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PRESS RELEASE

D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

D-8 ORGANIZATION OBTAINED RENEWED SUPPORT FROM ITS MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

Ambassador Isiaka Imam, the D-8 Secretary-General, received the renewed support from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Hossein Amirabdollahian, in executing the activities and strengthening cooperation of the Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8). The renewed support was expressed in a meeting between the D-8 Secretary-General and the Iranian Foreign Minister held on the side line of the 26th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Tashkent, in Uzbekistan on 24 January, 2023.

Ambassador Imam was in Tashkent on the invitation from ECO to attend the 26th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (COM) of ECO, hosted by Bakhtiyor Saidov, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

During his meeting with the Iranian Foreign Minister, Ambassador Imam presented the status update of the Organization that he has led since January last year. Among the achievements presented were the conclusion of the Trade Facilitation Strategy and the Dispute Settlement Mechanism protocols of the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement.

Ambassador Imam also reiterated his call to Iran to host the inaugural meeting of the Ministers of Energy from all D-8 Member States. He also thanked Minister Amirabdollahian for hosting two important affiliated bodies of D-8, namely, the Technology Transfer and Exchange Network, and the D-8 International University.

While in Tashkent, Ambassador Imam also paid a courtesy call on Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Ambassador Imam praised Pakistan's active role and significant contributions to the D-8 Organization over the years. Foreign Minister Zardari recalled that he had known the Organization in the past and, thus, emboldened his resolve to support the Organization. He expressed his readiness to strengthen cooperation in tourism by facilitating the 3rd D-8 Tourism Ministers Meeting in Pakistan in 2023.

Ambassador Imam also met with Mr. Kairat Sarybay, Secretary-General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures. The two Secretaries-General exchanged views on



the activities and achievements in their respective organizations, while promising to explore areas of possible collaborations. Ambassador Imam highlighted that both organizations have aligned priorities in the economic sector, especially in areas such as trade, tourism, energy, food security, and transport. The two leaders agreed to maintain contact to identify projects that can be jointly organized.

To broaden the opportunity to secure funding for the organization, Ambassador Imam also met with Mr. Enrico Pinali, the Asian Development Bank's representative for Uzbekistan. Ambassador Imam stressed that collaboration with other international partners is imperative for the D-8 Organization to execute its tangible projects. The Secretary-General apprised ADB about the Project Support Fund initiative of the D8 and solicit the support of the ADB in funding D8 projects with bankable feasibility studies. Mr. Pinali welcomed the proposal from the DG SG and presented some opportunities that can be tapped by the D-8 Organization, noting that some Members of the D-8 are also members of the ADB.

Concluding his program in Tashkent, Ambassador Imam also met Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, the Secretary-General of ECO. He thanked his host for inviting him to attend the 26th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of ECO. The two Secretaries-General underscored the need implement the Memorandum of Understanding between them, which was signed in 2011, noting that the participation of Ambassador Imam at the 26th Session of the COM ECO was, in fact, in accordance with the existing MoU.

While commenting on his visit to Tashkent, Ambassador Imam expressed his confidence that it had achieved its intended purpose.

“It is in line with my twin vision to broaden and strengthen collaboration with other organizations and partners,” he said. “It will enhance the global visibility of the D-8, which ultimately will broaden our opportunity to tap into vast resources that our partners can offer.”

“In the end, it is the people of our Member States who will enjoy the benefit of all our activities,” concluded Ambassador Imam. “It may be indirectly, but the benefit is surely there.”

The D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation is an inter-governmental organization founded in 1997 by the leaders of Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Türkiye. Far from being a political gathering, its main objective is to improve its member states' social and economic performance. One key feature of the Organization is the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement, which is expected to kick off this year. Once implemented, traders and buyers from the D-8 Member States can enjoy reduced tariffs on selected commodities.

Istanbul, 25 January 2023