Aide – Memoire

1. India is pleased to announce its candidature for re-election to Part- II of the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for the term 2025-2028. As an active and responsible ICAO member, India remains committed to the advancement of global civil aviation, safety, security, sustainability, and innovation. A founding member of ICAO since 1944, India has completed 80 glorious years advocating for ICAO's agenda of sustainable, safe, secure, and economical international aviation.

2. Civil aviation in India started way back on 18th February 1911, when Henri Pequet piloted the first commercial plane carrying 6500 mails across the river Yamuna, about eight miles covered in 27 minutes by a Humber bi-plane. This flight was recognized as the world's 'first carriage of mail by air'. We celebrated 100 years of Civil Aviation in India in 2011.

3. India is one of the fastest-growing aviation markets globally, with projections suggesting it will become the third-largest aviation market by 2030. This growth is driven by a rising middle class, increased air travel demand, and India's initiatives such as the UDAN (Ude Deshka Aam Naagrik) scheme to promote regional connectivity. Indian carriers recently signed record purchase agreements for the procurement of more than 1000 new aircraft. According to projections by the Airports Council International (ACI), India's aviation market will grow 5.5 times by 2052, a rate significantly higher than the global average of 2.67 times. This reflects India's increasing importance in global air travel and air cargo networks.

4. India currently has over 150 operational airports and plans to expand this number significantly. The country is focusing on modernizing existing infrastructure, developing new green-field airports, and ensuring better connectivity in remote and under served areas to enhance global air connectivity.

5. India successfully hosted the 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference (APAC- MC) on 11th and 12th September 2024 in New Delhi. In 2025, India will host two significant ICAO APAC Symposiums, namely The Radio Navigation Symposium, scheduled for 7th - 9th April 2025 and the GBAS-

SBAS Workshop for Airspace Users from 14th - 16th October 2025 reinforcing its leadership in global aviation. India is also hosting the Dangerous Goods Panel Working Group Meeting from 21st April to 25th April 2025 at New Delhi with objectives to examine, study and propose the solutions on the issues of safe transport of dangerous goods by air through extensive discussions and exchange of world's best practices among the members of ICAO Dangerous Goods Panel. These events will further contribute to advancing aviation safety and technology on a global scale.

6.   **India's commitment to ICAO's Strategic Goals:**

6.1   **Strategic Goal 1: Every Flight is Safe and Secure:** India plays a proactive role in supporting ICAO's Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP). India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has implemented comprehensive safety regulations, enhanced training programs, and collaborated with international agencies to ensure global safety standards are met. India has made significant strides in enhancing aviation security in line with ICAO's standards. The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) serves as the regulatory authority overseeing civil aviation security in the country.

6.2   **Strategic Goal 2 : Aviation is Environmentally Sustainable:**

6.2.1 India is dedicated to addressing climate change and has taken significant steps to promote Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) production and usage, carbon reduction initiatives, and the integration of clean technologies in aviation to reduce the sector's carbon footprint. India has set a target to blend 5% SAF in jet fuel for international flights by 2030.

6.2.2 Indian airports are also leaders in green energy use, with nearly all major airports operating on renewable energy. Airport operators, including the Airports Authority of India (AAI), have installed solar power plants to generate and consume green energy, promoting sustainability. Since 2014, 80 airports-approximately 51% of the total 157 operational airports-have achieved 100% green energy usage. Airports such as Cochin have gone further by not only using green energy but also

supplying it to the city grid. Airports like Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru have attained ACI Level 4+ carbon-neutral status. The setting up of the International Solar Alliance and the Global Bio fuel Alliance in India demonstrates our commitment to this cause.

6.3 Strategic Goal 3: Aviation Delivers Seamless, Accessible, and Reliable Mobility for All:

6.3.1 The Indian airspace spreads over 2.8 million square nautical miles including oceanic area measuring 1.8 million square nautical miles. India has always been at the forefront of technological innovation to ensure reliable and efficient flight operations and airspace management in one of the biggest and busiest airspaces in the world. The indigenous GAGAN (GPS-Aided GEO Augmented Navigation) system for enhanced satellite-based navigation and the Space based ADS-B (Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast) system have been implemented for more efficient and accurate air traffic operations.

6.3.2 India has made remarkable progress in advancing Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) by setting upworking groups to develop regulations for eVTOLs, vertiports, and air operator permits. The development of a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) document, tailored to India's needs, is underway, along side efforts to align AAM with traditional airspace. These steps position India at the fore front of AAM innovation, aiming for a sustainable and efficient air mobility ecosystem.

6.3.3 In celebration of ICAO 75 years of facilitation, India has proliferated the use of Digi-Yatra at its major airports, enabling seamless, paperless travel through biometric facial recognition. As the IT hub of the world, India is at the forefront of digital transformation in aviation, revolutionizing aviation processes. The service, available via a mobile app on both Android and iOS platforms, has gained widespread adoption, with over 80 lakh users having downloaded the app and more than 4 crore journeys completed through Digi Yatra.

