeting adopted the reports of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Customs Official Meetings held virtually on 23 March 2021 and 24 May 2022, respectively, and the report of the Technical Meeting held virtually on 05 December 2022. The adopted Reports are attached as **Annex 7**, **Annex 8**, and **Annex 9**, respectively.

**Agenda Item - 10: Discussion and adoption of the Protocol on Dispute Settlement Mechanism of the D-8 PTA**

The Meeting appreciated the experts from the Member States for their efforts in finalizing the Protocol on Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) of the D-8 PTA.

The Meeting recommended the Protocol on Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) of the D-8 PTA to be adopted by the D-8 Trade Ministers Council in its 3<sup>rd</sup> session to be held in Dhaka on 5 March 2024. The final text of the DSM Protocol is attached as **Annex 10**.

**Agenda Item - 11: Adoption of the Trade Facilitation Strategy of the D-8 PTA**

The Meeting appreciated the experts from the Member States for their contribution in finalizing the Paper on the D-8 Trade Facilitation Strategy (TFS).

The Meeting recommended the Paper on TFS to be adopted by the Trade Ministers Council in its 3<sup>rd</sup> session to be held in Dhaka on 5 March 2024. The final text of the Paper is attached as **Annex 11**.

**Agenda Item - 12: Adoption of the “Dhaka Trade Declaration” to be issued by the D-8 Trade Ministers**

The Meeting reviewed the draft text of the ‘Dhaka Declaration on D-8 Trade Cooperation’ and finalized it for adoption by the Trade Ministers Council in its 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting to be held in Dhaka on 5 March 2024. The final text of the draft appears as **Annex 12**.

**Agenda Item - 13: Election of the Chair of the Supervisory Committee**

Nigeria offered its willingness to be the next Chair of the Supervisory Committee for the next two years. The Supervisory Committee unanimously elected Nigeria as its Chair for the next two years starting in 1 May 2024.

**Agenda Item - 14: Date & Venue of the 8th Supervisory Committee meeting**

Nigeria, as the elected chair of the SC PTA, proposed to host the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the SC PTA in Abuja in September 2024. The Nigerian proposal was welcomed by the Member States.

**Agenda Item - 15: Any Other Business**

No item was raised by the Member States under this agenda item.

**Agenda Item - 16: Adoption of the Meeting Report**

The Supervisory Committee considered and adopted the report of its 7<sup>th</sup> session.

**Agenda Item - 17: Closing Session**

The D-8 Secretary-General conveyed profound gratitude to the Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh for hosting the meeting and warmly thanked Mr. Noor Md. Mahbul Haq for his competent chairing.

In his Closing Remarks, the Chair expressed his profound gratitude and appreciation to all delegates for their fruitful discussions and commended the constructive outcome of the deliberations.

The Meeting also appreciated the Secretariat for its valuable work.

**PROTOCOL TO THE D-8 PTA  
ON DISPUTE SETTLEMENT MECHANISM**

**PREAMBLE**

The Governments of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and the Republic of Turkey (hereinafter referred to as the "Contracting Members"),

**RECALLING** Article 26 Para 4 of the Preferential Trade Agreement among D-8 Member States done at Bali, Indonesia on 13 May 2006 (hereinafter referred to as "the Agreement") on determining the procedures for the Establishment of Arbitration Panel which shall be annexed to and form an integral part of the Agreement;

**RECOGNIZING** the need to establish a mechanism which could be supplementary to the procedures defined in Article 26 of the Agreement, to solve the dispute arising in the implementation of the Agreement.

**HAVE AGREED** as follows:

**Article 1  
Definitions**

For purposes of this Protocol:

- "The Complaining Party" means a contracting member that requests consultation under the agreement;
- "Party Complained Against" means any contracting member to which the request for consultation is made under the agreement;
- "Dispute": means a disagreement between Contracting Members regarding the interpretation and/or application of the Agreement in relation to their rights and obligations
- "Days" shall mean calendar days;
- "Panel" means a Dispute Settlement Arbitration Panel established under Article 8 of this Protocol;
- "Party to the dispute" means the Complaining Party or the Party Complained Against.
- "Consensus" means if no Contracting Member present at the meeting of the Supervisory committee when a decision is taken, formally objects to the decision;
- "Appendix" means an instrument attached to this protocol, which forms an integral part of this protocol. Appendices will be approved by the Supervisory Committee.

## **Article 2 Objective**

The objective of this Protocol is to provide an effective and efficient process for consultations and settlement of disputes arising under the Agreement and to arrive at, where possible, a mutually agreed solution.

