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PRESS RELEASE

D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL'S ANKARA VISIT FOCUSES ON HEALTH COOPERATION, CLIMATE ACTION, AND INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

H.E. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), had high-level engagements during his latest visit to Ankara, Türkiye, focused on advancing cooperation in health, climate action, and other priority areas of the D-8 agenda.

Most prominently, the Secretary-General had an in-depth session with the Minister of Health, H.E. Prof. Dr. Kemal Memişoğlu, during which he conveyed deep appreciation for Türkiye's important role in the D-8 and its formidable capacities as well as rich experience in multiple aspects of the health sector. The two sides reviewed the evolving D-8 health cooperation agenda and exchanged views on translating existing commitments into more practical and result-oriented cooperation. The subjects covered included: opportunities for enhanced cooperation in pharmaceuticals and medical manufacturing, vaccines, biotechnology, research and innovation, digital health, and capacity-building. The importance of leveraging the complementary strengths and expertise available across the nine D-8 Member States was underscored, besides the need to foster stronger linkages among relevant institutions.

The Secretary-General and the Minister also exchanged views on the 2nd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Health, to be hosted by Türkiye, emphasizing the importance of substantive preparations and concrete outcomes. The Secretary-General proposed organizing a D-8 Webinar on Digital Health, drawing on Türkiye's experience and good practices, which was welcomed by the Ministry.

The Secretary-General further sought the Minister's support in strengthening D-8 engagement with relevant international health organizations to reinforce Member States' efforts in agreed priority areas. It was agreed to maintain close coordination between the D-8 Secretariat and the Ministry of Health of Türkiye to advance the health cooperation agenda and preparations for the 2nd Ministerial Meeting.

The Secretary-General's other major engagement in Ankara was his participation in the comprehensive Briefing organized for Diplomatic Missions on Türkiye's preparations as the incoming Presidency on the COP31 and Leaders' Summit, to be held in Antalya in November 2026. The Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change and President-Designate of COP31, H.E. Murat Kurum, delivered a substantive address, outlining the Presidency's core approach centered on 'Dialogue, Consensus, Action.'

On the sidelines, the Secretary-General interacted with Minister Murat Kurum and reaffirmed the D-8's strong support for Türkiye's COP Presidency and readiness to contribute constructively towards a successful Conference in Antalya. The engagement built on the momentum generated by the First D-8 International Ministerial Meeting on Environment, held in Istanbul on 17 July 2026, and the adoption



of the ‘Istanbul Declaration,’ which provided an important framework for advancing D-8 cooperation on environment and climate change. The D-8 Secretariat and Türkiye are also in consultations on possible D-8 engagements during COP31.

The Secretary-General also interacted with H.E. Fuat Oktay, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (TBMM), Ambassadors of D-8 Member States, and other distinguished speakers. The occasion provided a valuable opportunity for fruitful exchanges on COP31 preparations as well as matters of mutual interest.

The Ankara visit concluded with a meeting between the Secretary-General and Member of Parliament Mr. Ali Şahin, at the TBMM. The exchanges focused *inter alia* on the current D-8 agenda, Türkiye’s long-standing support for the Organization, and opportunities for further strengthening cooperation among D-8 Member States.

The Secretary-General highlighted the importance of sustained political and institutional support for advancing D-8 priorities and translating the Organization’s expanding agenda into tangible outcomes. MP Mr. Ali Şahin affirmed his strong support for the D-8 and its objectives and exchanged views on ways to further enhance the Organization’s visibility, salience, and contribution to cooperation among its Member States.

Overall, the Ankara engagements reflected the Secretary-General’s emphasis on strengthening coordination with Member States, advancing implementation of Summit and Ministerial-level decisions, and promoting practical, project-based and result-oriented cooperation across the D-8. The Secretary-General was accompanied during the visit by Ambassador Mustafa Özcan, Director-I, and Mr. Muhammad Bilal Khan, Executive Assistant, D-8 Secretariat.



Istanbul, 3 September 2026