

**Welcome Address
CAG**

Honourable Rashtrapati Ji,

Honourable Speaker Lok Sabha,

Honourable Chairman-Public Accounts Committee,

**My distinguished predecessors Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, Shri
V.N. Kaul and Shri Vinod Rai**

Esteemed members of the Audit Advisory Board,

Senior Officers from the Government, Members of the

Audit & Accounts fraternity,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a matter of great honour, for each one of us in the Indian Audit and Accounts Department, to welcome you to this inaugural function of the 27th Conference of Accountants General. We are grateful to the Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, for having agreed to inaugurate this conference and inspire us with his presence. Sir, with your rich experience and vast knowledge on various issues of governance, we look forward to be guided by your words of wisdom.

2. We are fortunate to have the presence of Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The Comptroller & Auditor General of India plays an important role, in ensuring the executive's accountability to the Parliament. Madam, we look forward to your valuable guidance, and encouragement in fulfilling our constitutional duties.

3. CAG has been described as a friend, philosopher and guide to the Public Accounts Committee. We are honoured by the presence of Prof. K.V. Thomas, Hon'ble Chairman PAC. He is a source of strength and support to our organisation.

4. James Madison, the 4th President of US and one of the framers of the US constitution had said, and I quote, "in framing a government, which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people, is no doubt the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind, the necessity of auxiliary precautions", unquote. One such precaution in the Indian democratic system is the institution of the Comptroller and Auditor General, which is tasked by the

Constitution to help people in holding the government to account.

5. Independence, credibility and timeliness is our core value. I am proud that this institution, during its existence, has withstood the test of independence and objectivity. Credibility of the institution emanates from the quality of our audit process. Timeliness helps in making the audit findings relevant to influence policy-making and improving implementation.

6. In pursuance of our mandate, we audit more than fifty thousand organisational units every year and produce more than 135 audit reports to be placed in the Parliament and State Legislatures. They contain about fifteen hundred recommendations to the governments.

7. We annually certify more than five thousand five hundred accounts of the Union and State Governments, PSUs, Autonomous Bodies and Externally Aided Projects. We contribute to the public exchequer by pointing out under recovery and incorrect assessment of taxes, duties and other sources of revenue.

8. As part of our accounting and entitlement functions we provide important financial MIS to the state governments.

Annually we finalise the pension for about 5.5 lakh retiring employees and manage the provident funds of about 41 lakh employees of 23 state governments.

9. In the last two decades we have been contributing to the global development and peacekeeping efforts by providing external audit services to 13 international organisations which includes the United Nations Headquarters, World Food Programme and the International Atomic Energy Agency. In July 2014 the CAG of India has been appointed as a Member of the UN Board of Auditors for a six year term.

10. Changing dynamics of governance and expectations of society have thrown up new challenges for public audit. There is a growing demand around the world for public auditors to intervene during the life cycle of a project rather than restricting themselves to post-mortem analysis. As Public services and projects are involving more and more private players, auditing Public Private Partnerships is a new frontier.

11. We hope to meet these challenges by developing sound audit frameworks and building our capacity in the emerging areas. Our attempt is to work out strategies for increasing the impact of audit in improving governance.

12. Biennial conference of Accountants General is an occasion for us to put our minds together and review our functioning in the face of emerging challenges. The Conference would focus on four important themes. These include deliberations on the “Emerging Areas in Audit” like the audit of Public Private Partnerships and regulatory bodies. We would also be discussing on the ways of enhancing the impact of audit on governance and making our interaction with the Parliament more meaningful. We would be exploring ways of strengthening the capacity of the Department to undertake new responsibilities. Challenges faced in the accounting and entitlement functions is another important agenda for the Conference.

13. As part of the Conference, we have organised a panel discussion on, “Reporting in public interest – value and impact of CAG’s audit.” This is aimed at exploring ways of aligning our audit reports with public interest and thus increasing their impact. To give a perspective of external stakeholders, eminent persons from different fields will be participating in this discussion.

14. I am sure the deliberations in this Conference would lead to strengthening of our Institution. The words spoken by our

eminent guests during this inaugural session would guide and inspire us.

15. I once again extend a very warm welcome to Hon'ble Rashtrapathi Ji for having spared his valuable time to be with us. I again extend a warm welcome to the Hon'ble Speaker Lok Sabha and Hon'ble Chairman Public Accounts Committee for gracing this occasion. I welcome all our distinguished guests and members of the media on behalf of the Indian Audit & Accounts Department and on my own behalf.

Jai Hind