



ICAO

UNITING AVIATION

News Release

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ICAO COUNCIL PRESIDENT EMERITUS, DR. ASSAD KOTAITE, DIES AT AGE 89

MONTRÉAL, 28 February 2014 – Universally recognized as one of the most prominent and respected figures in the world of civil aviation, Council President Emeritus of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Dr. Assad Kotaite, died yesterday at the age of 89.

A respected leader and visionary who devoted his life to the safe and orderly growth of international civil aviation throughout the world, Kotaite's remarkable career mirrored the evolution of ICAO for over half a century. He was also deeply instrumental in promoting the critical role of air transport as a driver of economic, social and cultural development worldwide.

Born in Lebanon in 1924, Kotaite obtained his degree in law from the French University of Beirut, as well as a doctorate from the University of Paris. His prestigious career with ICAO began in 1953 when he was appointed to the Organization's Legal Committee, a position he held until 1970. Concurrently, from 1956 to 1970, he was the Representative of Lebanon on the Council of ICAO, interrupted for two years in 1963 and 1964 when he served as Chief of Administrative Services for the Directorate General of Transport of Lebanon. During that 14-year period, Kotaite represented Lebanon at all sessions of the ICAO Assembly. In 1970, he was appointed Secretary General of ICAO and then elected President of the Council for eleven successive mandates – from 1976 until his retirement 30 years later in 2006. His tenure is the longest among senior executives in the history of the United Nations system.

A consummate diplomat, Kotaite was inspired and guided throughout his career by the *Preamble* to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* of 1944, also known as the *Chicago Convention*. The *Preamble* sets forth that international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve peace, friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world. Kotaite was widely recognized as a champion of cooperation and dialogue among ICAO's Member States and within the world aviation community. He also gained a well-earned reputation as a master conciliator and consensus-builder, steering global aviation through an increasingly complex, competitive and politically challenging regulatory environment.

The recipient of numerous honours and awards during his long tenure, all of which were detailed in his *My Memoirs* (ICAO, 2013), in September of last year Kotaite received the highest honour in the world of civil aviation, the Edward Warner Award. This accolade is bestowed by the ICAO Council on an individual or organization in recognition of outstanding contributions to the safe and orderly development of civil air transport.

After retiring from active service with ICAO, Kotaite established the Assad Kotaite Graduate and Postdoctoral Fellowship Fund. This scholarship programme acknowledges the importance of assistance and cooperation in the field of specialized aviation training, with the objective of advancing the safety and development of civil aviation by strengthening the capabilities of national civil aviation personnel.

Submission of Condolences

Resources for editors:

Funeral and visitation arrangements in Montréal, Canada will be as follows:

Visitation:

Saint George Antiochian Orthodox Church

555 Jean-Talon Street East, Montréal

Monday 3 March 2014, from 1700 to 2100 hrs.

Tuesday 4 March 2014 from 1000 to 1100 hrs.

Funeral Service:

Saint George Antiochian Orthodox Church

555 Jean-Talon Street East, Montréal

Tuesday 4 March 2014 from 1100 to 1200 hrs.

For Donations to the Assad Kotaite Scholarship Fund, please contact: DSouhami@icao.int

Kotaite bio on ICAO Website: www.icao.int/about-icao/Pages/biography-president-kotaite.aspx

Past speeches and addresses: www.icao.int/about-icao/Pages/biography-president-kotaite-address.aspx

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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