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## **Search for suspect continues after Canadian is killed in Mexico**

**The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade could not**

## **confirm reports Monday that a Canadian wounded in a shooting at a Mexican hotel was still in Mexico, being protected by Cabo San Lucas police.**

By The Vancouver Sun May 20, 2008 [Be the first to post a comment](#)

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade could not confirm reports Monday that a Canadian wounded in a shooting at a Mexican hotel was still in Mexico, being protected by Cabo San Lucas police.

"We can't confirm whereabouts of individuals because of the privacy act," said Foreign Affairs spokesperson Marie-Christine Lilkoff. "But I can tell you that we are aware of a Canadian citizen who was wounded in Cabo San Lucas and that consular assistance is being provided."

Bouabal Bounthavorn, 29, died after he was shot three times in the head Thursday inside his hotel room, according to local police.

Bounthavorn's 24-year-old girlfriend, Masha Heikali, believed to be of Burnaby, B.C., was shot in the foot.

American news agencies reported Monday that Mexican police are protecting Heikali as they search for the killer, described by hotel employees as a tall, thin, dark-skinned man. Police in Cabo San Lucas would not confirm the report when contacted by Canwest News Service.

Foreign Affairs also refused to confirm the details surrounding the case Monday. "There is an investigation -- a local investigation into the circumstances into the death," said Lilkoff. "This is all I'm in a position to say."

In an interview with Canwest News Service, the publisher of a local English-language newspaper said she spoke to employees at the Hotel Riu, where the incident occurred. Carrie Duncan said hotel employees believe the killer is Mexican. Duncan said workers told her "a man who appeared to be Mexican ... burst into the room, shot him [Bounthavorn], shot the girlfriend in the foot, then fled."

The workers said the man appeared to be about six foot one.

Duncan, who publishes the Gringo Gazette newspaper, said police are releasing few details of the crime.

"This is a tourist town," she said. "You're not going to get very far with this."

Bounthavorn's murder is the latest in a string of violent attacks that have left at least half a dozen Canadians dead in Mexico in the last three years.

Last May, Jeff Toews, a 34-year-old Albertan, died after falling from the balcony of a Cancun resort. However, Toews's family believes he was the victim of a beating.

Despite the number of violent attacks, the Department of Foreign Affairs has not issued an official warning about the country.

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