

**Opening Remarks by the CAPSCA-AP Chairperson, AVM M Mafidur Rahman,
Chairman, CAAB on the 15th CAPSCA-AP meeting
(12th-16th Dec 22)**

Chairman's Opening Remarks: Time: 14th Dec 7:00 AM

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim. In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful.

1. His Excellency Mr. Atty Arthur P Tugade, Secretary Department of Transportation , Republic of the Philippines; Mr. Dr. Manjit Singh, the Acting Regional Director of ICAO APAC Office; Captain Manuel Antonio Lara Tamayo, Director General of CAA Philippines; Mr. D.M Parakrama Dissanayake, Regional Coordinator CAPSCA; Dr Ansa Jordaan, Chief of Aviation Medicine section, ICAO HQ; Distinguished DGCA's, Representatives from the member States, Representatives from WHO, ACI, IATA and all the participants attending the meeting, very Good Morning and warm welcome to you all.

2. Indeed, its my honor and privilege, as the CAPSCA-Asia Pacific Regional Chairperson to say a few words on this grand occasion. Although I couldn't attend in person due to national commitment, but I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the ICAO APAC Office for holding 12th, 13th and 14th CAPSCA-AP special meetings virtually to keep the participating States updated especially on COVID-19 status. These meetings facilitated the member States to share their experiences in the preparation of strategies for the recovery of COVID Pandemic.

3. Here I'd like to recall the contribution of 11th CAPSCA-AP Workshop in Bangladesh in October 2019, just prior to spread of COVID-19. Through the conduct of that event we were somehow prepared and could respond immediately to prevent the spread of virus and support national health agencies and other stake holders in accordance with the WHO and CASPCA guidelines. The Bangladesh Government under the dynamic

leadership of Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, took timely steps in dealing with this deadly virus and put the COVID-19 issue as one of its topmost priorities.

4. As you all are aware that Bangladesh being a densely populated country, effective implementation of many measures was difficult. But with the Government assistance and enforcement we were able to raise the public awareness which helped us a lot in the containment of the virus in our country. Thanks to ICAO secretariat for timely issuance of state letters followed by CART recommendations really helped all of us.

5. The assistance from the ICAO Regional Office had always played an important role in raising great understanding among the member States. The numerous video conferences were helpful in connecting the member States in dealing with the strategic issues needing immediate attention. In addition the research works/guidelines published by WHO, ACI, IATA, EASA, FAA and other ICAO partner organizations were communicated to us promptly by the Regional Office, which in turn were disseminated to our airport authorities, airlines, public health authorities and all other concerned agencies for their compliance. Special emphasis was given on the Public Health Corridor concept received from ICAO HQs to protect the flight crew during the COVID-19 pandemic while passengers aircraft transported cargo in the pax cabin to overcome the economic loss of the airlines. Bubble arrangements, bilateral and regional cooperative arrangements were introduced. In fact, this pandemic gave birth many innovations.

6. All pandemics leave us with some lessons, likewise COVID-19 has also taught us to think more rational and to be more humane. COVID affected all of us, but it also helped us getting united. States supported each other with available resources and capacity. We witnessed a good trend of the world community compromising to reach general consensus. This was prominent in the High Level Meetings, Long Term Aspiration Goal Dialogue both in UN, ICAO. Number of Working Papers presented in 57th DGCA Conference and 41st ICAO General Assembly also helped us to formulate “Declaration on Air Transport Facilitation Affirming Global Commitment to Enable the Safe and Efficient Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic and to make aviation more resilient in the future.” And also for Maintaining health and sustaining safe air transport during public health emergencies

affecting air travel. Now we realize better that Commercial objectives are to be taken in but saving human lives in the pandemic should have more weightage, and that is what the member States had undertaken despite diverse climate, population, socio cultural heritage, refugees and many other public health issues. Like other regions, in Asia Pacific, as CAPSCA member States, we must work together in a cooperative way going above the regional, political issues, to contribute to wheels of economic development.

7. I sincerely appreciate ICAO regional office for arranging the 2nd Aviation Medical Examiner Refresher workshop along with the CAPSCA/15 Meeting which is graciously hosted by Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines. The more we prepare, better we will be able to respond.

8. I wish that the CAPSCA/15 meeting would bring fruitful discussions among the CAPSCA–AP member States and other participants to contain any further reappearance of pandemics or any public health emergencies and challenges.

9. At the end, once again I express my sincere appreciation ICAO Regional Office, CAPSCA Chief Dr. Ansa and the DG Philippine for organizing and hosting the important event. I wish all the participants, good health, cooperative spirit and for the future success and continuation of the CAPSCA Programme.

Mary Christmas and New Year Greetings in advance to Everyone.

May Almighty Bless us all!

Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen!

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