

For sale: Malawi Presidential jet

BLANTYRE, MALAWI: For sale, presidential jet, 15 years old. Perfect flying condition. US\$13.3M. Contact Malawi for details.

Cash-strapped Malawi on Monday (28 January) announced that it will be inviting bids for President Joyce Banda's jet, as it tries to raise much-needed revenue.

"The Malawi government has decided that the jet should be disposed of 'on as-is basis' to an interested individual or firm," the president's office said in a tender notice.

The Dassault Falcon 900EX, built in 1998 and which seats 14 passengers, was in "perfect flying condition", according to the notice. Bids open on February 20.

Late president Bingu wa Mutharika controversially acquired the jet five years ago, despite poverty in the southern African nation.

At the time Mutharika said it was "cheap to run", despite his country depending on aid inflows for almost half its budget.

Former colonial power Britain, Malawi's main bilateral donor, reduced its aid to Malawi by £3m after the purchase.

Banda vowed to sell the plane as a cost-saving measure when she succeeded Mutharika after his death last April.

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge

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