

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

CASE NO: \_\_\_\_\_

SHERWIN WEEKES,

Plaintiff,

vs.

ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES LTD.,

Defendant.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL

Defendant, ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES, LTD., ("RCCL"), by and through its undersigned counsel, hereby files this, its Notice of Removal, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1441, et seq., and 9 U.S.C. §202, et seq., and respectfully states as follows:

1. This is an action by SHERWIN WEEKES ("Plaintiff"), a seaman from St. Vincent and the Grenadines and former employee of RCCL<sup>1</sup>, who alleges he suffered an injury during the course of his employment aboard the *Brilliance of the Seas*.

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<sup>1</sup> Plaintiff has named Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd ("RCCL"), as Defendant; however, the operator of the vessel is/was RCL (UK) Ltd., a subsidiary of RCCL. For the purposes of this Notice of Removal, Defendant will stipulate that Plaintiff has named the proper Defendant.

2. At all times material to Plaintiff's Complaint, the terms of Plaintiff's employment were governed by a Sign on Employment Agreement ("SOEA") between the parties. A copy of the applicable SOEA is attached hereto as *Exhibit "A."*

3. The SOEA also incorporates a Collective Bargaining Agreement ("CBA") attached hereto as *Exhibit "B."*

4. The CBA at Article 36, provides, in pertinent part, as follows:

...All grievances and any other dispute whatsoever, whether in contract, regulatory, tort, or otherwise relating to or in any way connected with the Seafarer's service for the Owner/Company under the present Agreement, including but not limited to claims for personal injury/disability or death, no matter how described, pleaded, or styled, and whether asserted against the Owner/Company, Master, Employer, Ship Owner, vessel or vessel operator, shall be referred to an resolved exclusively by mandatory binding arbitration pursuant to the United Nations Conventions on Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards (New York 1958), 21 U.S.T. 2517, 300 UN.T.S. ("The Convention").

5. By signing the SOEA, Plaintiff acknowledged and agreed to be bound by its terms and conditions including those incorporated by referenced within the CBA.

6. The SOEA and incorporated CBA constitute an arbitration agreement falling under the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards (the "Convention").

7. 9 U.S.C. §205 states:

Where the subject matter on an action or proceeding pending in a State court relates to an arbitration agreement or award falling under the Convention, the defendant or the defendants may, at any time before the trial thereof, remove such action or proceedings to the district court of the United States for the district and division embracing the place where the action or proceeding is pending.

8. Accordingly this suit is an action over which the United States District Court has original jurisdiction under the provisions of 9 U.S.C. § 202 et. seq., and one that may be removed to federal court under the provisions of 9 U.S.C. § 205, in that it is

an action arising under the laws of the United States and relating to an arbitration agreement falling under the Convention.

9. On or about December 6, 2010, Plaintiff served RCCL with a Complaint in state court in the Eleventh Circuit of Miami-Dade County, Florida, *Sherwin Weekes v. Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.*, Case No. 10-61793-CA-25. A copy of the Complaint and all other pleadings, process, and orders in this case are attached hereto as *Exhibit "C,"* pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1446(a).

10. This suit is an action of which this court has original jurisdiction under the provision of 9 U.S.C. § 202 et. seq., and one that may be removed to this court under the provisions of 9 U.S.C. § 205, in that it is an action arising under the laws of the United States and relating to an arbitration agreement falling under the Convention. The grounds for removal are as follows:

a) There has been no trial of the state court action.

b) Sherwin Weekes is a seaman from St. Vincent and The Grenadines. Defendant is a foreign corporation, and the *Brilliance of the Seas* is a vessel registered in the Bahamas.

c) The underlying SOEA and CBA requires arbitration as all possible venues for the arbitration are signatories to the Convention.

d) Defendant stipulates to the application of United States law in arbitration; and, Defendant stipulates to venue for arbitration in Miami, Florida.

e) Because the Agreement is between a foreign corporation and a foreign seaman and because the Agreement provides for arbitration, this dispute falls under the provisions of the Convention. See 9 U.S.C. §202 et. seq.

11. Accordingly, this court has jurisdiction over this action, and this case is removed to the United States District Court, Southern District of Florida pursuant to U.S.C. § 205.

12. RCCL files and presents herewith the sum of \$350.00 as required by 28 U.S.C. §1446.

WHEREFORE, Defendant, ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES LTD., moves this court for an order that the action now pending against it in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit, in and for Miami-Dade County, described above, be removed to this Court and proceed therein.

Respectfully submitted,

ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES LTD.  
1050 Caribbean Way  
Miami, Florida 33132  
(305) 539-6000 Tel.  
(305) 539-8101 Fax

By: /s/ RANDY S. GINSBERG  
RANDY S. GINSBERG  
Fla. Bar No.: 185485

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served U.S. Mail on May 31, 2011 to: Peter P. Sotolongo, 201 South Biscayne Blvd. Miami, Florida 33131 & John F. Billera, 2641 NE 207<sup>th</sup> Street, Aventura, Florida 33180.

By: /s/ RANDY S. GINSBERG  
RANDY S. GINSBERG  
Fla. Bar No.: 185485