

Welcome Address by CAG of India at the Opening Ceremony of 16th ASOSAI Assembly on 24 September 2024

Your Excellency, Smt Droupadi Murmu, the Hon'ble President of India;

Chairman of ASOSAI, General Chanathap Indamra;

Secretary General of ASOSAI, Mr. Hou Kai;

Distinguished Delegates. Special invitees

Ladies, and Gentlemen,

- ❖ It is my privilege and honor to extend a very warm welcome to all of you \ to the 16th Assembly of Asian Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions, or the ASOSAI. \
- ❖ I am particularly thankful to Her Excellency, \ the Hon'ble President of India, \ for gracing this occasion with her esteemed presence as the Chief Guest. \ Her unwavering support for the principles of transparency, \ accountability, governance and inclusive development has been a source of great inspiration to all of us. \ Your Excellency, your presence here today \ underscores the importance of this Assembly \ and strengthens our resolve to pursue the path of excellence in public sector auditing.\
- ❖ We are pleased to welcome the heads of SAIs, \ heads of delegations, along with their distinguished delegate teams. \ We are

also pleased to note that representatives of Chair \ and Secretary General of the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions \ and the senior management of the INTOSAI Development Initiative \ are present with us on this momentous occasion. \

- ❖ ASOSAI is one of the seven regional working groups of INTOSAI. \ It was established in 1979 with 11 members \ with the objectives of promoting cooperation \ among member SAIs through exchange of ideas and experiences \ in the field of public sector audit; \ facilitating capacity development for government auditors \ and promoting closer collaboration and brotherhood among auditors in the audit fraternity. \
- ❖ ASOSAI has since grown to 48 members, with SAI India being one of its Charter member. \ The first Assembly was held here in New Delhi in 1979. \ It is therefore a proud moment for us to welcome the 48-member strong ASOSAI back to its place of birth. \

- ❖ As a community of public sector auditors, \ the ASOSAI membership represents shared values \ and goals of public accountability that bind us together. \ Over the years, \ ASOSAI has provided a vibrant platform for exchange of ideas, \ capacity development of public sector auditors \ and dissemination of technical and domain knowledge across the membership \ that has helped to deepen and strengthen the roots of public sector auditing profession \ in the member SAI countries. \
- ❖ Excellency, today more than ever, Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) \ are at the forefront of critical oversight, \ ensuring public funds are safeguarded, \ particularly in times of unprecedented crises. \ Whether during the pandemic, in the fight against climate change, \ or in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), \ SAIs' role in preserving integrity and accountability has never been more essential. \ COVID-19 exposed not only vulnerabilities in public health and finance \ but also highlighted how misappropriations can peak, \ particularly in pandemic-related spending. \

- ❖ In this digital age, as governments adopt AI and emerging technologies to deliver services, \ SAI must address growing risks – privacy breaches, algorithmic biases, and social exclusion. \ SAI has the responsibility to scrutinize \ whether these advancements serve all citizens fairly and inclusively, \ ensuring no one is left behind. \ The impact of climate change alone, expected to cause trillions in economic losses, \ demands urgent SAI-led audits of adaptation and mitigation strategies. \
- ❖ Furthermore, SAI must champion knowledge-sharing, \ particularly in implementing best practices. \ The focus of the public sector audit community \ on implementation of International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs) \ and the leveraging of technology \ to optimise audit effectiveness \ are enabling SAI to not only meet today's challenges \ but also tomorrow's uncertainties. \

- ❖ This gathering of the highest offices of the Supreme Audit Institutions \ could not have come at a better time. \ Over the next few days, \ the dignitaries representing their respective SAIs shall be engaged in insightful discussions \ and exchange of ideas \ that will go a long way on defining \ the future course of the auditing community of this region. \
- ❖ Excellencies, \ the institution of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India is more than 160 years old. \ Since our independence in 1947, \ we have worked tirelessly to strengthen our audit capabilities, \ resources, \ and most importantly, our skills and competencies to match up with the developments over the years, \ and challenges emerging from climate change, \ emerging technologies and crises like Covid-19 pandemic. \
- ❖ As SAI India prepares to take over the chairmanship of ASOSAI, \ we do so with a deep sense of responsibility \ and commitment. \ We are acutely aware of the challenges \ that lie ahead, \ but we are equally determined to rise to the occasion \ and continue the good work initiated by our predecessors. \ It is our firm belief that ASOSAI must evolve to remain relevant \ and responsive to the needs of its members in an ever-changing world. \

- ❖ I am happy to note that \ the Assembly sessions will provide ample opportunities to further strengthen sharing of knowledge \ and building of capacity of SAI auditors \ so that they are fully equipped to meet the emerging challenges, \ through the creation of several new Working Groups on IT Audit & Data Analytics, \ State Owned Enterprises and Regional and Municipal Audit.\
- ❖ Excellency Madam President,\ it has been a practice to hold a one-day Symposium along with the ASOSAI Assembly, \ on an issue of topical relevance.\ Accordingly,\ a Symposium will be held on 26th September 2024, \ on “Digital Public Infrastructure and Gender Divide- \ Issues of Inclusion and Accessibility”.\ I firmly believe\ that the Symposium will be another ideal forum for exchange of knowledge and experiences \ on the audit of Digital Public Infrastructure for provision of public services \ and the issues of gender divide.\
- ❖ As the assembly convenes today, \ it is imperative for members of ASOSAI to reflect on the remarkable contributions made by the leadership of ASOSAI \ in guiding the organization towards continued success. \ Over the years, \ ASOSAI has emerged as a vital pillar of regional collaboration, \ knowledge-sharing, \ and

capacity-building for Supreme Audit Institutions across Asia. This progress has been made possible through the tireless efforts of the current Chair, SAI Thailand, Secretary General, SAI China, Capacity Development Administrator, SAI Japan, and all the Governing Board members.

- ❖ Excellency Madam President, on behalf of the ASOSAI community represented here, I am proud to state that the 16th Assembly will culminate with the New Delhi Declaration that will provide the road map for the future work of the Association and its members.
- ❖ I would like to once again extend a warm welcome to Her Excellency, and all the distinguished delegates to the 16th ASOSAI Assembly. I hope that your time here in India will be productive, enlightening, and enjoyable. SAI India has made every effort to ensure that your stay is comfortable and that you experience the best of our culture and hospitality.
- ❖ As we embark on this important journey together, I am confident that the bonds of friendship and cooperation that we strengthen during this Assembly will serve as the foundation for future success.

❖ To conclude, I express my gratitude to Her Excellency President of India to grace this occasion. Also, I sincerely hope that our distinguished delegates from abroad will have cherished memories of their time here, both in terms of the professional engagements and the warmth of our hospitality. I wish everyone a pleasant and enriching stay in India.

Thank you.

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