



A quarterly newsletter of the

# D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION



## This issue's highlight:

AZERBAIJAN BECAME OFFICIAL MEMBER OF D-8

D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL PAID OFFICIAL VISIT TO NIGERIA

AMBASSADOR IMAM PAID MAIDEN VISIT TO AZERBAIJAN

SECRETARY-GENERAL WAS SPEAKER AT 3<sup>RD</sup> ISTANBUL HUMAN RESOURCES FORUM

D-8 SG PARTICIPATED THE 18<sup>TH</sup> TEHRAN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM EXHIBITION

## D-8 ORGANIZATION UNVEILS SECRETARIAT'S NEW PREMISES IN ISTANBUL

A new Secretariat for the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) was unveiled in Kağıthane Municipality in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 28 January 2025. The new premises will be the seat of the Organization's headquarters. At a ceremony attended by representatives from member states, local government, partner organizations, and media, the event was officiated by Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, Secretary-General of the D-8.

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## **MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**Dear Readers,**

Warmest greetings from the Secretariat of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation.

We, at the D-8 Organization, started 2025 on a high note, following the successfully organized, and well-attended, 11<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit, held in Cairo in December 2024.

I am happy to inform you, our readers, that following the unanimous acceptance of its application to be a member of the D-8, Azerbaijan has completed its D-8 Charter ratification and has submitted its Instrument on 19 March, 2025. This marked official accession of Azerbaijan, as the 9<sup>th</sup> Member of D-8.

I know you may be wondering what the name of the organization would be, now that Azerbaijan has joined our fold. Our principal organs will discuss this at a later date. But regardless, we are thrilled to have Azerbaijan as part of our family. We are confident that Azerbaijan will greatly contribute to the Organization's work in achieving our collective goals and objectives.

Another news item is, the D-8 Secretariat has officially relocated its premises from İstinye, Sarıyer area of Istanbul, to Merkez, Kağıthane Municipality in Istanbul. We inaugurated the new office on 28 January 2025. We thank, immensely, the Government of the Republic of Türkiye for providing us with a befitting office, as the seat of the D-8 Secretariat. No doubt, this will further strengthen the Secretariat in executing its mandate and manage the day-to-day operationalization of the Organization.

**Dear Readers,**

In terms of activities, my team and I, at the D-8 Secretariat, have also kicked-off 2025 with several activities. Chief among which is my consultation with Member States to garner stronger support towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Organization.

For example, I conducted consultation with the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in the first half of January 2025. While there, I met with the Honorable Minister of Trade and Investment, the Honorable Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, the Honorable Minister of Youth Development, and other senior officials from line agencies relevant to the D-8. The meetings resulted in tangible programs to be hosted by Nigeria.

Similarly, I also held consultation with the Government of the Republic of Türkiye, as the host of the Organization. In addition to reporting some of our progress, I sought guidance from the Turkish Government, in carrying out our mandates and facilitating activities that Türkiye will organize.



I also paid an official visit to the Republic of Azerbaijan, on consultation with the Government to ensure the smooth transition and participation of our new member in the works of the D-8.

It was an honor for me to be received by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, who provided strategic guidance for his country's active participation in the D-8. Chief among these is Azerbaijan's readiness to host a D-8 Media Excellence Center, a D-8 Transportation Center of Excellence, and a D-8 Energy and Climate Action Center.

In Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, I also met with the Honorable Foreign Minister, Jeyhun Bayramov, the Honorable Minister of Youth and Sports, the Honorable Minister of Digital Development and Transportation, senior officials and high-ranking dignitaries. I am happy to inform you that those meetings resulted in tangible programs, to be organized by the government.

To put it briefly, my maiden visit to Baku was a success, and I sensed a high degree of Azerbaijan's spirit and excitement about playing an active role in the D-8.

### **Dear Readers,**

The D-8 sectoral cooperation also recorded significant progress, during the first quarter of 2025.

In the tourism sector, following the announcement of Antalya as the D-8 Tourism City of 2025, several activities will be organized in 2025, which the Ministry of Tourism of Türkiye and the City of Antalya have prepared.

I also attended a Tourism Investment Exhibition in Tehran, on the invitation from the Government of Iran.

In the trade sector, Pakistan has issued its gazette notification for the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (D-8 PTA) on 1 January, 2025, thus marking Pakistan's effective implementation and operationalization of the D-8 PTA, as of 1 January 2025.

In the realm of external relations, I am happy to note that the D-8's visibility is steadily increasing. For example, in the first quarter of 2025, I received in audience the Assistant Secretary-General of OIC for Science and Technology, as well as and from the MUSDAV Youth Organization.

I also visited our partner organizations, including the Secretary-General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) and the Secretary-General of the OIC Arbitration Center (OIC-AC).



**Dear Readers,**

To conclude, I am confident that the D-8 will achieve many more in 2025 and beyond. As our Leaders mandated it, the Secretariat will ensure maximum support in achieving such a noble target.

But, we also believe that support is crucial to achieving the onerous objectives of our Organization. The Secretariat will need the support of the Member States and you, our valuable readers, in carrying out our mandate. We will value inputs and suggestions on how to improve our performance from time to time.

I hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter, as much as we also enjoyed preparing it for you.

With my warmest regards,

**Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam**

The Secretary-General

## AZERBAIJAN IS OFFICIALLY A MEMBER OF THE D-8



The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan submitted its Instrument of the D-8 Charter Ratification to the D-8 Secretariat on 19 March 2025. This marked Azerbaijan's official accession, as the ninth member of the D-8 Organization.

