

# Amid popular outrage, no official explanation of secret CIA operation in Mexico

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The US government has made clear there will be no explanations, let alone apologies, after two CIA agents died in a road accident during a supposed anti-drug operation in the Mexican state of Chihuahua—an operation the Mexican federal government claims was carried out without its permission or even prior knowledge.

The incident reportedly occurred at 2 a.m. in a remote area of the Sierra Madre mountains, when the vehicle veered off the road, crashed, and exploded.

Initially, US Ambassador Ronald Johnson—a former Green Beret and CIA officer—claimed the deceased were merely “members of staff from the United States Embassy.”

It was soon revealed, however, that the dead were not ordinary US personnel, but CIA operatives engaged in a covert mission.

The CIA officers are among the first fatalities in Trump’s escalating war in Latin America, following the death in February of a lance corporal who fell off the USS *Iwo Jima* while conducting operations in the Caribbean.

The political dimensions grew when Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum revealed that the four individuals in the vehicle were “working jointly” on a mission of which the federal government had not been informed.

But as the US government conducts policing and intelligence operations across the border without even notifying Mexican authorities, Sheinbaum’s response has been remarkably restrained. She sent a letter to the US embassy requesting information.

The pro-Trump *Wall Street Journal* gloated, “She could have chosen to express outrage at an apparently egregious violation of Mexican sovereignty. Instead, she struck a muted response.”

The White House arrogantly dismissed this simple request. White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt told Fox News that Trump was “very displeased” with Sheinbaum’s reaction, adding: “I think the president would agree that a little sympathy from Claudia Sheinbaum would be very meaningful for the two American lives that were lost.”

Mexico’s security cabinet sank even further. all but apologizing in a carefully worded statement Saturday. After noting diplomatically that the operation violated Mexican law, it expressed “its deepest regret for the death of four

individuals—two state personnel and two US agents—during the accident that occurred in Chihuahua on April 19, and extends its sincerest condolences and solidarity to their families, coworkers, and loved ones during this difficult time.” The cabinet then reaffirmed “its willingness to maintain a close, serious, and respectful relationship with the government of the United States, for the benefit of the security of both countries.”

Román Oseguera Cervantes, director of the Chihuahua State Investigation Agency, and his bodyguard, Manel Méndez, were also reportedly in the vehicle. Chihuahua is one of the few states governed by the right-wing opposition National Action Party (PAN), and Governor María Eugenia (Maru) Campos has refused to provide information on the operation.

Subsequent reporting has exposed the extent of US covert activity. Two US officials speaking on condition of anonymity to *The Intercept* confirmed that the CIA has been running clandestine operations in Mexico, working alongside vetted state-level police forces and other agencies. According to these sources, the Americans died after a raid on a synthetic drug laboratory. It has also emerged that one agent entered Mexico on a tourist permit and the other with a diplomatic passport.

In contrast to Sheinbaum’s response, the incident has raised alarm among the Mexican working class and broader population, as the Trump administration behaves with unrestrained violence and open criminality across the hemisphere and the world.

In comments to the *World Socialist Web Site*, an autoworker at General Motors Silao denounced US intervention in Mexico and its wars globally, as well as the response of the Sheinbaum administration:

From the government, they support US wars and the participation of corporations, which in my case is General Motors. The only opposition will come from the workers. It depends on the rank-and-file to oppose the policies of capitalism and stand against profiteering based on the suffering of others, which is what war and human need represent.

The broader context underscores the urgency of this appeal:

- The Pentagon has been conducting bombing operations on fishing boats in the Pacific and Caribbean since September, already claiming the lives of at least 186 innocent workers.

- In January, US bombs fell in the metropolis of Caracas as part of an operation aimed at kidnapping Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.

- In Ecuador, joint operations have involved burning and bombing farmers' homes and detaining and torturing agricultural workers.

- Washington continues its war of annihilation against Iran and its support for the Israeli genocide in Gaza and destruction of Lebanon.

- Last week, United States Southern Command chief Francis L. Donovan launched the SouthCom Autonomous Warfare Command (SAWC), designed to deploy autonomous and unmanned systems across Latin America.

- As Trump threatens “Cuba is next” after Iran, the island continues to be starved of oil with the complicity of Sheinbaum and other regional governments.

There are countless indications of the dangers directly faced by Mexico as a result of US aggression:

- Last year, the US State Department designated six Mexican cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, further laying the legal groundwork for military intervention.

- Immediately after the attack on Venezuela, Trump said “the cartels control Mexico” and threatened to carry out direct military operations inside the country.

- In a little-noticed move in January, United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), which covers Canada, the US and Mexico, established the Joint Interagency Task Force-Counter Cartel (JIATF-CC) to coordinate US intelligence efforts “to identify, disrupt, and dismantle cartel networks.”

- The White House marked the 250th anniversary of the Mexican-American War this year by celebrating it as a “legendary” conquest shaping US policy in the region today.

- Trump has effectively revived and expanded the Monroe Doctrine into what officials have dubbed a hemispheric war policy. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has referred to this approach as the “Greater North America” doctrine.

- In late February, the Mexican military killed Nemesio Oseguera, leader of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, using intelligence from the FBI and CIA. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that Mexican officials feared that if they did not act, Trump might launch a unilateral raid on Mexican soil. Trump himself openly mused: “Could happen... Stranger things have happened.”

- Brian Finucane of the International Crisis Group told *The Intercept* that elements within the US administration are eager to turn Mexico into a battlefield in a new “global war on terror” targeting cartels.

- The US midterm elections and FIFA World Cup hosted by the US, Mexico and Canada heightens the danger of precipitous

actions.

The reality is that the United States conducts covert operations around the world without permission. As Carlos Pérez Ricart, a researcher at Mexico's CIDE, explains: US agents “operate, move, and make contacts without consulting the Mexican government... whether the federal government knew or not is irrelevant, since it lacks the capacity to prevent or track these actions.”

What is pivotal is the response of both governments to this involuntary exposure. Washington has reaffirmed its presumed right to act unilaterally anywhere in the world. Meanwhile, Sheinbaum—who presents herself as a left nationalist defending sovereignty—continues to deepen Mexico's economic and military integration into US war plans. Mexico already serves as an “essential” supplier of military components for the Pentagon, participates in joint exercises with US forces while hosting American trainers, and has joined the tariff war against China.

Security Minister Omar García Harfuch—a police official and heir to the capitalist political elite—has the deepest ties to US security agencies and embodies this integration. His response has been to absurdly deny any ongoing US intelligence operations in Mexico.

The Mexican government has deployed National Guard troops to harass, kill and deport migrants headed to the US. It has also carried out at least 92 extraditions of alleged traffickers to the US, violating Mexican constitutional protections.

At the same time, Sheinbaum's admission that she was unaware of operations in a border state exposes more than a blind spot. It demonstrates that within the Mexican ruling class she represents there is no constituency for opposing the US drive to recolonize Mexico and Latin America. There is merely an eagerness and apprehension about securing a “fair share” of the profits from this process, including in the ongoing renegotiation of the US-Mexico-Canada trade deal. This is as far as Sheinbaum's talk of defending national sovereignty goes.



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