

PRESS RELEASE

Kenya Airways signs aircraft lease agreement and begins cargo codeshare partnership with Congo Airways

Nairobi, 13th September 2021— Kenya's national carrier, Kenya Airways PLC (KQ), has signed an aircraft lease agreement and begun operating a cargo codeshare partnership with Congo Airways. The agreement will see Kenya Airways lease two Embraer E190 jets to Congo Airways, boosting domestic operations and flight frequencies in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In addition, Kenya Airways has today commenced direct cargo flights from Johannesburg to Lubumbashi.

Kenya Airways will also offer courses through its Pride Centre and explore the exchange of technical personnel in various areas to ensure skills transfer between the two airlines.

The partnership strengthens collaboration and bolsters aviation ties between Kenya and the DRC, actualising the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Kenya Airways and Congo Airways signed in April 2021 in Kinshasa and witnessed by Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta and DRC's President Felix Tshisekedi.

Kenya Airways Group MD and CEO Allan Kilavuka hailed the partnership as the first of many steps in actualising Pan Africanism by creating a model for cooperation between two African Airlines, which will contribute to Africa's socio-economic development.

"KQ is a key player in the aviation space in Africa, and with over 40 years of experience, this is an important step in enhancing cooperation to increase air connectivity and offer greater passenger and cargo options between the two countries. The timing of this agreement is correct, considering the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the aviation industry, as it will increase the utilisation of our aircraft."

Speaking about the newly launched cargo direct flights between Johannesburg and Lubumbashi, he added, "Cargo has provided new opportunities in the face of the pandemic, and we are keen to continue building our operations and leveraging partnerships." The enhanced network is built around KQ's southern Africa operations in Johannesburg and is expected to provide further connections to additional points within the DRC and Africa. This will provide customers with more convenient schedules and capacity at a time when the global industry has suffered capacity shortfall due to the pandemic as well as improve profitability of KQ's regional freighters on the return sector from Johannesburg", he added.

Congo Airways' CEO Pascal Kasongo Mwema Mwenda said, "Increased air connectivity will offer more choices to passengers in the DRC and between the two countries. It will also provide better connectivity to international destinations, enabling both countries to fly to a better future and build a resilient aviation industry that can stand the test of time."

Kenya is seeking to leverage the DRC market by diversifying its export destinations, given the COVID 19 induced disruption, which has highlighted the need for deeper inter-regional trade.

Strengthened bilateral between the two countries will boost the National Carrier and Congo Airways passenger and cargo transport businesses between the two markets and the international network.

KQ currently operates an Embraer maintenance service centre – through its Technical Department – having flown the Embraer jets since 2008. Its Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) has two state-of-the-art hangers, mechanical and avionics workshops, and extensive warehousing capable of handling line and base maintenance of several aircraft models, including B737s E-Jets, and B787.

The International Air Transport Associations (IATA) estimates that African airlines saw a combined loss of USD 2 billion due to reduced passenger travel in 2020. Kenya Airways continues to diversify its services and operations in response to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the aviation sector.

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About Kenya Airways (<https://www.kenya-airways.com/ca/en/>)

Kenya Airways, a member of the Sky Team Alliance, is a leading African airline flying to 41 destinations worldwide, 34 of which are in Africa and carries over four million passengers annually. In 2020 KQ was named Africa's Leading Airline by the World Travel Awards. It continues to modernize its fleet with its 32 aircraft being some of the youngest in Africa. This includes its flagship B787 Dreamliner aircraft. Kenya Airways services London, Amsterdam, Guangzhou, Sharjah, Mumbai and over 25 intra-Africa routes in addition to its passenger network. The on-board service is renowned and the lie-flat business class seat on the wide-body aircraft is consistently voted among the world's top 10. Kenya Airways takes pride in being at the forefront of connecting Africa to the World and the World to Africa through its hub at the new ultra-modern Terminal 1A at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi.

About Congo Airways (About Congo Airways (<https://congoairways.com/>))

Congo Airways is a state-owned company formed on August 15th, 2014 and begun commercial operations on October 20th, 2015. As an IOSA certified company, it is full member of IATA, AFRAA and ATAF. The company owns two A320 and two Dash 8 Q400 bought on equity. It expects to receive delivery of four Embraer E2 (two E190-E2 and two E195-E2). It operates 15 routes within its domestic market and resumed flights within its regional market, including Johannesburg, South Africa, in December 2020. The airline anticipates reopening additional routes in the second half of 2021 and adding capacity on long haul destinations for cargo and passenger operations.

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