

Report of D-8 Commissioners Informal Retreat Meeting 16 October 2025, Republic of Azerbaijan

The Republic of Azerbaijan hosted the first-ever D-8 Informal Retreat Meeting on 16 October 2025 in Baku, marking a historic milestone in the Organization's efforts to enhance internal coordination and chart a renewed vision for the future. The Retreat served as a platform for open dialogue and brainstorming among the Member States and the Secretariat, focusing on practical strategies to strengthen cooperation, improve institutional effectiveness, and accelerate the implementation of D-8 priority areas and ongoing initiatives.

All Member States actively participated in the discussions, contributing valuable perspectives and recommendations aimed at advancing the collective goals of the Organization. The list of participants is provided in Annex-I.

1. Opening of the Meeting

- *Welcome Statement by the D-8 Commissioner of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Host)*
- *Opening Statement by the D-8 Commissioner of the Arab Republic of Egypt (Current Chair)*
- *Statement by the D-8 Secretary-General*

At the opening session of the meeting, Mr. Elmar Mammadov, D-8 Commissioner of the Republic of Azerbaijan; Ambassador Sherif Kamel, D-8 Commissioner of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Chair-in Office, and Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, Secretary-General of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation, delivered their opening remarks.

In their statements, they warmly welcomed all D-8 Commissioners and delegates to the first-ever D-8 Informal Retreat of the Commission, commending the initiative as a significant milestone in the Organization's history. The speakers underscored the importance of this retreat, describing it as an opportunity for open and constructive dialogue aimed at reviewing the Organization's progress, strengthening sectoral cooperation, and identifying strategic directions to enhance the D-8's effectiveness and visibility in the coming years.

2. Review of the D-8 Decennial Roadmap 2020–2030 – Briefing by the Secretary-General of D-8

The Secretary-General delivered a comprehensive presentation on the progress achieved during the first half of the D-8 Decennial Roadmap (2020–2030), outlining key milestones,

challenges, and areas requiring further attention. In his briefing, the Secretary-General emphasized the importance of aligning national initiatives with the collective vision of the roadmap and requested the valuable guidance of the Commissioners on how to accelerate and ensure its full implementation during the remaining period.

The Commission took note of the report and commended the Secretariat for its dedicated efforts in monitoring and advancing the implementation of the roadmap.

After detailed deliberations, the Commission proposed the following recommendations and directives:

- **Transformation of the Ad-hoc Committee:**

The existing *Ad-hoc Committee on Budgetary and Administrative Matters*, established by the 49th Session of the Commission, may be renamed as the Ad-hoc Committee on Reform, with an expanded mandate, which would include assessing the progress of the D-8 Decennial Roadmap (2020–2030), evaluating its implementation, and proposing adjustments to strategic priorities and mechanisms in light of new global and regional developments.

- **Full Implementation of the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA):**

The Commission reiterated the urgent need to fully operationalize the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) to boost intra-D-8 trade and economic integration. Member States party to the Agreement were encouraged to broaden their offer lists of tariff lines, enabling the realization of the PTA's true objectives and benefits.

- **Exploration of Deeper Economic Integration:**

The Commission further called upon all Member States to initiate and expedite feasibility studies for advancing toward a D-8 Free Trade Agreement (FTA) or a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). This step aims to deepen trade liberalization, facilitate cross-border investments, and promote sustainable economic growth among D-8 nations.

3. Discussions on Organizational Reforms – Introduced by the Director-I of the D-8 Secretariat

Ambassador Mustafa Özcan, Director-I of the D-8 Secretariat, delivered a comprehensive presentation, outlining the proposed organizational and structural reforms aimed at enhancing the overall efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness of the Organization. The presentation covered both institutional restructuring and statutory document revisions, in line with the mandates of the recent D-8 Summits and Commission sessions.

