

Texas National Guard soldier shot Mexican citizen across the border

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The Texas Military Department and Mexican authorities reported an on-duty Texas National Guard member opened fire across the Texas-Mexico border last Saturday night, striking and injuring a 37-year-old Mexican citizen in Ciudad Juárez.

“On the night of 26 August, a National Guard Servicemember assigned to Operation Lone Star discharged a weapon in a border-related incident,” a spokesperson for the Military Department said in a statement. “The incident is under investigation. More information will be made available as the investigation progresses.”

According to *El Diario*, a Spanish language newspaper in Ciudad Juárez, Darwin José García initially identified himself to police as a migrant attempting to cross into the United States. However, García later told reporters he was practicing sport on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande around 8:50 p.m. while a group of nearby migrants braved the river. García said he then heard gunfire and realized he had been shot in the leg, *El Diario* reported.

The shooting occurred near the Bridge of the Americas, which is adjacent to Mexico’s Parque Público Federal El Chamizal, a historic park used for outdoor recreation. *La Verdad*, a second news outlet in Juárez, reported García was treated by paramedics at the scene before being transported to a local hospital. He was released shortly after.

In an email on Monday, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) confirmed state troopers responded to a call of a shooting involving a National Guard soldier along the US-Mexico border in El Paso. The DPS claimed the Texas Rangers are conducting an investigation of the incident, but no new information has been made publicly available.

Mexico’s Foreign ministry said they have met with

senior officials from the DPS and the Texas Rangers about the shooting and were told the soldier involved “has been separated from his position until the investigation has concluded.”

Governor Greg Abbott’s office declined to comment on the incident and has referred all inquiries to the state’s military department. The US Border Patrol also refused to comment.

Saturday’s incident marks the second time this year a Texas National Guard member has fired upon a civilian while deployed under the auspices of Abbott’s Operation Lone Star and the third time in recent years that a soldier has fired their weapon while on duty at the border.

On January 13, trooper Angel Gallegos shot migrant Ricardo Rodriguez Nieto in the shoulder near Mission, just over 100 kilometers west of the industrial city of Matamoros. Gallegos claimed his service handgun accidentally discharged while he wrestled with Nieto. Nieto denied ever touching Gallegos and said the shot was fired from the kitchen into the living room of an abandoned house he and other migrants used for shelter. Testimony from other immigrants who witnessed the shooting corroborated Nieto’s version of events.

Notwithstanding, legal documents indicate the Hidalgo County District Attorney in Austin declined to present the case to a grand jury, citing insufficient evidence and unclear jurisdiction. Such an outcome can be reasonably expected for Saturday’s shooting.

In January 2022, a Texas Guard member unloaded his M4 carbine into the engine block of a Chrysler 300 sedan driven by someone he thought was a smuggler in Laredo. The soldier told investigators that he fired his rifle into the car after the driver, who was arrested after abandoning his vehicle, attempted to run over another

Texas Guard member.

Abbott launched Operation Lone Star, a multibillion-dollar state initiative, in 2021 to deter asylum seekers from crossing the Rio Grande along the 1,200-mile border Texas shares with Mexico. Abbott has overseen the construction of border barriers, including a sting of buoys in the Rio Grande. The launch of Abbott's program has coincided closely with the transformation of the Republican Party into an openly fascistic force in America's political arena.

The dehumanization of immigrants, the overwhelming majority of whom are workers seeking an escape from profound poverty and violence, has long been a tool of American bourgeois politics. From the Chinese Exclusion Act to contemporary actions like the busing of migrants to Democratic-controlled cities, all reactionary campaigns against migrants are rooted in a hostility to the working class and an effort to shift the blame for social ailments away from the capitalist system.

Indeed, Saturday's shooting cannot be comprehended separately from last week's Republican debate, where the GOP demonstrated its devolution into fascism, where Florida Governor Ron DeSantis boasted he would change the rules of engagement to allow border police to "shoot on sight" any migrants attempting to cross the border.



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