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Honduras: Military shooting must be urgently investigated and witnesses protected

Amnesty International today said it was deeply worried about the safety of victims of and witnesses to a shooting at a military blockade that took place in Tegucigalpa last night. The organization called on the Human Rights Prosecutor to urgently investigate the incident.

According to eye witnesses interviewed by Amnesty International, last night, four men were on their way back home when they saw a military blockade moved from its normal position, close to the Estado Mayor (military compound). They were not given any indication to stop or request to slow down so they drove past.

Immediately after, shots were fired by the military at the car. The men drove on and as they went into a new road, one bullet hit the driver, 32-year-old Angel Salgado, in the head. He lost control of the vehicle which then crashed into a taxi and injured several bystanders, including 45-year-old woman, who was also hit by a stray bullet. She is now in a serious condition in hospital.

At the time of writing, Angel Salgado was in hospital in a critical condition.

Eye witnesses said military personnel began cleaning the scene immediately after the crash occurred.

“We are extremely concerned about this case given Honduras’ track record of widespread impunity for human rights violations committed by police and military,” said Javier Zuñiga, Head of Amnesty International’s delegation in Honduras.

Amnesty International delegates in Honduras visited the hospital where both injured were being treated and heard the relatives of Angel Salgado had found it difficult to gain entry to see him.

The organization’s delegates also saw two men in military outfits passing by and going directly into the theatre where Angel Salgado was recuperating. The men said they wanted to check on his condition.

Until the authorities take serious action to investigate and bring to justice those responsible for human rights violations, this will be another shocking example of how the lives of Hondurans can be devastated in a moment by the police and military, who act knowing that no one will ever hold them to account,” said Javier Zuñiga.

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