## **Article 3 Scope**

Unless otherwise provided in the Agreement, this Protocol shall apply to the settlement of disputes between the Contracting Members regarding the interpretation of, application of, or non-compliance with the provisions of the Agreement.

## **Article 4 Choice of Forum**

1. Where a dispute regarding any matter arises under the Agreement and another international agreement to which the Parties to the dispute are party, the Complaining Party may select the forum in which to settle the dispute.
2. Once the Complaining Party has requested the establishment of a panel under an agreement referred to in paragraph 1, the forum selected shall be used to the exclusion of the other fora in respect of the dispute.

## **Article 4bis General Provisions**

Unless otherwise specified, any time periods provided for in this Protocol may be modified by the mutual consent of the Parties to the dispute.

## **Article 5 Consultations**

1. Any Contracting Member may request consultations with any other Contracting Member with respect to any matter relating to the interpretation, application of, or non-compliance with the provisions of the Agreement pursuant to Article 3. Contracting Members shall proceed with the consultations in good faith with the aim of reaching a prompt, equitable and mutually agreed solution.

2. The Complaining Party shall submit a written request to the Party Complained Against, stating the reasons for the request, including the identification of the measure at issue and an indication of legal basis for the complaint and provide sufficient information to enable an examination of the matter. A copy of the request for consultations shall be submitted to the Supervisory Committee.

3. The Party Complained Against shall reply within 10 days of its receipt.

4. These consultations shall take place within 30 days after the date of receipt of the request for consultations, and shall be concluded 60 days after the date of receipt of the request, unless Parties to the dispute agree to continue with the consultations.

4bis. Consultations shall take place, unless the Parties to the dispute agree otherwise, in the territory of the Party Complained Against.

5. In case of urgency, the Party Complained Against shall reply within 5 days after the date of receipt of the request. Consultations on matters of urgency, regarding those including perishable goods, shall be held within 15 days after the date of receipt of the request referred to in paragraph 1, and shall be concluded 30 days after the date of receipt of the request, unless the Parties to the dispute agree otherwise.

5bis. In cases of urgency, including those which concern perishable goods, the parties to the dispute, the Supervisory Committee and arbitration panels shall make every effort to accelerate the proceeding to the greatest extent possible.

6. The Parties to the dispute shall make every attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of the matter through consultations under this Article.

6a. Upon initiation of consultations, the Parties to the dispute shall provide information to enable the examination of how the measure at issue might affect the interpretation, and application of, and/or non-compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, and give confidential treatment to the information exchanged during consultations.

6b. Consultations under this Article shall be confidential and without prejudice to the rights of the Parties to the dispute in any further proceedings.

7. In consultations under this Article, a Party to the dispute may request the other Party to the dispute to make available personnel of its government agencies or other regulatory bodies who have expertise in the matter at issue.

8. Without prejudice to any other cases covered under Article 7.1, cases where the Party Complained Against does not respond to the request for consultations or does not enter into consultations in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5 of this Article, or if the Parties to the dispute are unable to reach a mutually agreed solution through consultations, shall be considered as cases where the Parties to a dispute have failed to resolve the dispute by recourse to the consultations, in terms of the said Article.

## **Article 6**

### **Good Offices, Conciliation and Mediation**

1. The Parties to the dispute may at any time agree to voluntarily undertake an alternative method of dispute resolution, such as good offices, conciliation or mediation. Such alternative method of resolution may begin at any time and be terminated at any time.

2. If the Parties to the dispute agree, good offices, conciliation or mediation may continue while the dispute proceeds for resolution before an Arbitration Panel under Article 8.

3. Proceedings involving good offices, mediation and conciliation and positions taken by the Parties to the dispute during these proceedings, shall be confidential and without prejudice to the rights of either Parties to the dispute in any other proceedings.

**Article 7**  
**Supervisory Committee Intervention**

1. Where the Parties to a dispute have failed to resolve the dispute by recourse to the consultations as provided for in Article 5 the Complaining Party may request in writing the Supervisory Committee to settle the dispute within thirty (30) days on an ad-referendum basis or through extraordinary meeting, and a copy of the request shall be sent to the D8 Secretariat and the Contracting members. Such meetings shall be held at the D-8 Secretariat.
2. The request referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall indicate whether consultations were held, and shall include sufficient information to enable an examination of the measure at issue, and the legal basis in relation with the dispute.
3. The Supervisory Committee shall receive the submissions of each party no later than 10 days from the receipt of the request referred to in paragraph 1.
4. In the event that the Supervisory Committee produces a mutually agreed solution to the dispute, the Parties to the dispute may request the Supervisory Committee to make recommendations regarding the implementing measures to be taken by the Party Complained Against, and the timeframe for doing so. Such recommendations shall be expressed in writing which shall be distributed promptly to the Parties to the dispute.
5. In case the dispute is not settled, the Complaining Party may request in writing from the Supervisory Committee the establishment of the Arbitration Panel.

