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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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

#### **D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL PARTICIPATES IN 51<sup>st</sup> COMMISSION SESSION IN ANKARA, MARKS D-8's 29<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

H.E. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), undertook an official visit to Ankara from 15 to 17 June 2026 to participate in the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the D-8 Commission and events commemorating the 29<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of D-8.

The 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the D-8 Commission, hosted by the Republic of Türkiye under the Chairmanship of the Arab Republic of Egypt, brought together Commissioners and senior representatives of all D-8 Member States to review progress achieved since the previous Session and chart the future direction of the Organization.

The Commission considered a comprehensive report presented by the Secretary-General on the activities of the Secretariat during the first half of 2026, highlighting significant progress in strengthening international partnerships, expanding sectoral cooperation, enhancing the visibility of the Organization, and advancing initiatives in trade, energy, tourism, SMEs, agriculture, science and technology, youth, and connectivity. The Commission also reviewed preparations for the 12<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit to be held in Jakarta, progress on measures for reform and institutional capacity-building, financial and administrative matters, and implementation of the D-8 Decennial Roadmap 2020-2030. The Commission also welcomed the announcement by Egypt regarding the ratification of the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) and the Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM), a significant development expected to contribute to deeper economic integration and increased intra-D-8 trade.

A key highlight of the visit was the reception commemorating the 29<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of D-8 (15 June), hosted by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and attended by Commissioners, Heads of Delegation, diplomats, senior government officials, representatives of international organizations, academia, business leaders, and members of the diplomatic community. The reception was graciously hosted by Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Berris Ekinici. A special message from H.E. Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan was read out on the occasion.



Addressing the gathering, Secretary-General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood paid tribute to the visionary leadership of the late Prime Minister Prof. Dr. Necmettin Erbakan and reflected on the significant evolution of D-8 since its establishment in Istanbul in 1997. He noted that what began as a pioneering initiative among eight developing countries was now transforming into a dynamic trans-Continental organization representing more than 1.28 billion people and a combined GDP exceeding USD 5.2 trillion. The Secretary-General highlighted the growing strategic relevance of D-8 in an increasingly complex global environment -- marked by geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainties, climate crisis, technological disruption, growing inequalities. He emphasized the Organization's expanding role in promoting South-South cooperation, economic integration, sustainable development, and multilateral engagement.

He further underscored recent achievements, including the accession of Azerbaijan as the 9<sup>th</sup> Member State; the successful convening of the first-ever Meeting of D-8 Ministers of Energy in Baku; the D-8 High-Level Energy and Urban Dialogue held during the World Urban Forum in Baku; and the ongoing efforts to establish the D-8 Energy and Climate Center, D-8 Transport Excellence Center, and D-8 Media Excellence Center in Azerbaijan. He also highlighted the D-8's expanding international engagement with the United Nations system and regional organizations, including FAO, COMSTECH, COMSATS, OTS, and BSEC.

The Secretary-General reaffirmed the Secretariat's commitment to working closely with Member States to build a stronger, more dynamic, and future-oriented D-8 capable of delivering tangible benefits to its peoples and contributing meaningfully to global peace, development, and prosperity.

On the sidelines of the Commission Session, the Secretary-General held high-level consultations with H.E. Fuat Oktay, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and former Vice President of the Republic of Türkiye. Discussions focused on regional and global developments, preparations for the 12<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit, and opportunities for further strengthening economic cooperation among D-8 Member States by building on existing complementarities and creating new synergies. The Secretary-General expressed appreciation for Türkiye's longstanding support for the Organization and its founding vision.

The Secretary-General also met with Mr. Abdullah Eren, President of TİKA, to explore new avenues of cooperation in development assistance, capacity-building, digital transformation, e-government, youth and women entrepreneurship, agriculture, education, and health. It was agreed to pursue the creation of dedicated platform aimed at fostering collaboration among development agencies of Member States and promoting joint development initiatives across the D-8 region.

In a separate meeting with Mr. Ahmet Serdar İbrahimcioğlu, President of KOSGEB, discussions focused on strengthening cooperation in support of SMEs, entrepreneurship, innovation, digital transformation, Artificial Intelligence, technology development, and start-up ecosystems. The two sides explored opportunities for capacity-building programmes, cooperation among innovation centers and Technopark's, and possible mechanisms to support SME financing and regional value-chain integration.



While the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission was instrumental in advancing the broader D-8 agenda, the Secretary-General's interactions with Parliamentary Committee Chairman and key senior officials in Ankara contributed to promoting practical cooperation initiatives in development, entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainable economic growth across the D-8 region.



Istanbul, 19 June 2026