**United Nations – Russian Federation Hold Sixth Annual Aviation Talks on a virtual platform, on 15 July 2020**

Joint Communiqué

The United Nations and the Russian Federation, represented by the Federal Air Transport Agency, held their sixth annual aviation talks on a virtual platform on 15 July 2020.

The United Nations was represented by Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support and Mr. Christian Saunders, Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Supply Chain Management and their team members; while the delegation of the Russian Federation was led by Mr. Alexander Neradko, First Deputy Minister of Transport of the Russian Federation - Director General of the Federal Air Transport Agency, accompanied by his Senior Staff. The Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations and representatives of Russian Air companies also attended the event.

The parties discussed issues pertaining to the aviation services provided by the Russian Federation to UN peace operations, including measures taken in response to COVID-19 pandemic, aircraft equipment and air crew requirements and accommodation; aviation Safety & Security; procurement procedures; air operator registration and the United Nations demand for Air Charters.

USG Khare expressed his gratitude to the Russian Federation for their contributions in the global efforts aimed at controlling the COVID-19 pandemic and more specifically for being the first UN air carriers to agree to carry COVID-19 patients on MEDEVAC flights. Their willingness to support the United Nations by allowing their operators to provide life-saving services in Mali, Afghanistan and Sudan is highly appreciated.

The USG informed the Russian Federation that, as announced during the fifth annual meeting, the Organisation has engaged an independent consultant to conduct an assessment of the Requests For Proposal (RFP) solicitation methodology, in order to improve the process for the Organization and vendors. The RFP study is scheduled to conclude by November this year. Its results will be shared with Member States and air service providers, appropriately.

Finally, the USG was pleased to inform the Russian Federation that his Department has again made significant strides in ensuring the contractual obligations of the UN have been met in terms of payments to air operators.

The United Nations Department of Operational Support and the Federal Air Transport Agency of the Russian Federation agreed to continue holding regular annual aviation talks. USG Khare warmly accepted the invitation extended by First Deputy Minister of Transport of the Russian Federation, Mr. Neradko to attend the next meeting in the 2021 year in Moscow during the International Aviation and Space Show MAKS-2021, COVID-19 pandemic permitting.

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15 July 2020