

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SAFETY SEMINAR-2011

OPENING SPEECH BY THE CHIEF OF AIR STAFF ON THE INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SAFETY SEMINAR 2011 ON 18 OCT 2011

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim,

1. Honourable Adviser to Prime Minister, Major General Tariq Ahmed Siddique (retd), Distinguished Guests, Delegates from home and aboard, Ladies and Gentlemen, Assalamu-Alaikum and a very Good Morning.

2. I am deeply honoured to welcome honourable Advisor and all the distinguished guests and participants to International Flight Safety Seminar-2011. This premier event manifests our attachment to promote flight safety and as a senior airmen of the country, I consider it an integral and important part of my professional duty. However, Flight Safety is not a business of Air Forces only. Every aviation related organization can greatly benefit from the concepts and practices of safety culture. With this view, the seminar is aimed at providing a unique platform to share our knowledge, experience and thoughts. As we explore the theme of this seminar "Experience sharing - A tool for expounding Flight Safety" I am sure that the participants, with their rich experience and knowledge, will 'identify the challenges' for improving the flight safety standards that will benefit us all.

Distinguished Audience,

3. In my view, the uniqueness of this Seminar lies in the very nature and outlook of aviation business. As aviators we share the same sky which by nature has no physical boundaries. Aviation fraternity worldwide -- be it military or civil, is perhaps one of the most intimately connected communities as our concerns are similar when it comes to conducting safe flight operation. While our common concern impels us to be closer, the growth outlook of the aviation industry in the Asia Pacific region makes this seminar much more relevant and essential to share our experiences and knowledge. Indeed, with an estimated demand of over 11000 new civil airplanes in the Asia Pacific region by 2030, the focus of aviation industry is now on Asia and no country can ignore that. Over the next 20 years, the number of airplanes in the Asia Pacific airlines fleet will nearly be tripled making air travel more frequent. A great majority of these airplanes will be new, demanding high end knowledge of the aviators, engineers and associated personnel.

4. In BAF, overcoming the challenges and ensuring a better Flight Safety trend has come a long way since our first flight in 1971 during our Liberation War. Starting with a few old aircraft like Dakota, Otter and others, BAF now operates cutting edge aircraft like Mig-29s. Our flight operations now expands beyond our national boundary, in difficult environment of Congo and Ivory Coast in UN Peace Keeping missions generating around 3,500 hrs each year. Even with bullet hits in some occasions in last 20 years, our aircraft in Africa were able to sustain operations without any major incidents or accidents with bare minimum operational and maintenance support and very good flight safety record.

5. The induction of modern platforms, systems and equipments in BAF is placing even higher demands on the cognitive skills of today's professionals. In both military and civil aviation, operators are now required to work with far more complex systems, dealing with more data and advanced information technology. Today's pilot needs to be capable of absorbing new information and changes quickly and synthesize those accurately for proper planning, problem solving, decision making and anticipating uncertainty, while flying high performance aircraft. It is a tough task and requires a superior level of situational awareness.

Distinguished Guests,

6. Flight Safety, be it in civil or military, revolves around the preservation of precious resources, both men and machines, while achieving the organizational objectives. The objectives in the civil aviation sector are driven by the need for efficient and safe transportation of passengers and to satisfy business needs. In the military aviation, the objective is to train realistically and conserve national air power capability thereby preserving the war fighting potential of the nation. I am a firm believer that, in such a challenging & demanding environment, flight safety remains an effective "force multiplier" for any organization. A safe environment would allow us to optimally utilize all resources that not only supports safe & effective flight but also preserve our precious man & machine. I believe that there is always enough time to do the job safely. If we don't take the right action at the right time, we may not be able to try again tomorrow.

7. Taking right action demands right kind of knowledge. The simplest and easiest means of acquiring knowledge is to share each other's experience, learning and wisdom. It is with this philosophy that we have organized this international Flight Safety Seminar for the second time. I am sure the participants will be immensely benefited from the presentations, discussion and more importantly, personal interactions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. My appreciations to the delegates from our friendly Air Forces, local aviation and related organizations for reposing confidence on our effort to enhance flight safety by participating in the seminar and enriching each other's knowledge. I deeply appreciate the true bondage of friendship, cooperation and understanding that prevail amongst us.

9. I once again convey my heartfelt thanks to the Honorable Adviser for his kind presence and inspiring all of us to make the International Flight Safety Seminar-2011 truly meaningful. I wish you all good luck and an intellectually engaging participation in the seminar. Thank you all.

Allah Hafez.