The instrument's submission also marked the completion of the ratification of the D-8 Charter by the Parliament of Azerbaijan.



These processes were undertaken, following the unanimous acceptance of Azerbaijan’s application to become a member of the D-8 Organization by the Leaders, during the 11<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit, held in Cairo 19 December 2025.

## **D-8 ORGANIZATION UNVEILS SECRETARIAT'S NEW PREMISES IN ISTANBUL**

A new Secretariat for the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) was unveiled in Kağıthane Municipality in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 28 January 2025. The new premises will be the seat of the Organization's headquarters. At a ceremony attended by representatives from member states, local government, partner organizations, and media, the event was officiated by Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, Secretary-General of the D-8.



In his remarks, the D-8 SG said that the new office premises would provide a conducive environment for staffers of the Secretariat to conduct the day-to-day operations in a more relaxed atmosphere, thus enhancing productivity. He expressed appreciation to the Government of Türkiye for providing the new office with State-of-The-Art facilities, befitting the D-8's status, as an international organization.



Speaking further, the D-8 SG said that the new office signifies the continued commitment of the Government of Türkiye to the advancement of the D-8 cooperation, as well as fulfillment of its responsibility as the host of the Organization's headquarters. He added that the new office will undoubtedly strengthen the Secretariat's services to the member states in order to achieve its objectives in the key priority areas. He assured that the office would continue to be the center for maintaining and strengthening cooperation with the D-8's international partners.

The D-8 SG used the opportunity to provide highlights of the 11<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit, held in Cairo last December, including the Leaders' acceptance of Azerbaijan as the ninth member of the D-8 Organization. He also thanked member states for their continued support for the D-8 Secretariat's operations, through payment of their statutory contributions.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr. Rıza Kağan Yılmaz, the Representative of the host country and Deputy Director General for International Economic Policies and Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, underlined the importance of the D-8 for the Turkish Government and other member states, as well as its potential as a future global economic powerhouse that would enhance cooperation amongst countries of the global South, for economic prosperity. He assured of the continued support of the Government of Türkiye to enable the D-8 Organization fulfill the objectives of its founding Fathers.

Mr. Levent Dirici, the Deputy Mayor of Kağıthane, representing the local government, welcomed the D-8 Secretariat to Kağıthane municipal area. He said that Kağıthane, being located in the center of Istanbul, with modern infrastructures, would continue to improve its existing facilities to support the Organization's Office. The D-8 SG, accompanied by representatives of the Member States and the local government, performed the ribbon-cutting of the unveiling of the Secretariat's premises.

## **THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO NIGERIA, 5-14 JANUARY 2025**

During consultation visit to garner support from member states, Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 Secretary-General (D-8 SG), paid an official visit to Nigeria from 4 to 14 January 2025. Accompanied by Mr. Punjul S. Nugraha, Director for Economy and External Relations (Director II), and Dr. Ismail Bello, Executive Assistant (EA-III), the D-8 SG met with ministers and other high-ranking officials from the Nigerian government and Nigeria's private sector. The summary of those meetings are as follows:

### **THE SECRETARY-GENERAL MET WITH THE MINISTER OF MARINE AND BLUE ECONOMY OF NIGERIA**



As part of his official visit to Nigeria, Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 Secretary-General, paid a courtesy call on H.E. Adegboyega Oyetola, the Hon. Minister of Marine & Blue Economy of Nigeria, in Abuja on 10 January 2025.

The meeting aimed to promote the blue economy agenda of the D-8 Organization, considering that all members are coastal states.

The D-8 SG also sought support from the Honorable Minister for various activities in the blue economy areas to be organized in 2025, ranging from fisheries and aquaculture to marine, renewable energy and connectivity.

It would be recalled that, Nigeria had hosted the meetings of the Experts Working Group on Shipping in 2010, 2011, and 2014. The D-8 SG also proposed that the Nigerian Government should resume her crucial role in this area.

### **THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF JAIZ BANK OF NIGERIA**

The D-8 SG met with the Management of Jaiz Bank of Nigeria, led by its Managing Director, Mr. Haruna Musa, Ph.D., in Abuja on 10 January 2025.

The D-8 SG introduced D-8 cooperation in financial services, including an on-going initiative to establish a barter trading payment system, and e-commerce platforms, under the D-8 platform. He also introduced the concept of establishing a D-8 development fund to finance projects and programs for the benefit of all stakeholders.



The two sides also expressed mutual commitment to explore the possibility of organizing a D-8 interest-free banking forum in Abuja, in 2025. Jaiz Bank is Nigeria's first interest-free banking entity, with a healthy appetite to expand its operation to the D-8 member states.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE MINISTER OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

The D-8 SG paid a courtesy call on H.E. Ayodele Olawande, the Honorable Minister of Youth Development of Nigeria, in Abuja on 10 January 2025. During their meeting, the D-8 SG introduced the organization to the Honorable Minister, and briefed his host on the activities of the Organization in the areas of youth empowerment, entrepreneurship and SME development. He underlined the outcome of the 1<sup>st</sup> D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Youth, held in Dhaka in May 2023, including the agreement to establish the D-8 Youth Council, whose statute is in the finalization stage.



The D-8 SG also called on the Honorable Minister to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Youth, stating that hosting the meeting will be a testament to Nigeria's commitment to advancing youth cooperation for the benefit of the member countries.

## D-8 SG MET WITH THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF STANDARDS ORGANIZATION OF NIGERIA



The D-8 SG met with Dr. Ifeanyi Chukwunonso Okeke, the Director-General of the Standards Organization of Nigeria in Abuja, on 14 January 2025.