6.3.4 India is among the few countries to develop a completely digital, paperless, and automated platform "Digital Sky" to support safe, efficient and secure access for millions of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) or Drones to the Indian airspace. India is extensively

using drones to provide services to a variety of sectors like health, agriculture, industry, tourism, etc.

6.3.5 In order to promote gender equality in aviation sector, Government of India has issued an advisory on "gender equality in the civil aviation sector" for industry stakeholders to increase the number of women in various positions to 25% by 2025 in India's aviation industry.

6.4 **Strategic Goal 4 : No Country Left Behind:**

6.4.1 India is a key contributor to global aviation development by providing technical cooperation and training to developing countries. India's civil aviation authorities, in collaboration with ICAO, offer expertise, best practices, and capacity-building programs to enhance aviation safety and efficiency in several member states. With state-of-the-art training institutes, India is fast becoming a hub for aviation training in areas such as Air Navigation Services, Rescue & Firefighting, and Aviation Management. India has consistently extended support to developing nations through sponsored training programs in the true spirit of' No Country Left Behind.'

6.4.2 India's aviation sector also plays a crucial role in global humanitarian efforts. The Indian Air Force and commercial airlines frequently provide critical services during emergencies. India has conducted numerous medical evacuations and disaster relief missions, including transporting emergency supplies, medical teams, and assisting countries affected by natural disasters. During the COVID-19 pandemic, India played a key role in repatriating citizens and providing essential medical supplies, including COVID-19 vaccines, to other nations.

6.5 **Strategic Goal 5 : Economic Development of Air Transport Assures Prosperity and Social Well-Being for All :** India ensures compliance with the Economic Development of Air Transport by implementing strategic policies, expanding infrastructure, and promoting economic growth. The National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) 2016 and liberalized Foreign Direct Investment rules attract global investment in the sector, while bilateral air service agreements expand global connectivity and partnerships. Programs like UDAN improve regional access, and airport modernization through the PPP model boosts capacity. Since its launch,

the UDAN scheme has successfully operationalized 619 routes and 88 airports, demonstrating the India's unwavering commitment to improving connectivity across the nation. Aviation significantly contributes to India's GDP and job creation, with a focus on skill development and incentives for the MRO sector. Technological advancements in air traffic management enhance efficiency, and affordability measures ensure widespread access to air travel. By strengthening connectivity, fostering economic growth, and supporting employment, India's aviation sector drives national prosperity and societal well-being.

6.6 **Strategic Goal 6 : ICAO's Convention and Treaties Address All Challenges:** India remains steadfast in its commitment to ICAO's strategic goals by adhering to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) and other international treaties, laws, and regulations to address evolving challenges in global aviation. Through robust policy frameworks, regulatory compliance, and collaboration with ICAO, India ensures alignment with global standards on safety, security, environmental sustainability, and air transport efficiency. India actively participates in audits, capacity-building programs, and the implementation of advanced safety and security measures, fostering international cooperation and contributing to the resilience and sustainable development of global aviation.

7. **India's Permanent Delegation at ICAO, Montreal:** The Permanent Delegation of India at ICAO in Montreal plays a pivotal role in supporting all ICAO's initiatives promoting safe, secure, sustainable, harmonized and gender inclusive international civil aviation. As a key participant in ICAO governance, India actively contributes to policy formulation, regulatory frameworks, and global aviation standards. The Representative of India is an active member of all ICAO Standing Committees, including those focused on safety, security, environment, and economic development. Notably, the current Representative of India also serves as the Chair of the ICAO Committee on Cooperation with External Parties (CCEP), strengthening partnerships between ICAO and external stakeholders, and as the Vice Chair of the ICAO Finance Committee (FIC), contributing to financial oversight and resource allocation. Through these leadership roles, India reinforces its commitment to shaping international aviation policies and fostering global cooperation.

8.   **India's Vision for ICAO 2025-2028**

8.1   **Strengthening Global Aviation Safety Security, and Sustainability:** India aims to continue enhancing global aviation safety and security, ensuring that all nations adhere to ICAO's standards. India will continue to advocate for sustainable aviation practices to mitigate aviation's environmental impact.

8.2   **Promoting Equitable Growth in Air Connectivity :** India envisions a more inclusive aviation ecosystem, where air connectivity is expanded to remote and underserved regions, fostering equitable economic growth and promoting tourism and trade.

8.3   **Advancing Technology and Innovation:** India will support the integration of new technologies in aviation to enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs, and improve the passenger experience, including advancements in air traffic management and the adoption of artificial intelligence.

8.4   **Supporting ICAO's, No Country Left Behind Initiative:** India reaffirms its commitment to ICAO's initiative to ensure that all countries benefit from aviation's positive contributions. India is committed to sharing knowledge and providing technical assistance to help countries build robust aviation systems.

India therefore seeks the continued support of ICAO member states for its re-election to the ICAO Council under Part II, reinforcing its commitment to a safe, secure, sustainable, and inclusive global aviation system. India remains dedicated to contributing to ICAO's mission of advancing international aviation for the benefit of all nations.