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Brazil: French Military Resumes Negotiations With Embraer On Purchase Of Training Aircraft

by Barbara Khol

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On May 11, Augusto de Oliveira, spokesperson for the state-run aircraft manufacturer EMBRAER, reported that the French military had resumed negotiations on the possible purchase of 80 Tucano turboprop trainer planes valued at $176 million. On May 10, French Air Force Chief of Staff Lt.Gen. Jean Freury visited EMBRAER facilities in Sao Jose dos Campos (Sao Paulo state). Negotiations commenced in 1989, when Brazil's Army ministry purchased 52 helicopters from France's Aerospatiale for $252 million, with a Tucano deal included as a clause in that contract. While an agreement was reached, France did not sign the Tucano contract because the Brazilian Aeronautics Ministry had fallen behind in payments to Thomson CSF for installing the Integrated Air Defense and Air Traffic Control Center (CINDACTA), in service in Brazil since 1976. De Oliveira said, "The Brazilian government paid part of the overdue debt last week, resuming negotiations on the Tucanos." He did not mention the payment amount. Since the Tucano model was introduced in 1983, EMBRAER has sold 600 units to Britain, Egypt, Iraq, Argentina, Venezuela, Honduras and other countries. (Basic data from AFP, 05/11/91)

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