The meeting discussed the importance of standardization as a key instrument to boost trade. The two sides identified potential collaboration of sharing experiences and best practices on standardization among the D-8 member states. The D-8 SG and DG SON also discussed possible collaboration on standards development within the scope of international and regional entities.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT OF NIGERIA

The D-8 SG met with H.E. (Dr.) Jumoke Oduwole, the Honorable Minister of Trade, and Investment of Nigeria, on 14 January 2025.

A progress update on trade cooperation, particularly on the operationalization of the Preferential Trade Agreement, (D-8 PTA) was presented to the Minister. The D-8 SG urged the Minister to spearhead Nigeria's use of the D-8 PTA to boost her exports to the D-8 Member States.



The D-8 SG also sought support from the Honorable Minister for convening the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Supervisory Committee in Abuja this year, which the Honorable Minister accepted. The D-8 SG and the Honorable Minister also discussed the progress of the D-8 SME Center, which Nigeria will host.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE PERMANENT SECRETARY OF NIGERIA'S FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND INVESTMENT



While in Abuja, the D-8 SG also held a meeting with H.E. Amb. Nura Abba Rimi, the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment of Nigeria.

The two dignitaries reviewed the outcomes of the meeting with the Minister, particularly Nigeria's commitment to host meetings relevant to the trade cooperation agenda of the D-8.

## THE D-8 SG PAID A COURTESY CALL ON THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF NIGER STATE

The D-8 SG paid a courtesy call on H.E. Hon'ble Mohammed Umar Bago, the Governor of Niger State, in Minna, Niger State, Nigeria, on 15 January 2025.

The D-8 SG introduced the D8 Organization to the Governor. He presented the organization's areas of cooperation, which includes trade, agriculture and food security, energy, transportation and human resources development, stressing that these areas aligned with the development agenda of the current administration in Nigeria and Niger State.



The D-8 SG also used the opportunity to inform the Governor that the D-8 SME Center is expected to be launched in 2025 in Abuja. He urged the Niger State Government to take advantage of the D-8 SME Center, to empower SMEs and entrepreneurs from Niger State.

The meeting also discussed actionable cooperation in the agricultural value chain and energy sector between the D-8 and the Niger State government.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NIGERIAN EXPORTS PROMOTION COUNCIL



The D-8 SG met with Mrs. Nonye Ayeni, the Executive Director/CEO of the Nigerian Exports Promotion Council (NEPC), in Abuja on 17 January 2025.

The two dignitaries identified collaborative programs between the D-8 and NEPC, to enhance Intra-D-8 trade that will support market access, boost exports, build capacity, as well as support organizing joint trade fairs and exhibitions, under the D-8 platform.

## **THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MAIDEN VISIT TO AZERBAIJAN, 4-8 MARCH 2025**

The Secretary General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, paid an official visit to Azerbaijan from 4 to 8 March 2025. The visit was to facilitate consultation with the Government of Azerbaijan, following the D-8 Leaders' approval of Azerbaijan as the ninth member of the organization, during their 11<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit, held in Cairo, Egypt on 19 December 2024.

Mr. Ahmar Ismail, Director-I, Mr. Punjul S. Nugraha, Director-II, Mr. M. Bilal Khan, Executive Assistant I, and Mr. Ilham Uludag, Media and Protocol Assistant, accompanied the D-8 SG, on the visit. The summary of the meetings held in Azerbaijan are as follows:

### **COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV**

During his official visit to Azerbaijan, Ambassador Imam, the D-8 SG paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku on 4 March 2025.

The D-8 SG used the opportunity to congratulate President Aliyev on the accession of Azerbaijan as the ninth member of the D-8, describing it as historic, being the first country to join the organization, since it was established in 1997.



He hoped that the entry of Azerbaijan to the group of alliance of nations would contribute to the endeavor to achieve its overall objectives.

Speaking further, the D-8 SG introduced the D-8 Organization and its activities, including priority areas of trade, transportation, energy, agriculture and food security, tourism and industry and SME development. He highlighted D-8's novel initiatives in marine and blue economy, youth, health, education, and human resources development.

The D-8 SG also briefed the President on some of the D-8's key instruments, such as the Preferential Trade Agreement (D-8 PTA), Customs Agreement, and Visa Agreement. He urged Azerbaijan to become a party to those instruments, stressing that Azerbaijan could benefit enormously from these instruments to grow her economy, while advancing the Organization's cooperation agenda.

The D-8 SG commended Azerbaijan's successful presidency of COP29, adding that critical decisions on the global climate agenda were adopted under Azerbaijan's leadership. He added that climate change would be a key focus area for the D-8 Organization, thus leveraging Azerbaijan's expertise and leadership in this critical sector. He enjoined H.E. President Aliyev to consider hosting D-8 affiliated bodies in Azerbaijan, especially in energy and media, to expand cooperation within the D-8 framework.

In his response, H.E. President Ilham Aliyev expressed gratitude to the D-8 Member States for their unanimous decision to accept Azerbaijan as a member of the Organization. He described this decision as a sign of respect for Azerbaijan and a testament to the strong friendship among the D-8 nations. President Aliyev also emphasized Azerbaijan's readiness to actively engage in all D-8 initiatives and activities, to enable her to contribute to the Organization's developmental objectives.

