

Pirates kill captain, kidnap 15 off Nigerian waters

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Some pirates have killed a sailor and kidnapped 15 from a Turkish cargo ship off the coast of Nigeria,

The sailor, an Azerbaijani, was attacked inside the Liberian-flagged Mozart owned by a Turkish company on Saturday.

Several crew members were also wounded in the attack.

The Mozart had been en route from the Nigerian economic capital Lagos to Cape Town in South Africa when it was boarded on Saturday.

"I do not know where I am heading," says a voice on a recording posted on Twitter and purported to be the latest captain of the Mozart.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan spoke

by telephone to the new captain and was following events closely, his office said.

Ten sailors who were taken hostage from a Turkish vessel off West Africa were released in August 2019.

Pirate attacks on ships worldwide jumped 20 per cent last year driven by a record spate of kidnappings off West Africa, the International Maritime Bureau said last week.

A total of 195 incidents of piracy and armed robbery were reported, up from 162 in 2019.

Out of 135 sailors abducted globally last year, 130 were recorded in the Gulf of Guinea—the highest ever number of crew members kidnapped in the area stretching thousands of kilometres (miles) from Senegal to Angola.