Ambassador Özcan emphasized that reforming the Organization's statutory and administrative framework is crucial for modernizing its governance mechanisms, improving coordination

between the Secretariat and Member States, and ensuring that the D-8 remains fit for purpose in a rapidly evolving global economic and geopolitical environment.

The Commission deliberated upon the presentation made by the D-I and supported the reforms process, in principle. After some deliberation they recommended the following:

- The Ad-hoc Committee on Reform shall comprise D-8 Commissioners and experts from all Member States and convene its inaugural meeting at the earliest opportunity under the coordination of the current Chair, the Arab Republic of Egypt, in collaboration with the D-8 Secretariat.
- The Committee shall be mandated to:
 - o Restructure and strengthen the institutional framework, including the decision-making process (such as analyzing on adopting a majority voting mechanism instead of consensus), and to enhance the operational capacity of the D-8 Secretariat.
 - o It shall also review the annual budget and Member States' contributions.
 - o The Committee shall update the Charter, Staff Regulations, and Financial Regulations, in accordance with the guidance provided by the Heads of State and Government during the last three D-8 Summits.
- The Committee shall convene periodically to ensure continuous progress and effective consultation among Member States. It will prepare and submit a detailed mid-term progress report outlining key findings, recommendations, and proposed actions to the upcoming 50th Session of the D-8 Commission, which will be hosted by the Arab Republic of Egypt. This process aims to ensure transparency, inclusivity, and sustained momentum in advancing the Organization's reform agenda.
- Upon the request of the Secretariat to utilize the General Reserve Fund (GRF) to cover essential expenditures for the month of October 2025, the Commission deliberated on the matter and recommended the temporary use of the GRF for the said purpose. It was further agreed that the amount utilized shall be reimbursed once the Secretariat receives the outstanding contributions for the 2025 budget from the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- The Member States encouraged the Islamic Republic of Iran to settle its outstanding financial obligations to the Secretariat at the earliest possible time. In this regard, it was suggested that one of the D-8 Member States' Embassies in Türkiye or Iran's diplomatic missions in Türkiye could be utilized as a facilitative channel to explore a practical mechanism for resolving the long-standing arrears in a constructive and mutually agreeable manner.

4. Strengthening Sectoral Cooperation – Briefing by the Director-I of the D-8 Secretariat

Ambassador Mustafa Özcan, Director-I of the D-8 Secretariat, briefed the Commission on the progress achieved in Sectoral and Private Sector Cooperation, emphasizing the vital role of the private sector as a key driver of economic collaboration among Member States.

After review, the Commission noted the progress made in sectoral cooperation and private sector engagement, and made the following recommendations:

- **Focus on Priority Areas:**

Sectoral cooperation should be focused and project-based, focusing on the priority areas identified by the Organization, and in close coordination with the relevant line ministries of Member States.

- **Leadership by Member States:**

The Commission supported the idea that Member States lead specific sectors to enhance coordination, ownership, and effective implementation. Those hosting affiliated bodies may lead sectors related to them.

- **Strengthening Private Sector Engagement:**

The Commission encouraged further collaboration with the private sector in the member states and the implementation of ongoing projects such as the D-8 Payment Card and the D-8 Creative Economy and Financial Center (CEFC) proposed by Malaysian partners.

- **Expansion of D-8 Designated Airports:**

Member States were encouraged to broaden and implement the D-8 Designated Airports initiative to enhance connectivity, tourism, and logistics cooperation within the D-8 region.

Overall, the Commission reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening both sectoral and private sector partnerships as critical instruments for achieving the shared goals of economic resilience, innovation, and sustainable development among D-8 Member States.