President Aliyev also said that Azerbaijan's accession to the D-8 had demonstrated his country's staunch support for multilateralism, which had been the cornerstone of his country's foreign policy. He added that COP29 was one of his country's multilateral successes, producing milestone outcomes such as, the increased pledges of 300 million US Dollars for climate financing and the adoption of Article 6 of the Paris Climate Agreement.

H.E. President Aliyev highlighted the importance of establishing linkage between Azerbaijan's institutions and the D-8 Organization. He advocated for expanding the D-8's geographical reach to the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus region and affirmed Azerbaijan's interest to facilitate closer engagement between the D-8 and Caucasus region, for mutual benefits.

As part of Azerbaijan's commitment to the D-8, H.E. President Aliyev proposed that his country will host D-8 meetings on energy and renewable energy, youth, and media cooperation. Furthermore, the President expressed his country's willingness to establish one or two D-8 affiliate bodies in strategic areas, such as energy, transportation, and media cooperation.

### **THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF AZERBAIJAN**



Following the meeting with President Ilham Aliyev, the D-8 SG met with H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov, the Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in Baku on 4 March 2025.

The D-8 SG used the opportunity to brief the Minister on the strategic guidance issued by President Ilham Aliyev, regarding Azerbaijan's membership of the D-8. The D-8 SG also sought the Foreign Minister's support, in its implementation.

In his remarks, the Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov, expressed his delight at Azerbaijan's becoming a member of the D-8. He said that his country was prepared to host meetings and events, to promote the cooperation agenda of the Organization. He shared insights into Azerbaijan's areas of strength, particularly in Energy and Climate Action, as demonstrated through its COP29 Presidency and stressed that, under President Aliyev's guidance, Azerbaijan will bring significant value to the D-8.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF STATE TOURISM AGENCY

On 5 March 2025, the D-8 SG met with Ms. Azada Huseynova, Deputy Chairman of the State Tourism Agency of Azerbaijan. The D-8 SG introduced the Organization's objectives and its key priority areas. He said that tourism is one of the priority areas of cooperation of the D-8, stressing that it was a vital sector for sustainable economic growth.



He shared insights into other initiatives that have been undertaken under the tourism D-8 cooperation, including the D-8 Tourism City of the Year Award and the D-8 Designated Airports Initiative and the D8 Crescent and Moon initiative. However, he proposed that Azerbaijan should consider organizing an event focused on tourism on the sidelines of the upcoming UNGA Summit in New York, in collaboration with the UN Tourism and other relevant institutions, thus taking advantage of the D-8's Observer status at the UN.

Ms. Huseynova introduced Azerbaijan's tourism strategies and emphasized the country's rich attractions and other ongoing projects in Health Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, and Regional Development Tourism. She expressed readiness to enhance cooperation with D-8 Member States and welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal for joint tourism initiatives. The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment to strengthening tourism collaboration within the D-8 framework, for sustainable economic development.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH AZERBAIJAN'S FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER OF ECONOMY



The D-8 SG met with H.E. Mr. Elnur Aliyev, Honorable First Deputy Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan, in Baku, on 5 March 2025.

The D-8 SG congratulated the Vice-Minister for Azerbaijan's joining the D-8. He highlighted the Organization's key initiatives to promote trade and economic prosperity among Member States and underscored the importance of cross-border investments to deepen intra D-8 trade relations.

Consequently, the D-8 SG proposed to Azerbaijan to host a meeting of investment promotion agencies of the D-8 Member States in Baku, in order to enhance investment cooperation among the D-8 Member States.

Mr. Aliyev welcomed the proposal and expressed readiness to collaborate on various priority areas, including transportation, small and medium enterprises, human resources development, information and communication technology, trade, and investment. The meeting underscored the significance of e-commerce and investment partnerships, and, agreed to hold follow-up meeting to discuss the modalities for the proposed activities.

## D-8 SG MET WITH THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF ENERGY OF AZERBAIJAN



The D-8 SG met with H.E. Mr. Elnur Soltanov, Honorable Deputy Minister of Energy of Azerbaijan, in Baku on 5 March 2025. During the meeting, the D-8 SG provided a comprehensive overview of the D-8's objectives and key activities, particularly on trade, energy, industry, agriculture, health, education, tourism, transportation, and climate action. He stated that D-8's trade facilitation tools include the D8 PTA, Customs, and Visa agreements.

While speaking on energy cooperation, the D-8 SG proposed several activities to enhance energy cooperation among member states, including organizing seminars, and experts' meetings, at the working group's level.

The Deputy Minister expressed his satisfaction with Azerbaijan's membership of the D-8. He introduced the Government's key initiatives and achievements in the energy sector, providing insights into Azerbaijan's robust performance in local energy sources, such as oil and gas, and its forward-looking strategies to advance renewable energy production, for a sustainable future.

He welcomed the suggestion by the D-8 SG to enhance energy cooperation and advised that they should be discussed further.

## THE D-8 SG PAID A COURTESY CALL ON THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AND SPORTS OF AZERBAIJAN

The D-8 SG paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Farid Gayibov, Honorable Minister of Youth and Sports of Azerbaijan, in Baku on 6 March 2025.

During the meeting, the D-8 SG congratulated Azerbaijan for joining the D-8. He provided an overview of the organization's activities and briefed the Hon'ble Minister on the past activities and meetings related to youth and sports.



H.E. Mr. Gayibov expressed appreciation for the visit and indicated his readiness to support the organization's activities, drawing from Azerbaijan's various programs in sports and youth development.

