

Beat: Miscellaneous

Pirates attack ship off Nigeria, kidnap four sailors

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USPA News - Pirates have attacked a supply vessel off the coast of Nigeria and kidnapped four of the crew members on board, including three Italian citizens and one Ukrainian, officials said on Tuesday. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the abductions.

The attack happened at approximately 7:45 p.m. local time on Sunday when the Italian-registered offshore supply vessel, the MV Asso Ventuno, was boarded by a group of armed pirates. It happened when the vessel was approximately 40 nautical miles (74 kilometers) off Bayelsa State in Nigeria. "Pirates armed with guns attacked [and] boarded an offshore supply vessel underway and kidnapped four crew members," the piracy reporting center of the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) said. "No injuries to crew members and vessel continued passage to a safe port." Italy's Foreign Ministry confirmed three of the kidnapped crew members are Italian, while the fourth victim is believed to be a person from Ukraine. Their identities were not immediately known, and it was unclear where they were taken or if a demand for ransom had been made. The owner of the vessel, Augusta Offshore S.p.A., did not immediately comment on the incident. The Naples-based company specializes in the support of offshore petroleum exploration and production activities, according to its website. It says it owns a fleet of 17 vessels which were built between 1978 and 2012.

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