5. Implementation of D-8 Agreements – Briefing by the Director - II of the D8 Secretariat.

- *The D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)*
- *Multilateral Agreement Among D-8 Member Countries on Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters (D-8 Customs Agreement)*
- *The Agreement on “Simplification of Visa Procedures for the Businessmen of the D-8 Member States” (D-8 Visa Agreement)*

Mr. Punjul Nugraha, Director-II of the D-8 Secretariat, delivered a briefing on the status of implementation of various D-8 Agreements. He encouraged Member States that have not yet acceded to these agreements to consider joining them, emphasizing that wider

participation would further enhance economic cooperation and institutional progress within the Organization.

After deliberation, the Commission took note of the presentation and made the following recommendations:

- *Strengthening the D-8 PTA* - Cooperation under the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) should be further strengthened. Member States were urged to accelerate implementation of the Agreement, while discussions on the development of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) or a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) should be expedited.
- Egypt informed the Commission that the process of ratifying the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) is underway and will be completed, in the near future.
- Azerbaijan's Accession - The Republic of Azerbaijan informed the Commission that it is actively exploring the possibility of joining the D-8 Agreements, demonstrating its commitment to deepening cooperation within the Organization.
- D-8 Chambers of Commerce and Industry (D-8 CCI) Secretariat - The Republic of Türkiye expressed its interest in hosting the Permanent Secretariat of the D-8 CCI in Türkiye. It was noted that, following consultations with the relevant ministries and authorities, further details would be officially communicated to the D-8 Secretariat in due course. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan welcomed Türkiye's proposal and, while supporting it, also expressed its readiness to host the Secretariat in the event that Türkiye is unable to do so.
- *Simplification of Visa Procedures* - Bangladesh announced its intention to host the 4th Meeting of the Consular Authorities of D-8 Member States on the Implementation of the Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures. The meeting will serve as a platform to discuss practical steps for advancing and implementing the Agreement among Member States.

6. Future of D-8 Affiliated Bodies – Briefing by the Director-I of the Secretary-General of D-8

Ambassador Mustafa Ozcan briefed the Commission on the progress and overall review of the D-8 Affiliated Bodies, emphasizing the need for hosting Member States to further strengthen cooperation and extend both administrative and financial support to ensure their effective functioning.

The Commission deliberated on the presentation and commended the host countries for their continued commitment and contributions in hosting the D-8 Affiliated Bodies. Following the discussions, the Commission made the following recommendations:

- The Commission requested the Secretariat to resubmit the paper on the modalities of the D-8 Affiliated Bodies—covering their financial and administrative structures—which was originally presented at the 47th Session of the Commission, for further review and consideration at the 50th Session to be hosted by Egypt.
- It was agreed that the performance and activities of the Affiliated Bodies shall be assessed on a biannual basis, and hosting Member States were encouraged to extend the necessary administrative and financial support, to strengthen their operations.
- The Republic of Azerbaijan informed the Commission of the progress made on the establishment of three proposed D-8 Affiliated Bodies—namely the D-8 Energy and Climate Center, the D-8 Transport Excellence Center, and the D-8 Media Excellence Center—and reported that two virtual focal points meetings had already been convened to incorporate Member States’ views and support for these initiatives.

7. General Discussions

During general discussions and observations, the member states recommended the following:

- It was emphasized that the D-8 possesses the ability to engage in political issues where it can demonstrate principled and unified stances. The Organization has already illustrated this capacity during the Extraordinary Meeting on GAZA of the D-8 Council of Foreign Ministers held in Istanbul on 8 June 2024.
- The meeting further underscored the importance of increasing the frequency of high-level meetings to enhance the visibility and relevance of the D-8 among senior decision-makers. Member States were encouraged to integrate D-8-related themes and priorities into the activities of their respective missions abroad in order to promote the Organization’s objectives more effectively.
- It was suggested that joint meetings and coordinated actions among D-8 missions at major international platforms be encouraged to identify common positions and, where appropriate, issue joint statements under the leadership of the Chairmanship-in-Office. In this context, it was further emphasized that any such statements or communications by the Secretariat on important or topical issues should be undertaken in full consultation with all Member States to ensure coherence with the Organization’s principles, procedures, and collective positions.
- Following the interest expressed by the Republic of Indonesia, the Arab Republic of Egypt proposed to hand over the Chairmanship of the Organization to Indonesia effective from 1 January 2026. It was agreed that this matter would be further discussed and finalized through mutual consultation between the two countries, in coordination with the D-8 Secretariat.

