

Welcome address by the Director General of Civil Aviation of Nepal on 56<sup>th</sup> DGCA Conference

Rt. Honorable Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli,  
Honorable Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Yogesh Bhattarai,  
Your Excellency Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, President of the ICAO Council,  
Mr. Arun Mishra, Director of the ICAO Asia Pacific Office,  
Our distinguished Guests Honorable State Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Secretary of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Ministry and other dignitaries  
Director Generals of the civil aviation of the Asia Pacific Region,  
Representatives of the various international aviation organizations and industry,  
Media friends,  
Ladies and Gentlemen !

It is my pleasure to welcome all of you in this one of the most beautiful country in the world, best known for its magnificent panoramic mountain views and unique historical and cultural heritages. Using this opportunity, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the International Civil Aviation Organization and its Asia Pacific office for giving Nepal this opportunity for hosting this Conference during the historic 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation Organization, popularly known as the Chicago Convention.

On this auspicious occasion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Rt. Honorable Prime Minister of Nepal KP Sharma Oli for giving his consent to inaugurate this very important international event of civil aviation sector despite of his very busy schedule. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to all distinguished guests for their gracious presence in this inaugural ceremony.

The contribution of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is immense for ensuring the safe, secure and efficient air transport development in the world. On this occasion I again reiterate our commitment towards the provision of Chicago Convention, 1944, its Annexes and guiding principle of ICAO for the establishment of effective safety oversight system. Nepal is in the process of reforming its civil aviation system through legislative and institutional reform in line with ICAO's guiding principle.

Safety is the core of civil aviation system. Nepal has made a considerable effort to improve its safety oversight capability level as required by ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan 2018-2022. With the support of ICAO TCB and ICAO APAC Office, we were able to achieve this target and it is well recognized by ICAO through its ICAO Council President Certificate. We have developed National Aviation Safety Plan 2018-2022 in line with ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan and also completed the first phase of State Safety Programme Implementation in collaboration with our industry partner. To give continuity the work of strengthening safety oversight capability, Nepal has a technical cooperation arrangement with DGAC France and we are working closely in this area for last two

years. Continuous support from EASA in harmonizing aircraft maintenance and airworthiness requirements is very instrumental to enhance safety and quality of aircraft operations in the region.

Ladies and gentlemen, Nepal possesses a very tough and difficult mountainous terrain where a very fast changing meteorological phenomenon prevails. We have altogether 50 airports of various sizes and among them 34 airports are in operations. Most of these airports are located in mountainous geography with 500-700 meter long air strips permitting Short-Take off and -Landing to small turbo-prop aeroplanes to serve community living in remote areas. To maintain continuous safe operations in these STOL ports are indeed very challenging. Occurrences associated with aircraft operations in Nepal are mostly relating to these operations, and more specifically, with small turbo-prop aeroplanes having less than 19 seat capacity and helicopters involved in logistic and rescue missions in high altitude operations. These operations cannot be compared with main stream air transport operations and also neither justifiable to compare with aircraft occurrences rate of air transport category. Due to our additional requirements of training and qualification to operate in such high altitude Altiports and collaborative efforts with airline operators, we are able to reduce fatal accident and number of fatalities in such operations significantly.

Air traffic data in Nepal indicates that there is an average of 7.2 percent growth of passenger traffic in international sector and 7.6 percent growth in domestic sector for last 25 years. With compared to year 2017, the passenger growth is about 12 percent in international sector and 16 percent in domestic sector in year 2018. With increase in an enthusiastic rate of air passenger growth and get benefit from its ample tourism potential Nepal has focused to expand airport infrastructures so as to relieve from the existing capacity constraint associated with limitation of a single international airport of Kathmandu valley. We have initiated the construction of new international airports in Nepal. Among them Gautam Buddha International Airport located at the birth place of Lord Buddha is under the phase of completion whereas Pokhara International Airport, located at the renowned tourist destination of Pokhara valley will be completed by June 2021. Besides these, a new full-fledged international airport with opportunity of future expansion has also been initiated in plain area near capital city Kathmandu.

To enhance our air navigation system, we have introduced PBN based flight procedure in five major airports and a total of 7 airports are equipped with night operations facilities. We have also enhanced our ATS surveillance capability with modern MSSR system which is capable to provide surveillance in two-third of our air space. This year we will complete the installation of ADS B facilities in 4 major airports including Kathmandu to complement the existing surveillance system. To further enhance our air navigation capacity, we are collaborating with Airport Authority of India for additional air routes and possibility of establishing GPS Aided Geo Augmented Navigation also known as GAGAN.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Nepal is hosting the DGCA conference 3<sup>rd</sup> time. Before this, we had organized the Conference in 1978 and 1998. This clearly indicates our attachment and commitment towards every endeavor of ICAO. This year our Theme Topic "Harmonizing efforts to meet the capacity

constraints" is a very appropriate issue facing by many countries in the world. These 5 days active participation and discussion will identify an appropriate solution to overcome the capacity constraints being faced by States in the areas of aerodromes, air space, safety and security and human resources. The Conference will also be able to conclude with valuable suggestions in various issues relating to agenda items Aviation safety, security and facilitation, air navigation services, economic development of air transport, aviation and environment, technical and regional cooperation and many more.

Ladies and gentlemen, on this occasion, before concluding my welcome address, I consider it my duty to extend my sincere thanks to Mr. Sanjiv Gautam, my predecessor and ex. Director General of CAA Nepal, who initiated to organize this conference and completed major tasks to prepare Nepal to host this programme.

At last, on behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to assure you, that we do all efforts for your pleasant and memorable stay in Kathmandu. I would also like to request you to explore the historic and cultural sites of this ancient city whenever you get a chance during your stay.

I would like to express my high gratitude for your attention and wish a success to the Conference.

Thank you.