

**Government of Pakistan**  
**Benazir Income Support Programme**

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**Press Release**

**July 26, 2016**

**Un Habitat’s New Urban Agenda For Sustainable Urbanization To Be Supported: Marvi**

Minister of State and Chairperson BISP, MNA Marvi Memon represented Pakistan as the head of the NDI delegation on Global Women’s Leadership Program at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for UN Habitat 3 at Surabaya Indonesia. “Habitat 3” is the third United Nations Conference on Housing and sustainable Urban Development that will take place in October 2016.

While making statement on behalf of Pakistan in the opening plenary session, the Minister stated that Pakistan has made commendable efforts towards implementation of Habitat - II Agenda, since the second United Nations Conference on Human settlements (Habitat - II) held in Istanbul in 1996. She highlighted that Pakistan was one of the most urbanized nations in South Asia. The urban population has increased tremendously from 43.0 million in 1998 and is expected to become pre-dominantly urbanized by the year 2025.



She stated that Pakistani Government had launched Vision 2025, a perspective plan, which has implications for managing urbanization as well as changing urban demography in line with UN Habitat New Urban agenda. She highlighted that Pakistan is committed towards making Pakistan's growing cities safer, sustainable, economically productive and equitable for the rural and urban vulnerable. In this regard, she mentioned government initiatives of construction of low cost housing schemes under Prime Minister's Program, Apna Ghar Scheme in Punjab and fast development of Integrated Mass transit System, Metro Bus and Metro-rail in major cities.

She reiterated that Programs like Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Pakistan's largest social safety net for the poorest women living in rural and urban Pakistan, are critical for this New Urban Agenda. Being the only custodian of the gender issues and women empowerment, BISP will be key to ensure gender equity whilst cities develop in Pakistan. Initiatives like microcredit interest free loans and BISP E-commerce are empowering women in the rural and urban spaces.

Creating safer and violence free urbanization especially for the vulnerable women is a key challenge for Pakistan which BISP through its advocacy will manage well in coordination with the provinces and federal ministries like Finance, Planning & Development, Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Housing and Works and PM Youth Program.