

**Government of Pakistan  
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division  
Press Release**

**Interactive Dialogue to Welcome President World Economic Forum to Pakistan**



July 11, 2019- Islamabad Børge Brende, President of the World Economic Forum (WEF) arrived in Islamabad today for a one-day visit to Islamabad to meet Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan and other members of the government. Ikram Sehgal, Chairman of Pathfinder Group, and Anum Akhai, of Martin Dow Group, hosted an interactive dialogue in his honor. This visit of the WEF President to Islamabad is an expression of the interest that this global economic organization is taking in Pakistan and its readiness to take more initiatives to support our country.

Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation and Dr. Reza Baqir, Governor State Bank of Pakistan were also present at the interactive dialogue together with a number of renowned economists, finance and media specialists, government officials, diplomats and other stakeholders.

Speaking at the dialogue, Dr. Nishtar welcomed Mr. Brende to Pakistan. She said that today we live in a very interconnected world, and this world appears to be challenged on many accounts. There are widening inequities, a number of demographic shifts, several epidemiological

challenges, and a rapid wave of urbanization are posing serious challenges to it. Also, there are many wars and conflicts ongoing, a number of humanitarian crises, a famine, the largest migration waves since the second world war. This is a world in which trust in multilateralism is eroding, the global system is facing threats that could wipe out the development gains of the past centuries. She said that even in the face of these challenges there are some auspicious developments at the global level, such as the focus on systems through Agenda 2030, emphasis on human capital development, and the potential of technology to deliver on public outcomes, she said that the World Economic Forum was one such positive transformative force as well due to its convening ability to convene public and private sectors and forge collaborative solutions.

She appreciated Mr. Brende for visiting Pakistan at a very opportune time when Pakistan is moving forward with transformative development agenda as the Prime Minister's top priority. She elaborated on Ehsaas, as one such transformative agenda. "Ehsaas is about the creation of a 'welfare state' by countering elite capture and leveraging technology to create precision safety nets, promoting financial inclusion and access to digital services, supporting the economic empowerment of women, focusing on the central role of human capital formation for poverty eradication, economic growth and sustainable development, and overcoming financial barriers to accessing health and post-secondary education" she added.

Mr. Brende in his address, appreciated the hospitality of Pakistan and said that with huge youth bulge in population, extensive potential for renewable energy and massive scope for skill building, and competitiveness, Pakistan has a great opportunity for economic growth. This indicates the cruciality of human capital development for the socio-economic growth of the country, he added. Currently, Pakistan's economy is at a very critical juncture and Pakistan can successfully come out of this transition by making right investments in education and skill development. He appreciated that the present government is driving in the right direction to uplift the economic engine of the country by thought partnerships and collaborations between public and private sectors. He announced that World Economic Forum will be launching a national accelerator on bridging the skill gap in Pakistan.