**Article 8**  
**Establishment of Arbitration Panel**

1. The request for the establishment of the Arbitration Panel shall be made in writing to the Party Complained Against and the Supervisory Committee. The Complaining Party shall identify in the request for the establishment of the Arbitration Panel, the specific measure at issue, the legal basis of the complaint including any provision of the Agreement alleged to have been breached and any other relevant provisions and the factual basis for the complaint and shall indicate whether a consultation under Article 5 or whether a Supervisory Committee meeting under Article 26 of the PTA Agreement was held.
2. The Arbitration Panel shall be composed of three arbitrators. Each Party to the dispute shall appoint one arbitrator, who may be its national, within 30 days of the date of the receipt of the request for the establishment of the Panel. The Parties to the dispute shall agree on and appoint the third arbitrator, who shall be the chairperson of the Arbitration Panel, within 45 days of the date of the request for the establishment of the Arbitration Panel. If the chairperson of the Arbitration Panel has not been designated by the Parties to the dispute within 15 days of the appointment of the second arbitrator, either Party to the dispute may request the Supervisory Committee to appoint the third arbitrator to chair the Arbitration Panel from the list of arbitrators, established in accordance with paragraph 3.
3. The D-8 Secretariat shall establish and maintain a list of arbitrators no later than 6 months



after the entry into force of this Protocol. The Secretariat shall consult with the Contracting parties while establishing this list. The Contracting Members may propose individuals to serve as arbitrators to be added to this list.

4. The chairperson of the Arbitration Panel shall not be a national of any Party to the dispute nor a resident nor an employee of any Party to the dispute and must not have dealt with the matter before in any capacity, whatsoever.
5. The appointments provided for in this Article shall be notified to the Parties to the dispute and to the Secretariat.
6. All arbitrators shall have specialized knowledge or experience in law and international trade or other matters relating to the Agreement or in the resolution of disputes arising under international trade agreements. They shall be independent, serve in their individual capacities and not take instructions from any organization or government, or be affiliated with the government of any of the Parties to the dispute.
7. After accepting their appointment and before beginning their work, the arbitrators shall sign the Statement of Agreement contained in Appendix 1 (Code of Conduct for Arbitrators of the Arbitration Panel). The Contracting Parties shall prepare Code of Conduct for Arbitrators of the Arbitration Panel (Appendix 1) within one year after the entry into force of this Protocol. The Code of Conduct for Arbitrators of the Arbitration Panel shall be modified or amended subject to the agreement of the Member States thereto.
8. The date of establishment of the Arbitration Panel shall be the date as of when the Statements of Agreement have been signed by the three arbitrators.
9. If an arbitrator appointed under this Article becomes unable to participate in the proceeding or resigns, a successor shall be selected within 10 days in accordance with the selection procedure followed to select that arbitrator.
10. If a disputing party believes that a panellist is in violation of the code of conduct, then the disputing parties shall consult the Supervisory Committee, and if Supervisory Committee agrees, the panellist shall be removed and a new panellist shall be appointed in his/her place within 10 days of such removal.

## **Article 9**

### **Procedures for Multiple Complainants**

1. Where more than one Contracting Member requests the establishment of a panel related to the same matter, a single panel may be established to examine these complaints taking into account the rights of all Contracting Members concerned. A single panel should be established to examine such complaints whenever feasible.
2. Any action taken under paragraph 1 shall be without prejudice to the Contracting Members' rights and obligations stipulated under the provisions of the Agreement.

