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## PRESS RELEASE

### D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

#### **D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL AMBASSADOR SOHAIL MAHMOOD EMPHASIZES INDISPENSABLE ROLES OF DIPLOMACY AND SUSTAINABILITY AT EURASIAN ECONOMIC SUMMIT IN ISTANBUL**

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), addressed the opening session of the 29<sup>th</sup> Eurasian Economic Summit in Istanbul today, stressing the indispensable roles of diplomacy and sustainability in addressing the challenges faced by the international community.

Organized by the Marmara Group Foundation, the Summit (11-13 May) brings together high-level political leaders, diplomats, policymakers, academics, business representatives, and members of civil society under the theme of “Global Responsibility.” The Summit is primarily focusing on issues of global peace as well as environmental challenges including depletion of water and greenery.

In the inaugural session, messages from the President of Turkiye, H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan; the President of Uzbekistan, H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev; and Nobel Laureate Prof. Dr. Aziz Sancar, were read out. The program also comprised opening remarks by distinguished international guests and senior representatives of regional and international organizations, including the D-8 Secretary-General.

In his address, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood commended the the Marmara Group Foundation and its President Dr. Akkan Suver for painstakingly building a formidable international platform (Eurasian Economic Summit) for strategic dialogue, intellectual engagement, and bridge-building among nations and peoples across Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and beyond. The Secretary General noted that this Summit was taking place in the backdrop of accentuating geo-political and geo-economic challenges -- including wars and armed conflicts, erosion of international law and multilateralism, global economic headwinds, surging protectionism, disruptions in global trade and supply chains, and climate change and related phenomena of food insecurity and water scarcity.

To effectively tackle these multiple crises, the Secretary-General stressed, the need for sustained peace and stability, dialogue and diplomacy, multilateral cooperation, regional solidarity, and sustainable development partnerships was greater than ever before.

In this context, the Secretary-General also highlighted the compelling relevance of the D-8 Organization’s six founding principles -- peace, dialogue, cooperation, justice, equality, and democracy -- in addressing the current global challenges. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood added that the D-8, representing a population of 1.2 billion people and a combined GDP exceeding USD 5 trillion, was working to promote cooperation



among its Member States in areas including trade facilitation, investment, agriculture, energy, green transition, digital transformation, and innovation-driven growth.

The Secretary-General stressed three key messages central to the Summit's theme. **First**, the imperative of sustainable and inclusive economic growth to tackle widening development gaps, economic vulnerabilities and unequal access to finance, technology and resilient infrastructure. **Second**, the urgency to ensure water security, climate sustainability and green economic transformation, warning that environmental degradation and water scarcity pose serious threats to global stability, food security and long-term development. **Third**, the indispensable role of innovation, connectivity and enhanced economic collaboration, noting that increased regional partnerships, digital transformation, technology-sharing including through greater South-South cooperation are key to building resilience and fostering sustainable prosperity in an increasingly interconnected world.

On the sidelines of the Summit, the Secretary-General engaged with several high-level participants and exchanged views on regional and global developments, economic cooperation, and prospects for strengthening partnerships among countries of the 'Global South.'

The detailed program of the 3-day Summit features a series of high-level sessions on global peace, energy and economy in the evolving international landscape, climate change and sustainability, water security, and democracy, women, and the future of peace.



Istanbul, 12 May 2026