The meeting proposed various programs to enhance Youth Cooperation, including, youth exchange, youth forums, sports and games, and cooperation with the scout organization. It also agreed to advance practical and effective cooperation in youth and sports, leveraging Azerbaijan's expertise and the D-8 Organization's dynamic platform to create meaningful opportunities for young people across the D-8 Member States.

## D-8 SG MET WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF AZERBAIJAN

The D-8 SG met with Mr. Nazim Tatliyev, the Vice-President of Azerbaijan's Chambers of Commerce and Industry, (ACCI), in Baku on 6 March 2025. The D-8 SG introduced the D-8 to his host, covering priority areas, such as trade, as well as customs and visa agreements. He also introduced D-8's novel initiatives to promote trade, including proposals to establish the new generation barter trading system, payment card system, and e-commerce.

The D-8 SG underlined the D-8's core area of focus as economic cooperation, the success of which he said hinges on the private sectors, most especially the chambers of commerce. He briefed his host on the D-8 Chambers of Commerce and Industry (D-8 CCI), as the private sector arm of the D8. He enjoined ACCI to join the D-8 CCI, to facilitate stronger business-to-business contacts.

The Chamber's Vice-President expressed enthusiasm for expanding trade ties with D-8 countries and affirmed support for D-8 trade and investment activities, acknowledging the ambitious trade targets of the Organization. Both sides agreed to collaborate effectively to enhance trade and investment, leveraging on Azerbaijan's potentials, as well as D-8's dynamic platform.



## D-8 SG MET WITH THE COP29 PRESIDENT



The D-8 SG met with H.E. Mr. Mukhtar Babayev, the COP29 President in Baku on 6 March 2025. During the meeting, D-8 SG acknowledged Azerbaijan's expertise in the area of climate action, stating that the country was well positioned to drive the climate initiatives, within the D-8 framework. He proposed to the office of COP29 Presidency to organize webinars and meetings on climate action, involving relevant D-8 stakeholders, including youth, thus recognizing the pivotal role of young people in advancing sustainability and climate resilience.

On his part, Mr. Babayev expressed his appreciation for the D-8's focus on climate issues and emphasized that climate change is a pressing concern for all nations. He noted that climate change impacts every aspect of life, from agriculture, tourism, trade, and social relations to sports, health, education, and transportation. He said further that addressing climate change requires a holistic approach, not limited to its environmental impacts alone, but addressing it in all relevant fields and sectors.

Mr. Babayev welcomed the proposal to organize climate-related meetings and advocated for expanding the scope of discussions to address the multifaceted impacts of climate change. He expressed Azerbaijan's readiness to support the D-8 Organization's climate activities and proposed the development of a comprehensive Adaptation Plan to help all D-8 Member States mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, effectively. Both sides agreed to collaborate closely on climate initiatives, leveraging Azerbaijan's expertise and the D-8 Organization's platform to promote sustainability, resilience, and youth engagement in climate action.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE OF AZERBAIJAN



The D-8 SG met with H.E. Mr. Sarvan Jafarov, Honorable Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Azerbaijan, in Baku on 6 March 2025. The D-8 SG introduced the Organization and its key activities in the areas of Agriculture and Food Security, underlining D-8's close partnership with international institutions such as, FAO and IOFS, to deepen agricultural cooperation, across D-8 countries.

Speaking further, the D-8 SG proposed a number of initiatives through which Azerbaijan could support agricultural development in the D-8 countries. He proposed that Azerbaijan should consider hosting a webinar on capacity building for agriculture and food security, establishment of D-8 Seed Bank, as well as other activities that would encourage youth participation in farming.

Responding, Mr. Jafarov shared insights into Azerbaijan's initiatives in agricultural development, including digital farming, electronic agriculture systems, agriculture support mechanisms, and active youth engagement in farming. He expressed enthusiasm for hosting D-8 meetings on agriculture and welcomed the idea of establishing a D-8 Seed Bank, to enhance agricultural cooperation among D-8 Member States. The Minister also invited D-8 Member States to participate in the Caspian Agro Exhibition in May 2025, to explore further opportunities for partnership and knowledge exchange.

## D-8 SG MET WITH THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF ECOLOGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The D-8 SG met with H.E. Ms. Umayra Taghiyeva, Azerbaijan's Deputy Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources, in Baku on 7 March 2025. During the meeting, D-8 SG introduced his organization to the Minister, stating that the priority areas of cooperation include, agriculture and food security, trade, energy, tourism, transportation, amongst others. He added that the organization was in the process of mainstreaming climate action in its cooperation agenda.



The Meeting discussed challenges related to climate change and its impact on all facets of life. The meeting further identified Azerbaijan's expertise in the areas of Climate Action, disaster management and early warning systems. The two dignitaries agreed that Azerbaijan could share its expertise in the aforementioned areas with Member States, in order to strengthen their resilience within the D-8 Community.

The two dignitaries further discussed collaboration on capacity-building programs and pilot projects to enhance preparedness to mitigate and adapt to climate change. They acknowledged the importance of cooperation in climate actions, including innovative approaches to environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction, and ecological preservation. Both sides agreed to explore practical ways to implement the proposed initiatives, focusing on tangible outcomes and sustainable impact.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE HEAD OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION DEPARTMENT OF MFA AZERBAIJAN

The D-8 SG held a productive wrap-up meeting with Mr. Elmar Mammadov, Head of the Economic Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan in Baku on 7 March 2025.

The meeting reviewed the outcomes of the D-8 SG's official visit to Baku. Both sides agreed that the meeting was a success, as evidenced by the various commitments expressed by Azerbaijan, including those guided by President Ilham Aliyev. The two sides agreed to develop an Action Plan, with a clear time frame, to implement new initiatives and proposals identified during the D-8 SG's meetings in Baku.



## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT OF AZERBAIJAN



The D-8 SG was invited to a meeting with H.E. Mr. Hikmet Hajiyev, Honorable Assistant of the President of Azerbaijan and Head of the Foreign Policy Affairs Department of the Presidential Administration, on 7 March 2025.

During the meeting, Mr. Hajiyev assured the D-8 SG that President Ilham Aliyev's strategic guidance for Azerbaijan's membership at the D-8 would be implemented by the relevant ministers and agencies in Azerbaijan.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF AZERBAIJAN

The D-8 SG was hosted by H.E. Yalchin Rafiyev, Azerbaijan's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, at an Iftar dinner. The event afforded the two sides an opportunity to review the D-8 SG's visit to Baku.

Mr. Rafiyev disclosed that Azerbaijan's Parliament has approved the country's ratification of the D-8 Charter, adding that the instrument of ratification will be submitted to the D-8 Secretariat, soon.



## D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL PAID COURTESY CALL ON THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT OF AZERBAIJAN



The D-8 SG paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Rashad Nabiyeu, the Honorable Minister of Transport and Digital Development of Azerbaijan, in Baku on 7 March 2025.

The D-8 SG briefed his host on D-8's activities and its progress in the transportation sector and digitalization. He underscored the critical role of civil aviation and marine transport in enhancing connectivity, among D-8 Member States, spanning three continents.

D-8 SG also emphasized that improved transportation networks, including air and sea routes would facilitate trade, boost tourism, and support economic integration within the D-8 community. He informed the Minister that H.E. President Ilham Aliyev has approved for Azerbaijan to host a center for D-8 transportation cooperation, which would serve as a hub for knowledge sharing, innovation, and capacity building, for the D-8 Member States.

Minister Nabiyeu expressed Azerbaijan's readiness to contribute actively to D-8's transportation initiatives, including hosting the proposed D-8 Transportation Center of Excellence, stating that the country's strategic location at the crossroads of global trade, placed it at a vantage position to host the proposed Center.

The two dignitaries also discussed the digitalization agenda, where the D-8 SG introduced the D-8 e-Government Network, which was established with the assistance of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). The two dignitaries agreed to maintain contact, through the designated focal points, to materialize the identified projects.

## D-8 SG VISITED THE HEADQUARTERS OF NAM YOUTH ORGANIZATION

On 8 Marh, 2025, before departing Baku to Istanbul, the D-8 SG visited the Headquarters of the Non-Aligned Movement Youth Organization (NAM), on the invitation of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, Mr. Yalchin Rafiyev. The Deputy Minister, guided the D-8 SG and his entourage to tour the premises of the Headquarters of the NAM Youth Organization. The D-8 SG took inspiration from the visit, which he stated could be replicated at the Headquarters of the D-8 Youth Council, which Bangladesh will host in Dhaka.



## **SECTORAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS ACTIVITIES**

### **D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL PAID VISIT TO THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM OF TÜRKİYE**

Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 SG, held a meeting with H.E. Mr. Serdar Çam, the Honorable Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye in Ankara on 22 January 2025. Relevant officers from the Ministry and the D-8 Secretariat were also in attendance.

The two dignitaries discussed and identified programs in the tourism sector to be organized in 2025, within the framework of the award bestowed to the City of Antalya, Türkiye, as the D-8 Tourism City of the Year 2025.



The two dignitaries also discussed the 4<sup>th</sup> D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism, which will be held in Egypt this year. They expressed their commitment to support the success of the Ministerial Meeting.

### **THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE D-8 COMMISSIONER OF TÜRKİYE**



The D-8 SG paid a courtesy call to H.E. Ambassador Aylin Sekizkök, the D-8 Commissioner of Türkiye, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye in Ankara on 22 January 2025.

The meeting discussed the way forward for the D-8 Organization, including the need to create a roadmap for expansion, following Azerbaijan's accession as the ninth D-8 member. It also discussed administrative matters of the Organization, considering Türkiye's position as the host for the D-8 Secretariat.

### **D-8 SG CALLED ON THE AMBASSADOR OF AZERBAIJAN TO TÜRKİYE**

Sequel to the approval of Azerbaijan's application to be a member of the D-8, during the 11<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit in Cairo last December, Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 SG, met with H.E. Dr. Reşad Memmedov, the Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Republic of Türkiye in Ankara on 22 January 2025.

The meeting discussed the way forward for Azerbaijan to be a full member of the D-8, particularly on the need to expedite Azerbaijan's ratification of the D-8 Charter. The D-8 SG told his host that Azerbaijan could, in the meantime, participate in D-8 activities, including hosting of meetings and activities involving the organization.



The D-8 SG also introduced D-8's cooperation instruments, including the D-8 PTA, Customs and Visa Agreements, through which Azerbaijan could take full advantage of her membership of the Organization.

## THE D-8 SG HOSTED D-8 COMMISSIONER OF TÜRKİYE AT THE D-8 SECRETARIAT



The D-8 SG received H.E. Ambassador Aylin Sekizkök, the D-8 Commissioner of Türkiye, at the D-8 Secretariat’s office in Istanbul on 29 January 2025. The D-8 Commissioner of Türkiye was the first official guest to visit the new D-8 Secretariat’s building.

The two dignitaries discussed about measures to elevate the D-8’s works, including the roadmap for Azerbaijan’s active participation, the forthcoming D-8 Commission meeting, and sectoral activities to be organized in 2025.