**Article 10**  
**Functions and Proceedings of the Arbitration Panel**

1. The function of an Arbitration Panel is to make an objective assessment of the matter before it, including an examination of the facts of the case and the applicability of and conformity with the Agreement, and make such other findings and rulings necessary for the resolution of the dispute referred to it.
2. Arbitration Panels shall interpret the Agreement in accordance with customary rules of interpretation of public international law.
3. Arbitration Panel meetings shall be closed to the public, unless the Parties to the dispute decide otherwise.
4. Each Party to the dispute shall be given the opportunity to provide at least one written submission and to attend any of the presentations, statements or rebuttals in the proceedings. All information or written submissions submitted by a Party to the dispute to the Arbitration Panel, including any comments on the interim report and responses to questions put by the Arbitration Panel, shall be made available to the other Party to the dispute.
5. A Party to the dispute asserting that a measure of the other Party to the dispute is inconsistent with the Agreement shall have the burden of establishing such inconsistency. A Party to the dispute asserting that a measure is subject to an exception under the Agreement shall have the burden of establishing that the exception applies.
6. The Arbitration Panel should consult with the Parties to the dispute as appropriate and provide adequate opportunities for the development of a mutually satisfactory resolution.
7. The Arbitration Panel shall make every effort to take any decision by consensus. Where, nevertheless, a decision cannot be arrived at by consensus, the matter at issue shall be decided by majority vote. The vote of the Arbitration Panel shall be confidential and no dissenting opinion shall be expressed.
8. On request of a Party to the dispute or on its own initiative and subject to such terms and conditions as the Parties to the dispute may agree within 10 days of the date of establishment of the Arbitration Panel, the Arbitration Panel may seek information from any relevant source and may consult experts to obtain their opinion or advice on certain aspects of the matter. The Arbitration Panel shall provide the Parties to the dispute with a copy of any advice or opinion obtained and an opportunity to provide comments. Where the Arbitration Panel takes the information or technical advice into account in the preparation of its report, it shall also address any comments by the Parties to the dispute on the information or technical advice.
9. The Arbitration Panel may, after consulting the Parties to the dispute, adopt additional rules of procedure not inconsistent with the rules adopted by the Supervisory Committee.
10. The Arbitration Panel shall apply the Rules of Procedure, which include the rights to hearings and the exchange of written submissions as well as deadlines and timetables for ensuring expediency, as set out in Appendix 2. The Rules of Procedure shall be modified or amended subject to the agreement of the Member States thereto. The Contracting Parties shall prepare Rules of Procedure of the Arbitration Panel (Appendix 2) within one year after the entry into force of this Protocol.

## **Article 11**

### **Interim Report Stage**

The Arbitration Panel shall issue an interim report to the Parties to the dispute setting out the findings of the fact, applicability of relevant provisions and the basic rationale behind any findings and recommendations that it makes, as a general rule, not later than [120] days from the date of establishment of the Arbitration Panel. Any Party to the dispute may submit a written request for the Arbitration Panel to review precise aspects of the interim report within 15 days of its notification. The findings of the final Arbitration Panel ruling shall include a discussion of the arguments made at the interim review stage.

## **Article 12**

### **Suspension and Termination of Proceedings**

1. The Parties to the dispute may agree that the Arbitration Panel suspends its work at any time for a period not exceeding 12 months from the date of such agreement. Within this period, the suspended arbitral proceeding shall be resumed upon the request of any Party to the dispute. If the work of the Arbitration Panel has been continuously suspended for more than 12 months, the authority for establishment of the Arbitration Panel shall lapse unless the Parties to the dispute agree otherwise.
2. The Parties to the dispute may agree to terminate the proceedings of an Arbitration Panel in the event that a mutually satisfactory solution to the dispute has been found.
3. Before the Arbitration Panel presents its final report, it may at any stage of the proceedings propose to the Parties to the dispute that the dispute be settled amicably.
4. The Parties to the dispute shall notify the other Contracting Members that the Arbitration Panel has been suspended, terminated or its authority has lapsed pursuant to paragraph 1.

## **Article 13**

### **Arbitration Panel Report**

1. The Arbitration Panel shall issue its report containing its findings and conclusions to the Parties to the dispute, as a general rule not later than three months from the date of establishment of the Arbitration Panel. If the Arbitration Panel cannot issue its report within this period, it may extend that period to a maximum of five months from the date of establishment of the Arbitration Panel.
2. When the Arbitration Panel considers that it cannot issue its report within one and half month in cases of urgency, it shall inform the Parties to the dispute in writing of the reasons for the delay together with an estimate of the period within which it will issue its report. In no case the issuance of the award shall exceed two months.
3. The report of the Arbitration Panel shall be final and binding on the Parties to the dispute.
4. The deliberations of the Arbitration Panel and the documents submitted to it shall be kept confidential.
5. The Arbitration Panel shall make every effort to take any decision by consensus. Where, nevertheless, a decision cannot be arrived at by consensus, the matter at issue shall be

decided by majority vote. The vote of the Arbitration Panel shall be confidential and no dissenting opinion shall be expressed.

6. Where the arbitration panel concludes that measure at issue is inconsistent with the Agreement, it shall recommend that the Party Complained Against bring the measure into conformity with the Agreement. In addition to its recommendation, the Arbitration Panel may suggest ways in which the Party Complained Against could implement the recommendations.

