

Nigeria Court Acquits 7 Russian Sailors on Arms Smuggling Charges

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A court in Nigeria has acquitted seven Russian sailors on arms smuggling charges, according to the Russian consulate in the West African nation.

The ruling follows months of concerted high-level diplomacy between the two countries to secure the sailors' release.

Nigerian authorities detained 15 Russian sailors on the MV Myre Seadiver in the port of Lagos in October 2012 after finding 14 Kalashnikov AK-47 assault rifles and around 8,000 rounds of ammunition on board. Eight of the sailors were [cleared](#) in June.

Moscow-based security firm Moran Security Group, which owned the vessel, said the arsenal was designed to provide protection against pirates, who often attack ships along the Nigerian coast.

The Myre Seadiver is an auxiliary vessel used to support maritime oil extraction and transport operations.

The owner earlier said the vessel had been authorized to make a port call in Lagos three weeks before its arrival and had all the necessary documents declaring the presence of weapons on board.

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