

8 April 2021

**STATEMENT BY
YAB TAN SRI MUHYIDDIN YASSIN
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA
AT
THE 10TH DEVELOPING EIGHT (D-8) SUMMIT (VIRTUAL)
BANGLADESH
8 APRIL 2021**

**"PARTNERSHIP FOR A TRANSFORMATIVE WORLD: HARNESSING
THE POWER OF YOUTH AND TECHNOLOGY"**

8 April 2021

The Honourable Sheikh Hasina Wazed

Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and Chair of the D-8 Summit

Honourable Heads of State and Heads of Government of D-8 Member States,

His Excellency Dato' Ku Jaafar bin Ku Shaari
Secretary General of D-8

Excellencies,

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Alhamdulillah, Praise be to Allah that we can all virtually gather here today for the Developing Eight (D-8) 10th Summit.

2. At the outset, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Honourable Sheikh Hasina Wazed for hosting this virtual Summit. I am confident that the D-8 will continue to prosper and progress under Bangladesh's stewardship.

3. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my profound appreciation and compliment to the Republic of Turkey for its leadership in the organisation from 2017 to 2021.

4. My sincere thanks to the D-8 Secretariat and the Secretary-General of D-8 for the excellent arrangement and commendable works in administering the organisation.

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Thematic – Youth and Technology

Excellencies,

5. It has been a little over one year when the COVID-19 was characterised as a pandemic. Since then, many people have lost their lives. Daily livelihood and businesses were disrupted and the economy was brought to a halt. Although the vaccination roll-out programme is ongoing for some countries, there are still others waiting for vaccines' arrival. Thus, there is an urgent need for all of us to work together to accelerate the development and production of vaccines and assure equitable and affordable access to vaccines for all.

6. The theme for this year's D-8 Summit, "Partnership for a Transformative World: Harnessing the Power of Youth and Technology", is indeed fitting. The tremendous potential of youth combined with technology can create new opportunities and subsequently contribute towards economic recovery.

7. With a dynamic youth population of 550 million, I am confident that the D-8 Member States could revitalise its economies by empowering youth with digital skills and harnessing digital businesses and entrepreneurship.

Sharing Malaysia's Experiences

Excellencies,

Malaysia's Digital Roadmap

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8. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted a newfound sense of urgency to the digital inclusion agenda. While the crisis has enabled hundreds of millions to work, learn and connect digitally, it is easy to see how it has also exacerbated the situation for far too many people in vulnerable situations around the world. Now, more than ever, connectivity should be at the core of all national and international priorities – from healthcare, education, government services and beyond.

9. Malaysia's government had recently announced a Digital Transformation Roadmap, with action plans focuses on expanding and improving Malaysia's digital connectivity. The National Digital Network (JENDELA) action plan, amounted to USD 12.7 billion, will be the platform to achieve these aspirations by accelerating the country's digital connectivity through widespread deployment of mobile, fibre and fixed wireless access, and paving the way to 5G. We believe it will push the adoption of technology and digital transformation. This is necessary for the country's economic trajectory.

Internet of Things (IoT)

10. Malaysia believes that IoT is a rapidly developing industry that would boost Member States' economy. We believe it will be the key driver in transforming the global economy post pandemic. Currently, Malaysia is actively cultivating IoT based industries like e-commerce, big data analytics, AI, blockchain and automation.

Industrial Revolution (IR4.0)

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11. Malaysia recognised that IR4.0 based industry would accelerate the growth of our digital economy. Under IR4.0 technology aspired initiative, my government has introduced Malaysia 5.0, to address digital accessibility, financial inclusion, productivity and growth through the tools of Industry 4.0 such as fintech, blockchain and artificial intelligence (AI). We believe it will contribute to digital economy and a more sustainable and circular economy.

12. As a long term strategy, my government is currently working closely with our colleges and universities. The aim is to help these colleges and universities to produce relevant and industry-ready graduates for the ICT industry, more relevant topics such as IoT and Big Data Analytics into the syllabus.