#### **Article 14**

##### **Compliance with the arbitration panel rulings**

1. Each Party shall take any measure necessary to comply with the arbitration panel rulings, and the Parties will endeavour to agree on the period of time to comply with the rulings.
2. No later than 30 days after the receipt of the notification of the arbitration panel report to the Parties, the Party Complained Against shall notify the Complaining Party and the Supervisory committee of the time it will require for compliance (reasonable period of time), if immediate compliance is not possible.
3. If there is disagreement between the Parties on the reasonable period of time to comply with the arbitration panel rulings, the Complaining Party shall, within 20 days of the receipt of the notification made under paragraph 2 by the Party Complained Against, request, in writing, the arbitration panel to determine the length of the reasonable period of time. Such request shall be notified simultaneously to the other Party and to the Supervisory committee. The arbitration panel shall notify its decision to the Parties and to the Supervisory Committee within 30 days from the date of receipt of the request.
4. The reasonable period of time may be extended by mutual agreement of the Parties.
5. The Party Complained Against shall notify the Complaining Party and the Supervisory Committee before the end of the reasonable period of time of any measure that it has taken to comply with the arbitration panel rulings.

#### **Article 15**

##### **Compensation and the Suspension of Concessions**

1. If the Party Complained Against fails to notify any measure taken to comply with the arbitration panel rulings before the expiry of the reasonable period of time, or if the arbitration panel rules, upon the request of either Party, that the measure notified under Article 14 is inconsistent with that Party's obligations under the provisions referred to in Article 3, the Party Complained Against shall, if so requested by the Complaining Party, present an offer for temporary compensation.
2. If no agreement on compensation is reached within 30 days after the end of the reasonable period of time or of the arbitration panel rulings under Article 14 that a measure taken to comply is inconsistent with the provisions referred to in Article 3, the Complaining Party shall be entitled, upon notification to the other Party and to the Supervisory Committee, to suspend obligations arising from any provision referred to in Article 3. The Complaining Party may implement the suspension 15 days after the date of receipt of the notification by the Party Complained Against.

3. The suspension of obligations shall be temporary and shall be applied only until any measure found to be inconsistent with the provisions referred to in Article 3 has been withdrawn or amended so as to bring it into conformity with those provisions or until the Parties have agreed to settle the dispute. The level of the suspension of concessions shall be equivalent to the level of the nullification or impairment.

### **Article 16** **Entry into force**

This Protocol shall enter into force thirty days following the date on which D-8 Secretariat, the depository, has received the instruments of ratification by at least four Member States.

The '**Protocol to the D-8 PTA on Dispute Settlement Mechanism**' is hereby adopted by the D-8 Trade Ministers Council during its 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on the **5<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024** in the English language in one original copy.

# **DEVELOPING EIGHT ORGANIZATION OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION (D-8) TRADE FACILITATION STRATEGY PAPER**

## **BACKGROUND**

Trade facilitation - simplification, harmonization, standardization and modernization of import, export procedures- is a key factor for raising the competitiveness and economic development of countries.

Istanbul Declaration adopted at the Ninth Summit of the D-8 in Istanbul on 20 October 2017 commended the progress made in Trade Cooperation by operationalizing the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) from 1 July 2016, agreed to its full implementation, and directed Trade/Economy Ministers to explore other trade facilitation mechanisms to promote intra-trade among the D-8 Member States.

Subsequently, at the 5th Meeting of the Supervisory Committee of Preferential Trade Agreement among D-8 Member States in Ankara, Turkey, on 24th October, 2018, Turkey proposed mapping out a strategy on trade facilitation and Member States supported this proposal.

The entry into force of the Trade Facilitation Agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as of 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017, also encouraged D-8 Member States to accelerate the process of integrating the D-8 Member States with the international fora in terms of trade facilitation regulations.

This Strategy aims to identify concrete actions and measures to facilitate trade among D-8 Member States.

## **BASELINE SITUATION**

D-8 Member States lags behind, in terms of World Bank trade facilitation indicators (Annex 1). There is a considerable space for improvement in the performance of the countries, especially through regional cooperation. A strategic approach, agreed among the countries, would make a significant contribution to facilitating trade of the D-8 Member States.

## **VISION**

The vision of this Strategy is to promote intra- trade of D-8 Member States through facilitating trade and customs procedures of the D-8 Member States.

