



KINSHASA SAYS SECURES RELEASE OF CONGO AIRWAYS A320

News / Airlines



Congo Airways (Kinshasa N'Djili) is set to take delivery of its second **A320-200** almost a month after it was seized at Dublin Int'l by international creditors. Minister of Justice for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Alexis Thambwe told local television that an Irish High Court had granted the release of EI-DSN (cn 3412) on the grounds the debt did not concern the airline.

"The Irish judge, this afternoon (Wednesday, September 22), ruled in our favour: the plane is to be released tomorrow," he said. "It may not (happen) tomorrow, since we must call on our technicians to repair it. But in the coming days, the aircraft will be in Congo."

Prior to the aircraft's intended departure for Kinshasa N'Djili late last month, a US firm, Miminco LLC, and US citizens John Dormer Tyson and Ilunga Jean Mukendi secured an Irish court order grounding the aircraft in Ireland pending the settlement of a USD11.5 million claim filed against the Congolese government. The claim dates back to 1997 when then Zairean soldiers led by one of the sons of then president Mobutu Sese Seko, occupied a diamond mining field owned by Miminco

LLC in Tshikapa territory near the Angolan border.

A second claim for a further USD100 million was subsequently filed by US distressed debt investor FG Hemisphere Associates which is seeking outstanding payment, plus interest, for an outstanding USD3 million loan owed by the Zairean government to that of the former Yugoslavia.

With the aircraft's arrival, the new Congolese national carrier and successor to LAC - Lignes aériennes Congolaises (4V, Kinshasa N'Djili) will be able to carry out its mandate to offer scheduled flights throughout the DRC as well as internationally.

Congo Airways is majority owned by an

27 SEPTEMBER 2015

SOURCE: CH AVIATION

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