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## **DR. ASSAD KOTAITE, PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF THE COUNCIL OF ICAO, NAMED RECIPIENT OF 2013 ICAO EDWARD WARNER AWARD**

**MONTREAL, 25 September 2013** – The 40th Edward Warner Award, the highest honour in the world of civil aviation, was conferred by the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) yesterday evening on Dr. Assad Kotaite, in recognition of his eminent contribution to the development of international civil aviation, most notably in the field of diplomacy and conciliation.

The Award was presented by Roberto Kobeh González, President of the ICAO Council, during a special ceremony on the opening day of the Organization’s triennial Assembly in Montréal. In his remarks, Kobeh emphasized that Dr. Kotaite was and remains an outstanding international diplomat, conciliator and visionary, “without a doubt one of the most influential and respected figures in the history of international civil aviation.”

“Throughout his 30-year tenure as ICAO Council President, he persistently encouraged cooperation and dialogue among ICAO Member States and with the world aviation community. He was a master consensus-builder, a great leader and man of sound judgment, forever guiding global aviation through a competitive and politically complex operating environment,” Kobeh stated.

“Dr. Kotaite was both a witness and an actor in the extraordinary evolution of global air transport. He was driven by the conviction that a healthy and sustainable air transport system could help build better lives for the citizens of our planet. His is a precious and far-reaching legacy of wisdom, determination and humanity,” he added.

### **Distinguished Career and Commitment to Global Aviation**

Dr. Kotaite’s distinguished aviation career began in 1953 as Chief of Legal Services of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation in his native Lebanon. That same year, he took part in a Legal Committee Meeting of ICAO and remained associated with the Organization for the next 53 years. He was successively Representative of Lebanon on the ICAO Council, Secretary General from 1970 to 1976 and Council President from 1976 until his retirement in 2006.

The *Convention on International Civil Aviation* was a constant source of guidance and inspiration to Dr. Kotaite in his efforts to advance the cause of aviation through conciliation and the development of policies for the development of an efficient global air transport system. He often quoted from the Convention’s Preamble to the effect that “development of international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world”.

Shortly after his retirement, Dr. Kotaite became the first-ever President Emeritus of the ICAO Council. Over the years, he was presented with numerous awards from States and international organizations around the world and was awarded Honoris Causa degrees from several prestigious universities.

To this day, he continues to add to his impressive collection of lectures and articles on international air law and the economics of air transport. He has been President of the International Court of Aviation and Space Arbitration since 1995.

ICAO has just published Dr. Kotaite's Memoirs under the title: *"50 Years of International Diplomacy and Conciliation in Aviation"*.

The Edward Warner Award is bestowed, in the form of a gold medal, on an individual or institution, in recognition of outstanding contributions to the safe and orderly development of civil air transport.

Edward Warner (United States) was the first President of the Council of ICAO.

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.

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