U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

Black Hawks arrive

US, Mexico still opposed to militarization of border

LAREDO MORNING TIMES

Two Black Hawk helicopters arrived in Laredo on Friday in response to the shooting of the CBP chopper on June 5.

Officials hope the new helicopters, which will be used by U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Laredo, will provide better protection in the event of another shooting.

"These helicopters carry greater capacity to transport CBP agents and will be used exclusively for civil use," U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar said in a statement. "They are

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Photo courtesy of U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar's Office

This photo shows one of the two Black Hawk helicopters that U.S. Customs and Border Protection sent to Laredo Friday.

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not armed but are better-suited to protect agents during daily operations.

"I share the opinions expressed by Mexico and our own government that we should not militarize the border and we are working together to make our border safer. There is cooperation and communication between the U.S. government and the Mexican government on this issue."

The Mexican government says it is working with the United States in the investigation into the shooting attack on the CBP helicopter, but says it "categorically rejects any attempt to see the border as a security threat."

Mexico's Foreign Relations Department said Thursday the U.S. border informed the Mexican government that it will send the two Black Hawk helicopters to patrol the area where the helicopter was hit.

The apparently unarmored chopper was forced to make an emergency landing in Northwest Laredo after bullets hit the right side of the aircraft and the rotor blade.

Blackhawks are armored against small-arms fire, and can transport more personnel.

Mexico has long opposed any militarization of the border.

(The Associated Press contributed to this report.)

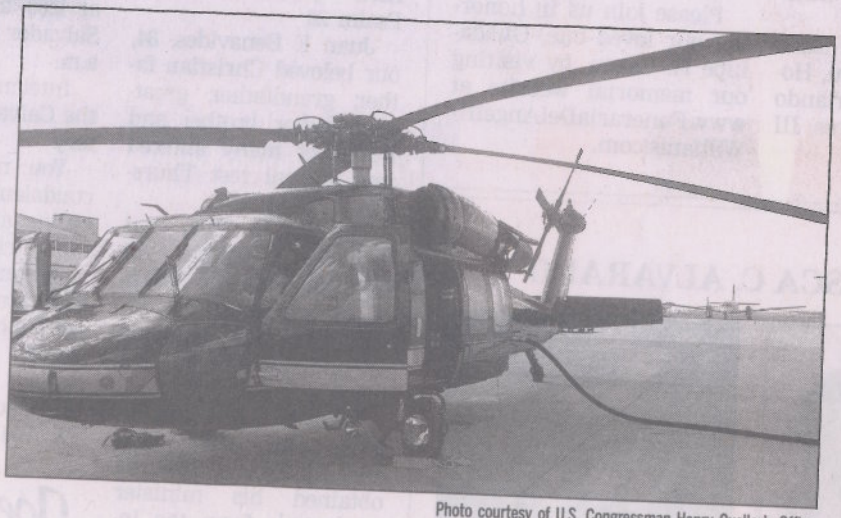

Photo courtesy of U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar's Office

This photo shows the second Black Hawk helicopter that arrived in Laredo Friday. U.S. Customs and Border Protection sent two Black Hawks to Laredo in response to the June 5 shooting of a CBP chopper. Officials hope the new helicopters, which will be used by CBP in Laredo, will provide better protection in the event of another shooting.