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PRESS RELEASE

D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL CALLS FOR STRONGER TRADE AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS AT 2ND D-8 BUSINESS FORUM IN INDONESIA

The Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), H.E. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, delivered a pre-recorded Keynote Address at the 2nd D-8 Business Forum, organised by the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN) on 15 October 2026 at ICE BSD City, Tangerang, Indonesia, on the sidelines of the 41st Trade Expo Indonesia (TEI), held from 14-18 October 2026. Convened under the theme “*Advancing Indonesia’s D-8 Presidency: Empowering Business Cooperation in Trade and Supply Chain*,” the Forum brought together policymakers, senior government officials, diplomats, representatives of chambers of commerce, and business leaders from D-8 Member States, including a substantial business delegation from Nigeria.

The Business Forum was attended, among others, by Indonesia’s Ambassadors to Nigeria and Pakistan, the Ambassadors of Azerbaijan and Iran to Indonesia, and representatives of diplomatic missions and business communities from Member States, reflecting broad engagement in the D-8 economic cooperation agenda.

The Forum featured addresses by Mr. Andi Anzhar Cakra Wijaya, Deputy Chairman of KADIN for Multilateral Diplomacy; Ms. Zelda Wulan Kartika, Special Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia on Economic Diplomacy, representing the Foreign Minister; and Mr. Johni Martha, Director General for International Trade Negotiations, representing the Minister of Trade of Indonesia. Their interventions emphasised expanding intra-D-8 trade, reducing trade barriers, strengthening supply-chain connectivity, and advancing South-South cooperation. Indonesia also reaffirmed its commitment to host the Fifth Meeting of the D-8 Trade Ministers Council in 2027.

In his address, Ambassador Mahmood expressed appreciation to the Government of Indonesia, KADIN and other organizing partners for their continued commitment to private-sector engagement. He commended Indonesia’s proactive initiatives, including the inaugural D-8 Business Forum in 2024 and the first D-8 Halal Expo in July 2026. These initiatives reflect Indonesia’s sustained efforts to translate the Organisation’s economic potential into tangible commercial opportunities through expanded market access, investment promotion, and stronger industrial linkages among Member States.

Highlighting the collective economic strength of the nine D-8 Member States — representing approximately 1.3 billion people and a combined GDP exceeding US\$5 trillion — the Secretary-General noted the Organisation’s target of increasing intra-D-8 trade from US\$157 billion in 2024 to US\$500 billion by 2030, as stipulated under the Decennial Road 2020-2030. He welcomed the completion of ratification



process of the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) by all original signatories as a significant milestone and stressed the importance of maximising its commercial benefits through greater utilisation of trade preferences and improved trade facilitation. He added that, on the direction of the Trade Ministers, the Organisation was also exploring the possibilities of a more comprehensive instrument for trade expansion and integration.

Underscoring the importance of halal economy and industry as a high growth sector, the Secretary-General highlighted proposals for an integrated D-8 Halal Trade Corridor; a Digital Halal Marketplace and Investment Platform; and closer cooperation in halal industries across the D-8 geography. He also welcomed Indonesia's initiatives to institutionalise the D-8 Halal Expo as an annual event and establish a dedicated Halal Economy Cooperation Secretariat.

Emphasising the central role of the private sector, the Secretary-General stressed the importance of strengthening the D-8 Chambers of Commerce and Industry (D-8 CCI), including its planned Permanent Secretariat in Istanbul, and enhancing collaboration with the D-8 SME Centre in Abuja, Nigeria, to promote entrepreneurship, investment and integration into regional and global value chains.

The Forum's panel discussions addressed trade facilitation, business mobility, financial connectivity and opportunities for broader market access. The event concluded with the symbolic launch of the D-8 Business Summit, to be organized by KADIN in 2027. Looking ahead to the 12th D-8 Summit in early 2027 and the Organisation's 30th anniversary next year, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood called for concrete commercial outcomes and reaffirmed the Secretariat's commitment to advancing a more integrated, competitive, technology- and innovation-driven, and investment-oriented D-8 economic partnership.



Istanbul, 16 October 2026