## **GOALS**

The D-8 Member States adopt this trade facilitation strategy with the aim to:

1. Promote trade facilitation reforms;
2. Enhance trade performance of the D-8 Member States
3. Develop more extensive national trade facilitation strategies;
4. Enhance regional cooperation implementation of trade facilitation;

5. Support the implementation of trade facilitation measures stipulated in the international agreements that D-8 Member States are parties to;
6. Exchange information on best practice in the implementation of trade facilitation in monitoring and evaluation in the field of trade facilitation.
7. Encourage the use of existing international trade facilitation instruments and standards agreed by the D-8 Member States.
8. improve the implementation of Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) among D-8 Member States.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The D-8 Member States adopt this trade facilitation strategy with the aim to:

- a. Provide transparency and harmonized application of trade related legislation within the territory by each D-8 Member State;
- b. Realize appropriate, transparent and predictable trade related fees and formalities;
- c. Facilitate customs procedures;
- d. Encourage freedom of transit wherever applicable;
- e. Enhance cooperation between border agencies;
- f. Provide mechanism for Appeal and Review.

## **ACTION PLAN**

- A. **Objective: To provide transparency and harmonized application of trade related legislation within the territory by each D-8 Member State.**

### **Actions:**

1. Each Member will promptly publish the following information in a non-discriminatory and easily accessible manner including electronically via internet where applicable preferably in English in order to enable governments, traders, and other interested parties to become acquainted with them:
  - a. Contact information of enquiry points;
  - b. Procedures for importation, exportation and transit (including port, airport, and other entry-point procedures) and required forms and documents;
  - c. Applied rates of duties and taxes of any kind imposed on or in connection with importation or exportation;
  - d. Fees and charges imposed by or for governmental agencies on or in connection with importation, exportation or transit;

- e. Laws, regulations and administrative rulings of general application relating to classification, valuation and rules of origin
  - f. Import, export or transit restrictions or prohibitions;
  - g. Penalty provisions for breaches of import, export or transit formalities;
  - h. Procedures for appeal or review;
  - i. Agreements or parts thereof with any country or countries relating to importation, exportation or transit and
  - j. Procedures relating to the administration of tariff quotas.
2. Issue trade-related certificates, approvals or other documents required for import/export within reasonable time, with a view to avoiding any documentation requirements that could disrupt cross-border flow of goods.
  3. Establish national enquiry points to respond to reasonable enquires from D-8 Member states about customs and other trade related procedures.
  4. Establish and maintain trade-facilitation web sites, where upon information on trade and customs related regulations and the contact info of enquiry points are reachable.
  5. Upon written request from traders, issue written advance rulings, through its customs authorities, prior to the importation of a good into its territory in the areas applicable in accordance with national laws and regulations.

**B. Objective: To realize appropriate, transparent and predictable trade related fees and formalities**

**Actions:**

1. Ensure that fees and charges related to importation and exportation are limited in amount to the approximate cost of the services rendered.
2. Review trade-related formalities and documentation requirements with a view to reduce and simplify them.
3. Ensure that penalties depend on the facts and circumstances of the specific case and are commensurate with the degree and severity of the breach.

**C. Objective: To facilitate customs procedures.**

**Actions:**

1. Adopt or maintain, to the extent practicable, expedited customs procedures.
2. Simplify procedures and promote the use of electronic system for customs clearance wherever possible.
3. Ensure, to the extent possible, the release of goods without undue delay while ensuring compliance with customs and other trade-related laws and formalities.



4. Encourage to enhance the capacity of customs officials on physical inspection of import or export goods in order to have an effective and efficient inspection.
5. Encourage the establishment of authorized operator schemes on the basis of international standards to operators who meet the specific criteria determined by the Customs authorities, and it would provide additional trade facilitation measures through customs procedures.
6. Encourage the establishment of single window, enabling traders to submit all documentation requirements related to importation, exportation and transit to a single-entry point.
7. Encourage the adoption of risk management methodology to focus on customs enforcement on high-risk consignments and expedite the release of low-risk consignments.
8. Implement customs and other trade-related laws/regulations in a consistent and uniform manner across the economy and avoid any inappropriate exercise of discretion by Customs and other trade-related administration officials.
9. Measure and publish average release times of goods periodically and in a consistent manner, using tools such as, inter alia, the Time Release Study of the World Customs Organization.
10. Encourage the development of capacity to adopt and maintain post-clearance audit in customs administration to ensure compliance with customs and other trade-related laws and formalities.
11. Encourage to the extent possible, to provide flexibility in the readiness of all Member States to utilise the use of electronic proof of origin and develop capacity to facilitate data exchange in securing effective implementation of trade cooperation agreement.

**D. Objective: To ensure freedom of transit**

**Actions:**

1. Encourage freedom of transit of cargo through the territories of the Member States.
2. Provide that traffic in transit will not be conditioned upon collection of any fees or charges imposed in respect of transit, except those required by national regulations, the charges for transportation or those commensurate with administrative or other reciprocal expenses entailed by transit or with the cost of services rendered.
3. Provide that formalities, documentation requirements and customs controls, in connection with traffic in transit, will not be more burdensome than necessary to (i) identify the goods; and (ii) ensure fulfillment of transit requirements.
4. Cooperate and coordinate with a view to enhancing freedom of transit, including formalities and legal requirements and due practical operations.
5. Endeavour to appoint national transit coordinator to which all enquiries and proposals by other member states relating to the good functioning of transit operations can be addressed.