Upon the observations made by Azerbaijan and Türkiye, the Commission recommended that the D-8 Secretariat explore the possibility of convening sideline meetings of the D-8 Council of Foreign Ministers during the annual sessions of the United Nations General Assembly. Such an arrangement would provide a valuable opportunity for D-8 Foreign Ministers to engage in regular exchanges, review the progress of the Organization's activities, and further promote and strengthen cooperation among Member States.

8. Closing of the Retreat Meeting

Ambassador Sherif Kamel, Chair of the meeting, expressed his sincere appreciation for the active participation and valuable contributions of all D-8 Commissioners to the first-ever D-8 Retreat Meeting, graciously and successfully hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan. He conveyed his gratitude to the Government of Azerbaijan for their warm hospitality and excellent arrangements in organizing the D-8 Week celebrations, including the Retreat Meeting of the D-8 Commission.

D-8 Commission Retreat Meeting - List of Participants
16th October 2025 in BAKU

#	<i>Member State</i>	<i>Delegate's Name</i>	<i>Delegate's Designation</i>
1	Azerbaijan	H.E. Mr. Elmar Mammadov	Head of Delegation Co-Chair of the Meeting D-8 Commissioner of AZE
2		Mr. Rovshan Mirzayev	Deputy Head of Economic Cooperation Organization
3		Ms. Nuray Akhundzade	AZE-MoFA
4	Bangladesh	H.E. Mr. M. Forhadul Islam	Head of Delegation D-8 Commissioner of BGD
5	Egypt	H.E. Ambassador Sherif Kamel	Head of Delegation Chair of the Meeting D-8 Commissioner of EGY
6	Indonesia	H.E. Ambassador Tri Tharyat	Head of Delegation D-8 Commissioner of IDN
7		Mr. Otto Rakhim Gani	Deputy Director for D-8 Affairs IDN-MoFA
8		Ms. Ida Ayu Ghardina Anindya Putri	Attaché, Directorate of South and Central Asian Affairs IDN-MoFA
9	Iran	H.E. Mr. Seyed Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari	Head of Delegation D-8 Commissioner of IRN
10		Ms. Yasaman Yeganeh	IRN-MoFA
11		Mr. Arsalan jamshidi	First Secretary IRN-MoFA
12	Malaysia	H.E. Ambassador Ahmad Kamrizamil Mohd Riza	Head of Delegation Ambassador of MYS to AZE

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#	Member State	Delegate's Name	Delegate's Designation
13		Ms. Nurul Ain Mohammad Fadhil	Second Secretary, Head of Chancery Embassy of MYS in AZE
14	Nigeria	H.E. Ambassador Zayyad Habu Abdussalam	Head of Delegation Chargé d'affaires of NGA to TUR
15		Mr. Muhammad Habib Abubakar	First Secretary Embassy of NGA in TUR
16	Pakistan	H.E. Ambassador Ahmed Amjad Ali	Head of Delegation D-8 Commissioner of PAK
17	Türkiye	H.E. Ambassador Aylin Sekizkök	Head of Delegation D-8 Commissioner of TUR
18		Mr. Halil Ibrahim Ucar	→TBA TUR-MoFA
19	D-8 Secretariat	H.E. Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam	The Secretary General
20		H.E. Ambassador Mustafa Ozcan	The Director-I
21		Mr. Punjul Nugraha	The Director-II
22		Mr. Muhammad Bilal Khan	Executive Assistant-I
23		Ms. Zahrah Setareh	Executive Assistant-II
24		Mr. Ilham Uludag	Media and Protocol Assistant