Excellencies,

Youth and Technology

13. A few weeks back, my government launched a specifically designed programme to empower Malaysia's youth directly affected by the pandemic. The New Gen Entrepreneur Online Bootcamp is a technology-based training and business coaching program for youth entrepreneurs that I believe would benefit Malaysia's youth in the long term. It is one of the initiatives under the government USD 4.8 billion post-pandemic recovery stimulus package.

Youth and Digital Content

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14. Digital content creation is another up-and-coming industry that has unlocked its value as a result of digitalisation. It has attracted Malaysia's youth and rapidly maturing. The digital creative industry, which includes animations, movies and video games, is proving to be a significant growth driver for the nation. We have the right mix of talent for the animation and creative content industry and they have access to enablers that can help our local creators market their content to a global audience.

Youth and Agriculture

Excellencies,

15. Malaysia is proud that our youth involvement in agriculture has been on the increase. A shift in mindset in our younger generation has assured them that agriculture holds a promising future. Smart farming has rapidly becoming the future of agriculture. The food supply chain can be improved by introducing enabling technologies, such as the Internet of Things (IoT) or traceability systems, that have the potential to increase food safety and production transparency.

Youth and Education

16. The pandemic has also changed the conventional way of learning. My government has introduced initiatives to soften the impact, including improving the digital platform infrastructure for online learning. It includes greater last mile connectivity in schools across rural and remote areas through stronger fibre optic connectivity and providing 150,000 laptops, together with a free limited data package for low-income students, to ensure that their education is not disrupted.

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Malaysia's contribution to D-8

Excellencies,

D8 Health and Social Protection Programme (D8HSP)

17. The pandemic has made us realised the need to achieve a more robust, viable and effective healthcare system. In this regard, Malaysia is pleased with the activation of the D-8 Health and Social Protection Programme, which is indeed a timely move towards facilitating Member States in mitigating the impacts of the pandemic.

18. Malaysia is delighted to be a member of the Resource Mobilisation Working Group, responsible for articulating strategies and suggestions for domestic resourcing by countries. Malaysia will continue to share our expertise and experiences on the issue and work closely with the Working Group members.

Tourism

19. Malaysia is proud to host the 2nd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism in Malaysia in 2019. We welcome the D-8 Tourism Strategy and the Crescent Moon Initiative which was adopted. Malaysia believes that this initiative is imperative in facilitating Member States to revive its tourism industry severely affected by the pandemic. The initiative, designed to promote tourism and cultural, social, and human and business inter-connectivity, is essential in complementing the Dhaka Declaration's aspiration to promote tourism activities among the Member States.

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Deliverable – Reciprocal COVID-19 Vaccine Certificate Recognition

Excellencies,

20. In view of the vaccines roll-out plans that are already in motion in most countries, Malaysia would like to propose the possibility of having Reciprocal COVID-19 Vaccine Certificate Recognition among D-8 Member States, which I believe would speed up the reopening of the hardest-hit sectors.

21. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the life and livelihood of our people, and has triggered an alarm specifically on the issue of poverty. I take this opportunity to urge D-8 Member States to work together to address this issue collectively.

22. Malaysia's main focus falls under its poverty eradication strategy has been on income-generating, expansion of education and training facilities, employment generation, and modernisation of rural life as well as improvement in living conditions. Malaysia would share our experience with D-8 Member States to have a joint approach in moving forward in this post COVID-19 global landscape.

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Closing

Excellencies,

23. The Dhaka Declaration and the D-8 Decennial Roadmap for 2020-2030, which will be adopted today, will serve as a basis for transforming and guide the work of the D-8 for the betterment of our people. The adopted documents would provide an opportunity for the D-8 Member States to renew our cooperation and commitment towards achieving our shared vision.

24. To conclude, I would like to thank the Chair and the People's Republic of Bangladesh for hosting this Summit. I am confident that under the Chair's able leadership, the D-8 will achieve its objectives and desired aspiration of having a stable, sustainable and prosperous economy.

Thank you.

Words: 1430