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PRESS RELEASE

D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL HOLDS HIGH-LEVEL ENGAGEMENTS DURING ANKARA VISIT

The Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), H.E. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, undertook a two-day working visit to Ankara on 17-18 August 2026, holding a series of engagements with senior government officials and representatives from the academia and research community, industry, and Parliament. The visit formed part of the Secretary-General's continued outreach to strengthen institutional partnerships and advance practical cooperation in the D-8's core priority areas.

During the visit, the Secretary-General met with H.E. Ambassador Aylin Sekizkök, D-8 Commissioner of the Republic of Türkiye, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There was a wide-ranging exchange of views on major D-8 activities and initiatives since the Secretary-General assumed office in January 2026 -- including efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Organization, expand sectoral cooperation, deepen engagement with Member States and partners, and enhance the D-8's effectiveness and international profile and visibility.

The Secretary-General reiterated appreciation for Türkiye's consistent support as a founding Member State and host country of the D-8 Secretariat, under the leadership of H.E. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and H.E. Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. He particularly acknowledged the Foreign Ministry's facilitation of the D-8 Secretariat's engagement with the relevant Turkish Ministries, agencies and institutions, as well as its support for the ongoing exercise to strengthen the Organization's financial and human resource capacities. The Secretary-General also congratulated Türkiye on successfully hosting the first-ever D-8 International Ministerial Meeting on Environment in Istanbul in July 2026, and the adoption of the landmark "Istanbul Declaration", strengthened D-8 coordination on climate action in the lead-up to COP31 under Türkiye's Presidency. Views were also exchanged on intensifying cooperation in priority sectors and translating D-8 decisions into tangible outcomes.

In his visit to the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) the Secretary-General met with its Director General, H.E. Ms. Zehra Zümrüt Selçuk. The two sides reviewed existing cooperation between D-8 and SESRIC and discussed



expanding collaboration in statistics, socio-economic research, capacity-building and training, including focused analytical and statistical reports on D-8 priority sectors. It was decided to promote joint activities, conferences and workshops in mutually agreed areas and explore ways to place the growing partnership on a more structured institutional footing, including the possibility of a formal cooperation framework.

At the Center for Strategic Research (SAM), the premier think-tank affiliated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, the Secretary-General met with SAM President Prof. Dr. Ramazan Erdağ. This was part of his initiative to broaden D-8 engagement with think-tanks, academia, policy experts, intellectuals, and the youth. The two sides discussed ways in which SAM's research and intellectual capacities could contribute to the promotion of D-8 priority objectives. It was agreed to explore joint research, policy dialogues, conferences, roundtables and other knowledge-based activities, including greater interaction among think-tanks and academic institutions across D-8 Member States.

The Secretary-General visited OSTİM Technical University, where he met with Mr. Orhan Aydın, Chairman of the Board of OSTİM Organized Industrial Zone and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of OSTİM Technical University; Prof. Dr. Murat Yülek, Rector of OSTİM Technical University; Dr. Derya Çağlar, General Manager of OSTİM Technopark; and senior members of the OSTİM team. Discussions covered ongoing D8-OSTİM Technical University cooperation and explored ways to leverage OSTİM's university-industry-technology ecosystem for D-8 Member States, with emphasis on Artificial Intelligence, research and innovation, Technoparks, entrepreneurship and start-ups, SME development, industrial clusters, commercialization of research, and stronger academia-industry linkages. The Secretary-General highlighted the potential for practical initiatives connecting Universities, Technoparks, researchers, entrepreneurs and SMEs across the D-8 geography.

At the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (TBMM), Secretary-General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood met with the Honourable Burhan Kayatürk, Member of Parliament for Van and Chairman of the EU Harmonization Committee. He apprised Mr. Kayatürk of the D-8's priorities and ongoing activities, and exchanged views on efforts to deepen economic cooperation, connectivity, and people-to-people exchanges among Member States. The Secretary-General highlighted the value of greater parliamentary engagement in promoting awareness and broader ownership of the D-8 and its core mission and objectives.

As part of his Ankara programme, the Secretary-General participated in the Diplomatic Reception hosted by the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia marking the 81st Anniversary of Indonesia's Independence. He exchanged greetings with H.E. Achmad Rizal Purnama, Ambassador of Indonesia to Türkiye, and conveyed felicitations to the Government and people of Indonesia.

The Ankara visit reflected the Secretary-General's emphasis on action-oriented diplomacy and wider institutional outreach, engaging government, research and development institutions,

academia, industry, think-tanks and parliamentarians to advance practical partnerships in support of the D-8's economic cooperation and development agenda.

Mr. Muhammad Bilal Khan, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-General, accompanied the Secretary-General during the visit.



Istanbul, 20 August 2026