

Foreign Ministry Denies Ship Smuggled Arms

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Foreign Ministry denied Wednesday that a Russian ship seized by Nigerian authorities had been smuggling weapons.

"The vessel, which visited Nigeria to conduct repairs, replenish stocks, and replace the crew, was temporarily detained by Nigerian authorities for inspection, because it had a certain amount of firearms and ammunition on board," the ministry said in a [statement](#).

It stressed that the weapons were properly registered and necessary for the ship's normal operations.

"Arms smuggling is not an issue," it said.

Nigerian authorities seized the freighter on Tuesday in Lagos, one of Africa's busiest ports, and detained 15 Russian crew members on suspicion of arms smuggling after finding several

guns and about 8,500 rounds of ammunition on board.

The ship belongs to Moscow-based Moran Security Group and operates under a Dutch flag.

Moran has not commented on the incident.

The Foreign Ministry said the Russian crew members are "in good health, provided with all the necessary supplies including a telephone connection with Russia and access to the Internet."

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