6. Endeavour to establish mechanism for exchanging information among the country of departure, en route or country of destination with one another with regard to the goods in transit on a regular basis.

**E. Objective: To enhance cooperation between border agencies**

1. Ensure that authorities and agencies responsible for border controls and procedures dealing with the importation, exportation and transit of goods cooperate with the other members and coordinate its activities in order to facilitate trade.

**F. Objective: Provide mechanism for Appeal and Review**

Each member will provide and maintain appropriate appeal or review mechanisms for the administrative decisions by customs and other authorities in considering the following:

- a) administrative appeal or review be initiated prior to a judicial appeal or review;
- b) the right to either further appeal or further review in case where the decision on appeal or review is not given either within set periods or without undue delay as specified in its laws or regulations; and
- c) procedures for appeal or review are carried out in a non-discriminatory manner.

**INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

1. Member States of the D-8 will, or the purposes of the present Strategy Paper, establish a Trade Facilitation Committee. The Committee shall meet annually.
2. Each Member states will also establish and/or maintain a national committee on trade facilitation or designate an existing mechanism to facilitate both domestic coordination and implementation of the provisions of this Strategy Paper by September 2022.
3. The Trade Facilitation Committee will develop a comprehensive work plan, which will include all concrete actions and measures with clear targets and implementation timelines necessary for creating a consistent, transparent and predictable environment for the implementation of this Strategy.
4. In the performance of its functions, the Trade Facilitation Committee will be supported by a Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG) and a Capacity Building Working Group (CBWG). The detailed TORs of engaging the Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG) and the Capacity Building Working Group will be sorted out separately.

The **‘D-8 Trade Facilitation Strategy Paper’** is hereby adopted by the D-8 Trade Ministers Council during its 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on the **5<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024** in the English language in one original copy.

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**ANNEX 1**

**“TRADING ACCROSS THE BORDERS” RANKING OF D-8 MEMBER STATES IN  
WORLD BANK “EASE OF DOING BUSINESS” INDEX**

<b>D-8 Member State</b>	<b>Trading Across Borders (TAB) Ranking (2019)</b>	<b>General Ease of Doing Business (EODB) Ranking (over 190 countries)</b>
<b>BANGLADESH</b>	176	168
<b>EGYPT</b>	171	114
<b>INDONESIA</b>	116	73
<b>IRAN</b>	123	127
<b>MALAYSIA</b>	49	12
<b>NIGERIA</b>	179	131
<b>PAKISTAN</b>	111	108
<b>TURKEY</b>	44	33
<b><u>Average Ranking of 8 D-8 Member states:</u></b>	<b>121</b>	<b>95.75</b>

**Dhaka Declaration on D-8 Trade Cooperation**  
**adopted at the 3<sup>rd</sup> D-8 Trade Ministers Council Meeting**  
**05 March 2024**  
**Dhaka, Bangladesh**

We, the Ministers of Trade/Commerce of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and the Republic of Türkiye met in Dhaka on 5 March 2024 for the Third D-8 Trade Ministers Council Meeting;

**Reaffirming** our commitments set out in the Summit Declarations held in Istanbul (1997), Dhaka (1999), Cairo (2001), Tehran (2004), Bali (2006), Kuala Lumpur (2008), Abuja (2010), Islamabad (2012), Istanbul (2017), Dhaka (2021) and to the Decennial Road Map (2008-2018) and (2020-2030),

**Reiterating** the commitments made in the Declaration adopted at the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the D-8 Trade Ministers Council in Abuja (2013) and Declaration adopted at the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Trade Ministers Council in Islamabad (2016);

**Recalling** the Preferential Trade Agreement Among D-8 Member States (D-8 PTA) and the Multilateral Agreement Among D-8 Member Countries on Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters (Customs Agreement), both signed in Bali, Indonesia, on 13 May 2006;

**Recognizing** a non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system as a catalyst for economic development;

**Reiterating** the importance of a rules-based trading system as a step towards the effective and beneficial integration of countries into the global economy;

**Reaffirming** the commitment reflected in the Dhaka Declaration adopted at the 10<sup>th</sup> Summit of the D-8 held on 21 April 2021 in Dhaka to operationalize the Preferential Trade, the Visa, and the Customs Agreements as soon as possible in order to promote and ensure substantial cooperation among the Member States in this vital sectoral track of cooperation;

**Recalling** the commitment stated in the D-8 Decennial Roadmap 2020-2030 to take necessary steps to promote intra-trade of D-8 states and achieve the target of at least 10% of their total trade volume by the end of 2030;

**Recalling also** that the Decennial Roadmap 2020-2030 tasks the D-8 Trade Ministers Council to lead discussions on the benefits of transforming the PTA into the D-8 FTA while Article 30(3) of the D-8 PTA stipulates its review for further liberalization.