The visit also allowed the D-8 SG an opportunity to take the Commissioner on a guided tour of the new office.

## THE D-8 SG PARTICIPATED IN THE 18<sup>th</sup> TEHRAN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM EXHIBITION

On the invitation of H.E. Dr. Reza Salehi-Amir, the Honorable Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handcrafts of Iran, Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, D-8 SG attended the 18<sup>th</sup> Tehran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition in Tehran, Iran, from 11-12 February 2025.



H.E. Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and senior Iranian government officials graced the opening ceremony. The event witnessed the presentation of an award to Esfahak Village, in South Khorasan, as one of the Best United Nations Tourism Villages, for 2024.

The D-8 Secretary-General also interacted with private-sector exhibitors, to forge working relationships with the Private Sector, including Tourism operators in D-8.

## THE D-8 SG MET WITH THE MINISTER OF CULTURAL HERITAGE, TOURISM AND HANDICRAFTS OF IRAN



On the sidelines of the 18<sup>th</sup> Tehran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition, the D-8 SG met with H.E. Dr. Reza Salehi-Amir, the Iranian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts in Tehran, Iran, on 11 February 2025.

The meeting discussed ways to improve tourism cooperation among D-8 member states, through activities such as periodic meetings between deputy ministers of tourism, regular meetings of tour operators; organizing D-8 Tourism Exhibitions, and encouraging intra-D8 tourism.

## THE D-8 SG PARTICIPATED IN THE 3<sup>rd</sup> ISTANBUL HUMAN RESOURCES FORUM

Nurturing talent to ensure robust human resources in the digital age is crucial to achieving the objectives of the D-8 Organization. This statement was made by Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 SG, at the Opening Ceremony of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Istanbul Human Resources Forum, organized by the Human Resources Office (HRO) of the Presidency of Türkiye in Istanbul, on 17 February 2025. Attended on the invitation of Dr. Salim Atay, the President of the Human Resources Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, the D-8 SG elaborated on the D-8's strategies for advancing human resources to achieve the objectives of the Organization.



The D-8 SG highlighted capacity building for SMEs, youth empowerment, technology transfer, and supporting innovation and research, through quality education, as important areas of focus for the D-8. He called for strengthening of collaboration on human resources development, to address today's challenges, including maximizing the fast-growing artificial intelligence.



Concluding his participation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Istanbul Human Resources Forum, the D-8 SG took part in the workshop on Talent-Based Development: Strategies, Tools, and Applications, which Dr. Salim Atay, the President of HRO of the Presidency of Türkiye, chaired. The D-8 SG reiterated his call for enhanced collaboration on human resources development, for mutual benefits of member states of the Organization.

## THE D-8 SG PAID A VISIT TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF BSEC

As part of efforts to increase collaboration, with organizations outside the D-8 member states, D-8 SG paid a courtesy visit on H.E. Lazar Comanescu, the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), in Istanbul on 18 February 2025.

The two dignitaries compared notes, on the two organizations they represent, including identifying potential joint programs in areas of mutual interests.



## THE D-8 SG VISITED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE OIC ARBITRATION CENTER



To formulate concrete collaborative action plans that would benefit the D-8 and OIC-AC, Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 Secretary-General, visited Dr. Umar A. Oseni, the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation – Arbitration Center (OIC-AC) in Istanbul, on 19 February 2025.

The two dignitaries identified measures to boost trade, particularly within the D-8 framework. They also exchanged views on possible avenues for revenue generation, the current global situation, including international trade.

## D-8 SECRETARIAT VISITED THE GOVERNOR OF ANTALYA

Representing the D-8 Secretary General, Director Ahmar Ismail of the D-8 Secretariat met with H.E. Hulusi ŞAHİN, Governor of Antalya, and his team, at the Governor's office, on 19 February 2025. Discussions centered on programs planned for the City of Antalya, as the first D-8 Tourism City of the Year. Key stakeholders representing the Municipality of Antalya and the Antalya Chambers of Commerce and Industry contributed valuable insights.

Mr. Ismail also met with Dr. Candemir Zoroğlu, Coordinator for Antalya's D-8 Tourism initiatives from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Türkiye. The two officials discussed detailed programs and activities for the D-8 Tourism City of the Year.



## THE D-8 SG RECEIVED THE CONSUL GENERAL OF MALAYSIA IN ISTANBUL



The D-8 SG received in audience, Mr. Ahmad Amiri Abu Bakar, the Consul General of Malaysia in Istanbul, at the D-8 Secretariat, on 26 February 2025.

While welcoming the Malaysian Consul General, who arrived in Istanbul in January, 2025, the D-8 SG introduced the D-8 Organization's activities, including those initiated by Malaysia. The D-8 SG also encouraged his guest to continue to support Malaysia's active role in the D-8, including the implementation of the D-8 PTA.

Mr. Abubaker was also enjoined to facilitate the development of the e-commerce platform, and developing a payment card system for the D8, stressing that the two initiatives are being championed by organizations based in Malaysia.

## D-8 SG RECEIVED THE DELEGATION OF MUSDAV YOUTH

In line with the D-8's recent push towards youth development and empowerment, the D-8 SG welcomed a delegation from the MUSDAV Youth of Türkiye, led by Mr. Halis Akuzum, the President of MUSDAV Youth, at the D-8 Secretariat's premises in Istanbul, on 27 February 2025. The MUSDAV Youth presented a proposal for organizing a Youth Summit in Ankara, Türkiye in May 2025. They invited the D-8 SG to participate and support the Summit, including delivery of opening remarks.



