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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

#### **D-8's NETWORK OF PIONEERS FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (NPRI) HIGHLIGHTED IN TALKS WITH PAKISTAN DELEGATION OF SENIOR EDUCATIONISTS**

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) received a high-level delegation of Educationists from Pakistan at the D-8 Secretariat in Istanbul. Exchanges on the occasion focused on D-8's origin and historical evolution, the current trajectory of D-8's sectoral cooperation in myriad fields, and the Organization's initiatives in the realm of higher education, research, and innovation.

The delegation comprised senior representatives from Pakistan's higher education and scientific community -- including Dr. Abdul Basit, President of the Association of Private Sector Universities of Pakistan (APSUP) – Federal Chapter; Mr. Sabur Sethi, President of City University of Science and Technology, Peshawar; and Mr. Muhammad Murtaza Noor, Focal Person and Coordinator for CCoE and Outreach at OIC-COMSTECH, Islamabad.

In his remarks, Secretary-General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood emphasized that education, science, and technology constitute vital pillars of D-8 cooperation, offering significant opportunities for strengthening institutional linkages and advancing collaborative initiatives. He particularly highlighted the D-8 Network of Pioneers for Research and Innovation (NPRI) as a flagship platform connecting leading Universities across D-8 Member States, currently comprising 28 prominent institutions. The Secretary-General encouraged more Pakistani Universities and institutions of higher learning to become part of NPRI through relevant national Ministries.

The Secretary-General also noted Pakistan's important role in hosting key D-8 affiliated bodies -- including the D-8 NPRI Secretariat at COMSATS University, Islamabad; and the D-8 Research Center for Agriculture and Food Security (RCAFS) at the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad.

The delegation members commended the Secretariat's efforts in promoting academic and scientific collaboration and expressed strong interest in expanding engagement with D-8 initiatives, especially within the NPRI framework.

They added that the delegation was visiting Türkiye to participate in the Eurasia Higher Education Summit (EURIE) 2026, which brought together a broad representation of Universities and institutions, reflecting



Pakistan's expanding higher education landscape and its commitment to international academic cooperation.

The exchanges in the meeting reflect a shared commitment among D-8 Member States to strengthen knowledge-based cooperation and foster innovation-driven development through enhanced collaboration in higher education, research, and technology.



Istanbul, 13 April 2026