PRESS STATEMENT BY Sh. M. VENKAIAH NAIDU, HON’BLE MINISTER, AFTER BEING ELECTED AS PRESIDENT, GOVERNING COUNCIL, UN HABITAT

- I am indeed **delighted to be elected as President of the Governing Council of UN HABITAT**.
- This is a matter of great pride for India to be bestowed with such responsibility.
- The **member countries of Asia Pacific group** have nominated India and the other groups of nations have endorsed the same.
- **India has hosted the 6th APMCHUD Conference at New Delhi in December 2016 and BRICS Urban Conference at Visakhapatnam in October 2016.**
- **India is also currently the chair for APMCHUD.**
- India has been **consistently making efforts towards deepening and in enhancing the role of urbanisation in the developmental process** with wide ranging initiatives.
- India has launched major **initiatives for urban sector** which are aimed towards strengthening the urban system.
  - **Smart Cities Mission** envisages development of 100 smart cities to enhance the quality of urban life and to provide a clean and suitable environment.
  - **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Transformation (AMRUT)** aims to create infrastructure in 500 cities of above 100,000 population that has a direct link to provision of better services to the people.
Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana `Housing for All’ Mission envisages provision of 20 million houses by 2022 for housing all the urban households.

Heritage City Development and Augmentation (HRUDAY) programme intends to support core infrastructure aimed at revitalization of heritage sites and nearby areas.

National Urban Livelihood Mission envisages citizens to be adequately skilled to gain beneficial livelihoods and also to contribute to the economy.

Such urban development related Missions are further supported by special programmes such as Make-in-India, Digital India, Skilling India and Start up India which all together aim to reinvigorate and re-energise the cities as engines of economic growth and empowerment and as centres of improved quality of life.

Thus there is an URBAN TRANSFORMATION taking place in India under the able leadership of our Prime Minister MODI who is spearheading the mission of ‘Making Of Developed India’.

India is chairing this 26th Session of the Governing Council of UN HABITAT which would focus on implementation of New Urban Agenda.

UN-Habitat is the United Nations programme working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.
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UN-Habitat has set itself a medium-term strategy approach for each successive six-year period. The current strategic plan spans from 2014 to 2019.

Current trends of rapid urbanization – with over half of the world’s population now living in cities, and 90% of urban growth taking place in developing countries – coupled with recent global economic turmoil, growing poverty, and rising consequences of climate change have created the need for such strategic readjustments.

After a recent and successful reorganization of its internal structure to improve efficiency and to optimize the use of its resources, UN-Habitat is presently addressing its mandate through the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan. The plan outlines seven focus areas:

- Urban legislation, land, and governance,
- Urban planning and design,
- Urban economy,
- Urban basic services,
- Housing and slum upgrading,
- Risk reduction and rehabilitation, and
- Research and capacity development.

Because of the magnitude of work needed to effectively address the current urbanization challenges, UN-Habitat endeavours to strengthen its partnerships at all levels:
with governments, local authorities, NGOs, the private sector, and civil society.

- The 2014-2019 Strategic Plan places great emphasis on UN-Habitat’s catalytic and federalizing role, which positions it as a leading and acknowledged authority on urbanization matters.

- The Governing Council is composed of 58 member states, which represent 5 regional groups. Member states are elected by the UN’s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for a period of four years.

- The Objective of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat is to:
  - Promote integral and comprehensive approach to human settlements
  - Assist countries and regions with human settlements problems
  - Strengthen co-operation and co-participation in all countries on human settlement issues

- The theme of the 26th Governing Council of UN-Habitat scheduled from 8th May to 12th May, 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya is “Opportunities for the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda” including the Sub-themes: (i) Towards inclusive, sustainable and adequate housing for a better future; (ii) Synergies and financing for sustainable urbanization, and (iii) Integrated human settlements planning for sustainable urbanization.

- The 26th Governing Council would also, among other things, discuss issues relating to the activities of UN-Habitat matters including coordination matters, work
programme and budget of UN-Habitat, action plan for implementation of New Urban Agenda, and review of outcomes of the Habitat III Conference.

- India will also chair the **1st meeting of the 6th Bureau of APMCHUD at Nairobi** on 08th May, 2017 (Evening). As the host of the 6th APMCHUD conference, **India is the chair of the Bureau of APMCHUD for the next two years**, till the next conference is held at Tehran in later half of 2018.

- **Composition of the 6th Bureau of APMCHUD:**
  
  a) Republic of India,  *(Chair)*
  b) Republic of Korea,
  c) Islamic Republic of Iran,
  d) Republic of Indonesia,
  e) Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka,
  f) Republic of Iraq,
  g) Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and
  h) Republic of Nauru.