**Recognizing** the role of private-sector participation in facilitating and ensuring D-8 cooperation through enhanced trade and commercial activities; accordingly, **affirming** the importance of deepening the sectoral cooperation for deeper private sector involvement in all activities;

**Reiterating** the importance of efficient networking between and among D-8 Members, trade and investment promotion agencies, and private sectors for sharing best practices and promoting intra-D-8 trade;

**Recognizing** the need for inclusive trade for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and **affirming** the commitment to creating a more inclusive trading system that also ensures the increased participation of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), underrepresented sectors, youth and women entrepreneurs, and small-scale start-ups of the Member States in the international trading system;

do hereby,

1. Welcome the implementation of the Preferential Trade Agreement Among D-8 Member States (D-8 PTA) by Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia and Türkiye, and call upon the other Contracting Members to commence implementation of the D-8 PTA at their earliest convenience.
2. Invite the remaining Contracting Members to expedite the gazette notification of the implementation of the D-8 PTA at the national level at their earliest convenience.
3. Adopt the outcomes of the Special Session of the Supervisory Committee of the D-8 PTA held in Istanbul on 30-31 May 2016, the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Supervisory Committee of the D-8 PTA held in Ankara on 24 September 2018, the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Supervisory Committee of the D-8 PTA held virtually on 26 January 2021, the 7<sup>th</sup> Supervisory Committee Meeting held on 04 March 2024, the 1<sup>st</sup> Customs Officials Meeting held on 23 October 2018, 2<sup>nd</sup> Customs Officials Meeting held virtually on 23 March 2021 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Customs Meeting held virtually on 24 May 2022.
4. Adopt the ‘**Protocol on Dispute Settlement Mechanism of the D-8 PTA**’ and invite Contracting Members for its immediate ratification and subsequent implementation.
5. Adopt the ‘**D-8 Trade Facilitation Strategy**’ and invite Member States for its subsequent implementation.
6. Agree to enhance efforts to increase the intra-trade of D-8 Member States to at least 10 percent of the D-8 global trade, as reflected in the Decennial Roadmap 2020-2030.
7. Encourage the Member States to review the existing Offer Lists and expand them to an assertive level so that private sectors find more incentives in trading.

8. Task the D-8 Secretariat to commission a study to explore the ways and means for the expansion of the PTA and submit it to the next Supervisory Committee Meeting.
9. Underline the importance of close cooperation and mutual assistance among customs administrations and other relevant authorities of the member states for more effective trade facilitation, as enshrined in the Customs Agreement.
10. Agree to form a technical working group to conduct a scoping exercise on the possibilities of an agreement on identifying and removing technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and import licensing, including criteria to identify measures that are classified as non-tariff barriers to trade.
11. Agree to establish a D-8 database of non-tariff barriers and a work program for the removal of the para-tariffs and non-tariff barriers in conformity with national commitments in other relevant international and regional institutions.
12. Task the Supervisory Committee of the D-8 PTA to initiate a study for exploring the potential sectors for trade in services in the next phase of cooperation.
13. Task the D-8 Secretariat to work on country specific need assessment including financing and technical assistance and submit a report to the next session of the Supervisory Committee.
14. Commend the hard work of the Supervisory Committee in executing their mandate to ensure the implementation of the D-8 PTA, including the finalization of (i) Protocol on the Dispute Settlement Mechanism of the D-8 PTA, (ii) Trade Facilitation Strategy and welcome the Report of its 7<sup>th</sup> Session, held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 4 March 2024.
15. Call upon the Supervisory Committee to continue its commendable work in promoting the effective implementation of the D-8 PTA and present its report to the D-8 Trade Ministers Council on a regular basis.
16. Acknowledge the commendable work done by the D-8 Secretariat and appreciate its efforts to enhance collaboration among the Member States.
17. Convey sincere appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Commerce, the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, for his excellent chairing of the meeting.
18. Congratulate the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the excellent preparation and the successful hosting of the 3<sup>rd</sup> D-8 Trade Ministers Council Meeting and express utmost gratitude for their warm welcome and hospitality extended to all delegations.

Dhaka, 05 March 2024