



**Address by the President of the Council of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu,
on the occasion of the Presentation of the
Forty-second Edward Warner Award**

(Montréal, 24 September 2019)

It is an honour and great privilege for me to officially open this Forty-second Edward Warner Award Ceremony.

This evening we will be honouring Mr. Roberto Kobeh González an individual who has made eminent contributions to the development of international civil aviation throughout his half a century career in air navigation, air transport and international diplomacy.

Of particular note is his tenure as President of the Council of ICAO, during which he helped achieve fundamental consensus among the Member States of the Organization toward the adoption of policies and initiatives for the protection of the environment. He also played a decisive role in driving strategies and initiatives in aviation safety and security, and air navigation efficiency, thanks to his ability to negotiate and promote cooperation among States.

He was born in Mexico in 1943 and obtained his degree in communications and electronic engineering from the National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico in 1965.

From 1972 to 1975, he was a professor of Aeronautical Electronics at the Institute. He also studied at the Federal Aviation Administration Academy in Oklahoma, and took several courses in administration, planning, quality control and leadership at the National Productivity Centre of Mexico.

He would then go on to receive a tremendous number of accolades. I would like to mention, in particular, his Award for Extraordinary Service from the United States Federal Aviation Administration, which he received in 1988.

Then, in 1997, he received the Emilio Carranza Medal from the Government of Mexico.

In 2004, he was recognized for his Contribution to the development of Aviation in the Central American Region by the Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services.

In 2009, he was awarded the title of *Doctor Honoris Causa* by the Korea Aerospace University, and again in 2011 by the University of the Turkish Aeronautical Association.

In 2010, he received the Lázaro Cárdenas Prize from the National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico.

The Government of Mongolia presented him with the Peace Medal Award in 2012. That same year, he was also honoured with awards for his service from both IATA and ACI.

The following year, the Government of Burkina Faso awarded him the Médaille d'Officier de l'Ordre national. It was also in 2013 that he received the honorary title of Lifetime Goodwill Ambassador of ICAO, and also a conference room was named after him.

He would also have Mexico's International Airports and Auxiliary Services Training Centre named after him in 2015, the same year in which the Government of Singapore awarded him with its Public Service Star medal.

This leads us to tonight's ceremony, at which Roberto Kobeh González will receive civil aviation's highest accolade, the Edward Warner Award.

Mr. Kobeh started his aviation career in 1966 in the Flight Check Department of Mexico's Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). He was responsible for the location of sites, the installation, adjustment and certification of air navigation systems, and the supervision of the electronic system maintenance.

By 1973, he had become Department Chief. Holding this position until 1976, he was involved in the programming of certification flights, as well as radio and visual aid flight checks; training for pilots, console operators and aircraft maintenance personnel; and the procurement, installation, and certification of radar, radio aid and communications equipment.

He then became the DGCA's Deputy Director of General Administration and Air Transport, where he participated in negotiations of bilateral air transport agreements and in evaluations for the issuance of operator certificates and licenses. Then, in 1978, he was appointed Director General of the Air Navigation Services of Mexico, the government body in charge of planning and providing air traffic control, meteorology and aeronautical telecommunication services. He held this position until 1997.

He began his association with ICAO as a participant in different ICAO convened meetings. He represented Mexico at all sessions of the ICAO Assembly from 1998 to 2004. He was the Representative of Mexico on the Council from 1998 to 2006. In 2000, he became Chair of the Finance Committee, and in 2003, first Vice-President of the Council.

Mr. Kobeh was elected President of the Council in 2006 and continued in this role until he retired from ICAO in 2013. From 2015 to 2018, he returned to his position as Director General of Air Navigation Services of Mexico.

On behalf of ICAO, its Governing Council, and indeed the entire civil aviation community, I wish to acknowledge here the tremendous debt of gratitude owed to Mr. Kobeh's vision, commitment and tenacity, and for his far reaching contributions to enhancing international aviation safety.

The Edward Warner Award, which I have the honour to now present to Mr. Roberto Kobeh González on behalf of the Council of ICAO, consists of a medal and a diploma. The citation accompanying the Award reads as follows:

EDWARD WARNER AWARD

conferred by the Council

of the

International Civil Aviation Organization

on

Roberto Kobeh González

in recognition of his eminent contribution to the
development of international civil aviation in the fields

of aviation safety, security, efficiency, and sustainability.

During his extensive career in civil aviation, spanning more than a half century, Mr. Roberto Kobeh González played an important role in improving air transport planning and performance in terms of the safety, security, and efficiency of civil aviation.

A remarkable consensus-builder, he also helped achieve critical agreements among ICAO Member States on key environmental protection provisions, driving timely and sustainable progress in support of one of the most politically sensitive Strategic Objectives of the Organization.

Mr. Roberto Kobeh González's immense personal dedication to peaceful and productive cooperation among States, and his commitment to ensure a sustainable future for air transport mindful of its important socio-economic and environmental impacts, solidifies his enduring legacy in reinforcing and advancing the most fundamental aims of the Convention on International Civil Aviation.