

# NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL

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## DOWNED SHIP OFF AUSTRALIAN COAST

Mariamawit Tadesse  
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On November 1st, 18 people were rescued after a boat sank in remote seas off of Australia's Cocos Islands. The Cocos Islands are about 2,000km northwest of Australia and about 1,300km south of Indonesia. The islands lie roughly halfway from Australia and Sri Lanka. The boat was carrying about 40 passengers. It is still not confirmed whether these people were asylum seekers or which way they were actually headed.

The boat sent a distress signal around 11:15 p.m. A Taiwanese fishing trawler reached the boat and rescued around 18 people. "A second rescue came from the merchant ship, the LNG Pio-

neer, but it was just a little too late for the boat had already capsized" Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, the chief of the Australian Defence Force, told the Australian Associated Press.



Photo Courtesy <http://en.timeturk.com/boat-sinks-off-cocos-islands--26277-haberi.html>

According to France 24, one person has been confirmed dead and more than 20 people are still missing in rough seas. Stephen Langford, the regional medical director for the Royal Flying Doctor Service that sent a plane to assist the injured people, told Al-Jazeera News, "it was a race against time to find survivors. It's a fairly urgent task because there are still people in the water, and the weather is not fantastic." Australia is seeing its biggest stream of

asylum seekers in seven years. The government blames the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the end of Sri Lanka's decades-long civil war for the influx of people. As broadcasted on Al-Jazeera News, about 35 boats carrying around 1,770 asylum seekers have arrived in Australian waters just this year. Currently 328 Sri Lankans are refusing to leave Australian custom boats.

Officials told the BBC World News, "The rescued people could be taken to Australia's immigration detention center on Christmas Island." On Saturday, the government announced that more than 2,000 beds will be added in Christmas Island detention center to cope with this great

## UGANDAN SECURITY GUARDS IN IRAQ

Mariamawit Tadesse  
Assistant Editor

Since 2007, Watertight Security Services has sent more than 10,000 Ugandan security guards to Iraq. Watertight Services is a full-service security center that offers highly effective security solutions like close body guard protection, K-9 training and handling, first aid, external employment, innovative surveillance and access control systems, and expert security consulting.

While troops from the developed countries do not look forward to going to countries such as Iraq, Ugandan security guards compete for this opportunity. Applicants outnumber available places by more than 1,000.

For more than three years, Moses Matsiko has worked in Iraq and returned to Uganda to set up Watertight Security Services. Matsiko told the BBC World Service, "Since we do security, we start by screening the criminal background of people, hand in hand with Interpol and then we do a medical screening to make sure that the people we are sending are medically fit." Like the saying, "practice makes perfect," these men and women receive trainings such as listening to lectures that are essential in learning how to carry out their tasks and doing target practice with their AK47s. To

these security guards, Iraq is a land of opportunity where they can earn great incomes.

Seth Katerema Mwesigye, an instructor at Watertight, told the BBC, "I was a student at Makerere University, but when I left, I did not have land. When I came back, I bought land and cows. All that money came from Iraq." Watertight pays its security guards \$700 to \$1000 per month which is very nice pay for Ugandan living standards.

Watertight Security Services is facing high competition in the security sector due to the increase in the number of companies recruiting for a lesser price. One such country is Kenya. There are more than 500 Kenyans in Iraq at present, earning about \$400 per month. Watertight is looking at sending security guards to Afghanistan because no other competitor

companies have entered the country thus far. The men and women of Watertight Security Services are desperate to find employment in order to escape the poverty they encounter in Uganda.



Photo courtesy [http://www.wtsuganda.com/wts\\_gallery.html#](http://www.wtsuganda.com/wts_gallery.html#)