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PRESS RELEASE

D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

D-8 PARTICIPATED IN THE 3rd SHUSHA GLOBAL MEDIA FORUM IN AZERBAIJAN

The Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) participated in the 3rd Shusha Global Media Forum held in Shusha, Azerbaijan from 19 to 21 July 2025. The Organization was represented by Ambassador Mustafa Özcan, Director-I of the D-8, and Mr. Ilham Uludag, Media and Protocol Officer. The Forum, convened under the theme “Digital Pathways: Strengthening Information and Media Resilience in the Age of AI”, brought together more than 400 participants from over 50 countries, including senior government officials, media professionals, academics, and private sector representatives.

The Forum officially commenced on 19 July with the high-level session “Meeting with the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Ilham Aliyev”, held in Khankendi. During this session, participants engaged in a three-hour interactive exchange with President Aliyev, who responded to questions on various regional and global issues. Notably, President Aliyev highlighted Azerbaijan’s accession to the D-8 Organization, stating:

"Another important factor emphasizing the authority of Azerbaijan is the fact that we became the first and only country to become a new member of the D-8 Organization. The organization, which was once created on the initiative of Türkiye, Pakistan, Egypt and now brings together the eight largest countries of the Muslim world both in terms of population and potential, had never accepted new members since its creation many decades ago. Azerbaijan was the only one to be accepted unanimously."

This acknowledgement by H.E. Ilham Aliyev underscored Azerbaijan’s recognition of D-8’s growing strategic importance and potential.

On 20 July, the Forum continued in Shusha with an opening address by Mr. Hikmet Hajiyev, Assistant to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Head of the Department of Foreign Policy Affairs of the Presidential Administration. The day's programme included the panel discussion “Innovative Approaches: Media Literacy in the Digital Age”, where experts discussed contemporary strategies to strengthen public understanding and critical consumption of digital content. The day concluded with a guided visit to the cities of Aghdam, Khojali, Khankendi, and



Khidirli—recently liberated areas where Azerbaijan showcased its ambitious reconstruction and revitalization efforts.

Day two of the Forum included two panel sessions and one one-on-one discussion.

Panel 2, “Media Literacy as the Guarantee of Information Security”, emphasized the vital role of media literacy in combating disinformation and maintaining information integrity in the digital landscape.

Panel 3, “How Social Media Evolution Affects Public Trust: Embracing Media Literacy”, examined the impact of evolving digital platforms on public trust and the importance of promoting critical thinking skills in online environments.

During the One-on-One Session, Mr. Claus Strunz, CEO of Euronews, shared his insights under the title “Journalism in the AI Era: Preserving Truth Amid Automation”, reflecting on the ethical and operational challenges facing journalism in the age of artificial intelligence.

In parallel with the Forum, the D-8 delegation held bilateral meetings with Azerbaijani officials. Ambassador Mustafa Özcan met with Mr. Hikmet Hajiyev, Assistant to the President of Azerbaijan, during which they discussed the D-8’s ongoing activities and explored avenues to enhance cooperation between Azerbaijan and the D-8 Organization.

Ambassador Özcan also met with Mr. Ahmed Ismayilov, Executive Director of the Media Development Agency of Azerbaijan. They exchanged views on the possible means of advancing cooperation between the two institutions in media and communication areas.

The Forum provided a valuable platform for the D-8 to enhance its visibility, engage with key international stakeholders, and keep abreast of global developments in media and communication.

The Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) is an intergovernmental organization established in 1997 by Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Türkiye to promote economic cooperation and sustainable development among member states. In 2025, the Republic of Azerbaijan officially became the ninth member of the Organization, marking a historic expansion.

Istanbul, 24 July 2025