

Report of the D-8 Tourism Senior Officials Meeting on Nominations for the D-8 Tourism City of the Year Award, Virtually Held on 1 October 2024

The Meeting of the Senior Officials from Tourism Ministries/Departments of D-8 member states was held virtually on 1 October, 2024 and discussed nominations of the “D-8 City of The Year Award”.

Mr. Ahmar Ismail, Director-I Administrative, Legal and Internal Issues of the D-8 Secretariat, opened the meeting and delivered the opening remarks, on behalf of Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the Secretary General of D-8. The statement is attached as (Annex-I).

The meeting was attended by Senior officials from Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Türkiye. List of participants is attached (Annex-II).

The meeting deliberated on the nominations from Iran-Kerman, Pakistan-Lahore, and Antalya-Türkiye, and agreed upon the following:

Annual Award procedure – One city – one year only:

- Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, and Malaysia recommended to adopt the Award (nominations and voting procedures) on an annual basis.

Three Years selection – Three cities for the next three consecutive years:

- Iran, Pakistan, and Türkiye recommended to select the presently nominated cities for three consecutive years (2025, 2026, 2027), based on the voting preferences submitted by member states.

Next Ministerial Meeting:

- Egypt announced its consent to host the 4th Ministerial Meeting and the Senior Officials Meeting on Tourism in the first quarter of 2025. Egypt also informed that an official Note Verbale will soon be shared with the Secretariat in this regard.

Iran to share the selection criteria adopted by OIC and ECO:

- Iran emphasized that the adoption of selection criteria should be aligned with those of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), which will be shared by Iran with the Secretariat.

Announcement of the winner of the ‘City of the Year Award for 2025’

- As soon as it receives preferences from all D-8 Member States, the Secretariat will compile and announce the winner of the D-8 City of the Year Award for 2025.
- Malaysia recommended not to share the preferences received from individual member states, while voting procedure should be discrete.

Closing:

Mr. Ahmar Ismail appreciated all participants for their valuable contributions and active participation in the discussions. He also expressed hope that this initiative will strengthen cooperation and promote tourism among the member states.

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY, AMBASSADOR
ISIAKA ABDULQADIR IMAM, SECRETARY GENERAL OF
THE DEVELOPING-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC
COOPERATION (D-8), AT THE D-8 TOURISM SENIOR
OFFICIALS MEETING TO DISCUSS NOMINATIONS FOR
“D-8 CITY OF THE YEAR AWARD” 2025, HELD
VIRTUALLY ON 1 OCTOBER 2024.**

**Senior officials and Experts from the Ministries of
Tourism,**

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Asalam o Alaikum

I welcome you all to today's meeting, organized by the Secretariat of the Developing-8 Organisation for Economic Cooperation (D-8), to discuss the nominations submitted by member states for the first D-8 City of the Year Award, for 2025, and possibly for the next two years, as well.

Tourism is undeniably a key economic sector within the D-8, and it has significantly contributed to job creation and economic growth. However, the sector currently faces numerous challenges, including poor product development, inadequate infrastructure, ineffective marketing, and limited connectivity. Also, there is a pressing need for the sector to make transition towards being greener and more digital.

To address these issues, the D-8 has embarked on several initiatives such as the D-8 'Comprehensive Strategy on Tourism' and the 'Crescent Moon Initiative', which were adopted during the Second Ministerial Meeting on Tourism in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in November 2019. Another notable initiative, recently adopted, is the D-8 'Tourism City of the Year Award'.

As you would recall, the D-8 City of the Year Award was first proposed at the third D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism, held

in Bhurban, Pakistan, from 4-5 August 2024. That meeting adopted a Declaration outlining the establishment of the "D-8 Tourism City of the Year", with the aim of recognizing and promoting outstanding achievements in tourism sector, within the D-8 member's cities.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The essence of today's meeting, is to review and analyze the nominations submitted by three of our esteemed member states, for the "D-8 Tourism City of the Year", 2025. Once this is finalized, these nominations will be presented at the Fourth D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism, for endorsement. In this connection, I recall that Egypt has expressed its willingness to host the next Ministerial meeting on Tourism, but still, we await a formal communication from Egypt.

As you will recall, the last Senior Officials Meeting held on 28 August 2024, decided to extend the timeline until 30 September 2024. Also, the Senior Officials decided to vote for the three submitted nominations, i.e. the city of Kerman from Islamic Republic of Iran, city of Lahore from Islamic Republic of Pakistan and city of Antalya from the Republic of Türkiye. Therefore, the present meeting is supposed to decide whether one winner would be announced for 2025 or three winners will be shortlisted for the 'City of the Year Award' during the next three consecutive years i.e. 2025, 2026 and 2027.

In conclusion, **Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen**, I commend our member states for their attendance and dedication to enhancing the tourism sector. I am confident that this award will open new avenues for cooperation in the tourism sector among our member countries, as it holds great potential to accelerate the development of the tourism sectors in our member states.

However, collaboration among our member states is crucial for the success of the D-8 'City of the Year Award'. Let us continue to work together towards achieving this goal, making the D-8 a shining example of excellence in the tourism sector. I am optimistic that, if successfully implemented, this initiative will lead to a significant boost and global recognition for D-8 member states' tourism.

Thank you for your attention and I wish you all successful deliberations.

Tourism
Senior Officials meeting
To Discuss the Nominations for 'D-8Tourism City of the Year' award
01 October 2024, held virtually

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Iran	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Mr Moslem Shojaee, director general of tourism marketing and development department of the ministry of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts 2- Mr Saeed Shahrokhi, Director General of the Kerman province cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts department 3- Ms Golbanoo Khavari, Head of International Specialized Cooperation Group Ministry of Cultural Heritage Tourism and Handicrafts 4- Mr. Masoud Taghavi Officer in Charge of International Specialization Organization of The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts 5- Ms Farah Valinejad, officer in charge of Regional Specialized Organization of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage Tourism and Handicrafts 6- Mr Mohammadreza Hafezi Representative of International Relations Department of Ministry of Cultural Heritage Tourism and Handicrafts 	<p>Email: tpm.shojaei@gmail.com phone: +989127969512</p> <p>Email: saeedshahrokhi@gmail.com Phone: +989133480341</p> <p>Email: goli.khavari@gmail.com Phone: +989123200128</p> <p>Email: Taghavimasoodjan@gmail.com Phone: +98 912 377 3515</p> <p>Email: fara.diba1971@gmail.com Phone: +989125330289</p> <p>Email: mohammadhafezi97@yahoo.com Phone: +989128100967</p>

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VOTING TABLE (D-8 Tourism City of the Year Award)

Member State	1st Antalya	2nd Lahore	3rd Kerman
1	A	C	B
2	A	B	C
3	A	B	C
4	C	B	A
5	A	B	C
6	A	C	B
7	B	A	C
8	A	B	C
1st	6	1 vote	1 vote
2nd	1 vote	5 votes	2 votes
3rd	1 vote	2 votes	5 votes