The D-8 SG welcomed the initiative and expressed his commitment to participate in the event. The MUSDAV Youth is a non-governmental organization, under the patronage of the President of Religious Affairs of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye.

## THE D-8 SG ATTENDED MUSIAD'S IFTAR DINNER



On the invitation of Mr. Mahmut Asmalı, the President of MUSIAD, Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 Secretary-General, attended MUSIAD's Iftar Dinner in Istanbul, on 11 March 2025.

Reaping the blessings of the sacred Month of Ramadan, the D-8 SG rekindled the ukhuwah with the community at the Iftar, attended by dignitaries, including members of the diplomatic corps. The D-8 SG also used the opportunity of the Iftar to strengthen the D-8 relations with MUSIAD. He called on members of MUSIAD to support efforts to attain the D-8 objectives.

## THE D-8 SG ATTENDED THE IFTAR DINNER HOSTED BY THE TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER

On the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, the D-8 SG attended the Iftar hosted by H.E. Hakan Fidan, the Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye in Ankara, on 12 March 2025.

The D-8 SG noted Minister Fidan's Ramadan message, which centered on the importance of peaceful co-existence of all humanity, in accordance with the spirit of Ramadan.



## D-8 SG ATTENDED THE IFTAR PROGRAM OF AVRASYA GROUP



The D-8 SG attended an Iftar dinner hosted by Mr. Murat Doğanay, the Chairman of Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Platformu (ASAD) in Istanbul, on 15 March 2025.

The D-8 SG used the opportunity to widen the network of contacts with ASAD members, who are primarily renowned business people from Türkiye. Mr. Doğanay is the D-8 partner, in developing the barter trading system.

## THE D-8 SG RECEIVED THE OIC ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The D-8 SG welcomed H.E. Ambassador Aftab Ahmed Khokhar, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Science & Technology, at the D-8 Secretariat in Istanbul, on 17 March 2025.

During the meeting, both sides briefed on their respective Organizations' key activities and how to further explore potential areas of collaboration, particularly in science, technology, education, and health. The discussion aimed at strengthening cooperation between D-8 and OIC, for the mutual benefit of their respective Member States.



## D-8 SECRETARIAT ATTENDED SESRIC'S TALKS SERIES IN ANKARA



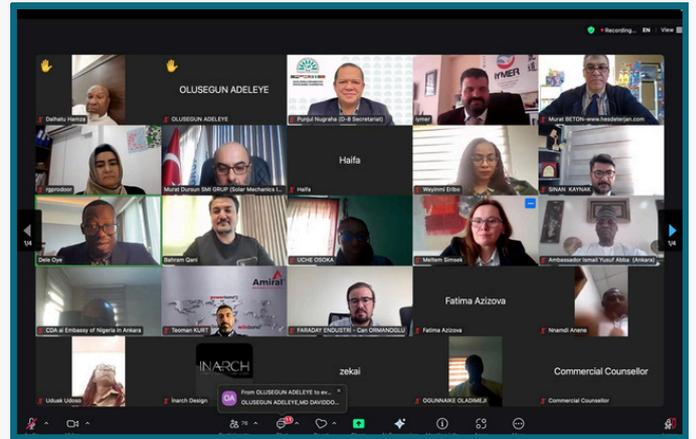
Representing the D-8 SG, Director Punjul Nugraha of the D8 Secretariat, attended SESRIC's Talks Series on the Commemoration of the International Day Against Islamophobia in Ankara, on 18 March 2025.

The D-8 noted that dialogue is crucial to build and nurture understanding among religious beliefs.

## D-8 SECRETARIAT PARTICIPATED IN THE NIGERIA-TÜRKİYE BUSINESS FORUM, VIRTUALLY

The D-8 Secretariat, represented by Director Punjul Nugraha, participated in the Nigeria - Türkiye Business Forum, held virtually by the Nigeria-Türkiye Business Council (NTBC), the Nigerian Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), and the IYMER Group of Türkiye, on 27 March 2025.

The Business Forum, with the theme: “Exploring Investment, Franchise, Partnership, and Distribution Opportunities,” was attended by the Minister of Livestock Development of Nigeria, the President of NACCIMA, senior officials from Nigeria’s and Türkiye’s government agencies, and business entities from the two countries.



Director Punjul welcomed the initiatives, which he noted will further strengthen economic and business interactions between Nigeria and Türkiye. He proposed a similar event be organized, involving wider participation from the D-8 Member States.

## ACTIVITIES OF D-8 AFFILIATED BODIES

### D-8 INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (D-8 IU)

#### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



Scientific cooperation forms the foundation for sustainable international cooperation. Universities play a central role in fostering scientific diplomacy and global collaboration. An institution such as D-8 International University, affiliated with an international organization, can fulfill an exceptional role in promoting scientific and technological cooperation among member nations and with other countries. To achieve these goals, during the last three months, D-8IU has signed memorandums of understanding, which are as follows:

Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Mosul and D-8 International University. (This MoU was made on March 2025)

Memorandum of Understanding between Kut University College and D-8 International University. (This MoU was made on March 2025)

#### WEBINAR

D-8 International University, in collaboration with Jiroft University, Tor Vergata University of Rome, Isfahan University, and other prestigious academic institutions, organized the 5th International Webinar on Recent Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Improvement Strategies.



Prominent professors from prestigious universities around the world attended the webinar. The opening session included a speech by Professor Abbas Afkhami, Chancellor of D-8 International University. Dr Mazaher Ahmadi from D-8 International University was also one of the scientific speakers at the event.



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