

Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue (11 luxury cars seized in Geneva)

Case ID:

ARW-253

Jurisdiction of Origin of Public Official or Entity Allegedly Involved:

Equatorial Guinea

Position of Public Official(s) (yrs in office):

Vice President of Equatorial Guinea (2012-2018) and son of President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo (1979 - current)

Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery:

Switzerland

Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery ? Description:

(1) Jurisdiction initiated legal action to recover assets (2) Jurisdiction of Asset Location

Asset Recovery Start:

2016

Asset Recovery End:

Ongoing

UNCAC Offenses Implicated:

Art.16

Art.17

Art.19

Art.23

Money laundering Implicated:

Yes

Legal Basis for Asset Recovery:

Actions Initiated by Foreign Jurisdictions

Intl.Cooperation: MLAT/Letter of Request?:

NA

Basis for Intl Cooperation:

N/A - The related criminal investigation was initiated by the Swiss Public Prosecutor.

Contributing Factors in Asset Recovery:

Ongoing Case

Status of Asset Recovery :

Ongoing

Assets Frozen or Seized (USD):

"more than \$8 million" (estimate)

Case Summary:

In November 2016, Swiss authorities seized 11 luxury cars as part of criminal proceedings opened against Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue, the son of Equatorial Guinea's longtime leader, on suspicions of money laundering. The prosecutor's office said in an e-mailed statement to Reuters: "The Geneva public prosecutor confirms the opening of criminal proceedings against Teodorin Obiang. The latter is accused of money laundering." "As part of the procedure, 11 vehicles were effectively sequestered in the cargo area of Geneva

airport on behalf of the prosecution."

The cars seized by the Geneva police were a Bugatti Veyron, four Ferraris including an Enzo and 599GTB, a Porsche 918 Spyder, a Lamborghini Veneno, a Maybach, a Koenigsegg, an Aston Martin and a McLaren P1, the Geneva prosecutor's office said. According to media reports, the Bugatti Veyron is worth \$2 million and the Swedish-made Koenigegg One is one of only seven ever produced for \$2.8 million. The total value of the 11 cars has not been reported - but the value of only two of the 11 cars (Bugatti Veyron & Koenigegg One) totals \$4.8 million. Media reports estimate the total value to be "more than \$8 million".

Equatorial Guinea filed a legal challenge to the seizure, arguing that the cars do not belong to Obiang but to a state company and were only in Geneva for repairs. In July 2017, the Swiss Federal Court rejected the request from the government of Equatorial Guinea to release the luxury cars.

Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery: Investigative Agency:

Public Prosecutor's Office in Geneva, Switzerland

Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery: Prosecuting Authority/Civil Attorney(s):

Public Prosecutor's Office in Geneva, Switzerland

Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery: Courts Involved:

Swiss Federal Court, Switzerland

Other Sources:

Swiss seize 11 cars in probe of Equatorial Guinea's VP, Reuters, 03 November 2016:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-equatorial-swiss-idUSKBN12Y28B>

Corruption trial against 'playboy' son of Equatorial Guinea's president opens in France, Deutsche Welle, 02 January 2017:<http://www.dw.com/en/corruption-trial-against-playboy-son-of-equatorial-...>

Equatorial Guinea's VP Obiang's cars seized in Switzerland, BBC, 03 November 2016:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-37861795>

Swiss refuse to release Obiang luxury cars, SWI Swissinfo, 25 July 2017:

https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/corruption-case_swiss-refuse-to-re...