

Remarks by Ambassador Hiramatsu at Global Civil Aviation Summit 2019

Date: 15th January, 2019

Venue: The Grand Hyatt, Mumbai

Hon'ble Minister for Civil Aviation, Mr. Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu,

Hon'ble Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Mr. Jayant Sinha

Mr. Rajiv Nayan Choubey, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of you on this auspicious occasion to inaugurate the Global Aviation Summit 2019. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere respect for the vision and able leadership of Shri Suresh Prabhu, Hon'ble Minister for Civil Aviation, for realizing the Global Aviation Summit 2019 today.

It is a great honor for the Government of Japan to participate in this important initiative, along with many Japanese companies, ranging from airline companies, aviation manufactures to airport operators, that wish to work in the field of Civil Aviation in India.

In the midst of the rapidly expanding and changing Civil Aviation market and Civil Aviation Industry, I totally agree with Shri Suresh Prabhu's insightful suggestion that we need to have multifaceted discussion to deal with the current issues surrounding this industry. More and more passengers are now beginning to fly, as seen in India, and we are facing a swiftly changing civil

aviation environment due to the development of new technologies at a surprising pace.

We need to look at these challenges from a broad point of view, bearing in mind regulations, technological innovations, commercial aspects, security and impact to the environment. I appreciate the Government of India's initiative for allowing cross-industry discussions through this summit.

Please allow me touch upon the bilateral relationship between Japan and India. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Japan last October was another success with a set of historic achievements for our strategic partnership. Japan and India share the vision towards a free and open Indo-Pacific. There are two keywords to materialize a free and open Indo-Pacific, and those are "connectivity" and "quality infrastructure." It is clear that Civil Aviation plays a crucial role in this regard.

In September 2017, during Prime Minister Abe's visit to Ahmedabad, Japan and India exchanged a RoD (Record of Discussions), allowing Japanese and Indian airlines to operate unlimited number of flights between the two countries, under the so-called "Open Sky Agreement". I hope that this "Open Sky Agreement" will create more passenger traffic, help airlines to establish new civil aviation networks, and encourage face-to-face interactions between our two countries. Enhanced communications will result in better understanding about each other, solidifying already strong business and strategic relationships between Japan and India. And I am sure, this will certainly improve "connectivity" between India and East Asia and beyond.

The importance of quality infrastructure is widely recognized. Japan is playing the key role for promoting the concept of quality infrastructure worldwide. Japan is dealing with one of the largest Civil Aviation traffic volumes, and has developed expertise in managing heavy air traffic. Japan is proud of its high-quality civil aviation infrastructure, such as advanced ATFM (Air Traffic Flow Management), ASM (Air Space Management) and facial recognition system to ensure the safety of airport and air traffic and the smooth boarding process of passengers. In this way, we are now preparing for the expected increase of civil aviation traffic in Tokyo Metropolitan area during the forthcoming Tokyo Olympic Games in 2020.

We hope that Japanese high-quality, resilient, safe and environment friendly civil aviation infrastructure will be emulated in other countries including India. Japanese Government stands ready to support it. I hope you will visit NEC booth in this venue which showcases most advanced facial recognition system.

In addition, Japanese Civil Aviation infrastructure and systems have shown resilience against natural disasters, such as, earthquakes, tsunamis and typhoons. Japan Civil Aviation Bureau (JCAB) and Japanese civil aviation industry have accumulated experiences and expertise on how to deal with natural disasters and to recover the civil aviation system as quickly as possible. Our knowledge and experiences would certainly be useful to India and other countries in minimizing the damages from natural disasters. I expect that active discussions on the topic of disaster management in the civil aviation industry will take place during this Global Civil Aviation Summit 2019.

In the field of aerospace manufacturing, Japanese technologies have started shining again. Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation is working on the production of “Mitsubishi Regional Jet,” so called MRJ.

Currently, 4 MRJ prototypes are undergoing various testing in the United States. Japan Civil Aviation Bureau will start the flight tests early this year, expecting the first delivery in the mid 2020s. In the field of light business jet, Honda Jet has been enjoying very good reputation all over the world since its first delivery in 2015.

I hope that MRJ and Honda Jet will expand the possibility of Japanese aerospace industry, bringing safer and more efficient aircrafts to the civil aviation market here and beyond.

In concluding, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to all the people who have been working so hard to realize the Global Civil Aviation Summit 2019. I wish that this summit brings a new perspective to all the participants today, leading to a new phase of advanced Civil Aviation processes and systems in the world.

Thank you very much.