



Islamic Republic of Iran

**Statement by President Rouhani
At the 10th (Virtual) D-8 Summit**

April 8, 2021

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*Praise belongs to Allah, and peace and prayers be upon
Allah's Prophet and his Household and His
Companions*

**Your Excellency, Ms. Sheikh Hasina
The Honorable Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

At the outset, I would like to extend my gratitude to Your Excellency and your colleagues for organizing this important Summit. I would also like to thank the Chairman of the last D-8 Summit, my dear brother, H.E. Mr. Erdogan, and the Republic of Turkey for effective chairmanship of the D-8 Organization. I would also like to appreciate efforts by the esteemed Secretary General and his team.

I hope this Summit serves as yet another stride towards the achievement of the noble objectives of the Organization and its founders.

Honorable Presidents and Prime Ministers

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Strengthening multilateralism is one of the Islamic Republic of Iran's top foreign policy priorities. We have supported developing countries' collective efforts for a fair and non-discriminatory international economic system. The ultimate goal of all these collective and legitimate efforts by developing countries is to attain economic growth, balanced development, public welfare and prosperity, and to preserve national values and cultures and secure a decent status in international relations.

It is by way of this very approach that we are an active member of international and regional groupings such as the Group of 77 (G77), Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), cooperation mechanism of the Caspian littoral states, and of course, the D-8. We are also laying the regional foundations for free trade with neighboring countries and we will soon create the first free trade area with Eurasian countries.

Notwithstanding its geographical dispersion, the D-8 Organization enjoys tremendous capacities and endowments including, *inter alia*, human and natural resources, energy reserves, complementary economies and interested private sectors. Further, we all have more or less similar challenges on our paths to economic development. The last of these challenges is COVID-19 pandemic which has affected the countries' economic architecture and developmental estimates and planning, bringing uncertainties to the global community. The D-8 Member States are now posed to important choices to make for cooperation in the post-COVID era. From this perspective, the present Summit can put Member States and the Secretariat on a clear path and right track forward.

Excellencies,

Since the inception of the D-8 Organization, the Islamic Republic of Iran has endeavored to play its part in the accomplishment of the lofty objectives of

the Organization. Such measures as the establishment of the *D-8 International University* and *D-8 Technology Transfer and Exchange Network*, which target two key areas of “education and human resource development” and “expansion of technological cooperation” among eight countries, are testimony to our efforts in this regard. We are fully prepared to participate in the operationalization of D-8 agreements and arrangements in ICT, trade facilitation, investment, agriculture, petrochemicals, science, health, tourism, and visa facilitation.

Given the importance of foreign trade for national development and public welfare of the great people of D-8 Member States, I would like to emphasize that the current trade volume among the eight countries is a far cry from the actual trade potential of the D-8. Accordingly, it is necessary that certain mechanisms be developed for the facilitation and promotion of trade among Member States, including through customs and banking facilities and mechanisms, as well as non-banking ones. In this context, proposed initiatives as D-8 chamber of barter trade and D-8 credit cards may be helpful.

An invaluable asset of the D-8 countries, in addition to their rich Islamic culture and immense human capital, is the huge market of the eight countries and – potentially – those of other Muslim countries. With such a market, it is possible to jointly invest in areas that demand large-scale investment and market. The large industrial and research and development mega-projects of modern economies that have already been studied and decided within the Organization, deserve a revisit and serious action.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In addition to COVID-19 adversities, the unilateralism and economic terrorism, and the way they have been addressed by international community, have stained the image of international community. These measures not only illegally and illegitimately target sovereign governments and independent nations, but constitute a serious threat to the achievements of the international community. Moreover, the Muslim World is being

subject to organized Islamophobia, thereby targeting the noble values of Islam and inflicting adverse economic and developmental impacts on Muslim countries.

I am proud to announce that the US illegal and unilateral measures aimed to bring the great nation of Iran to its knees have failed. While confronting the colossal economic pressure, we relied on our own willpower and domestic capabilities and have managed to make significant breakthroughs in various areas, including in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts and consequences.

The luminous evidence to the failure of the United States in the economic war against Iranian people is that Iran, amid struggling with sanctions and the coronavirus combined, has managed to secure an economic growth of more than 2 percent in the year when the world economy shrank by 3.5 percent and many countries experienced economic growth of -5 to -10 percent.

In the past four years or so, the international community has witnessed the intensification and acceleration of the US economic warfare against Iran. These cruel and unlawful sanctions have inflicted substantial damage to our country. The nuclear deal, which the US violated and rendered maximum pressure to demolish it, has yet survived owing to Iran's wisdom and foresight. To return to the JCPOA, the US must lift the sanctions and adopt practical measures. This is the obligation of the government who has breached the deal. The Islamic Republic of Iran will but respond to US action by action.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm our resolve and Iran's public and private sectors determination to deepen cooperation within the cooperation frameworks of the D-8.

Once again I wish to thank Your Excellency and your colleagues for organization of this Summit.

Thank you for your attention.