

# Trump says Iran may have shot down U.S. drone by mistake

WASHINGTON/DUBAI (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump played down Iran's downing of a U.S. military drone on Thursday, saying he suspected it was shot by mistake and that "it would have made a big difference" to him if the remotely-controlled aircraft had been piloted.

While the comments appeared to suggest Trump was not eager to escalate the latest in a series of incidents with Iran, he also warned that: "This country will not stand for it." Tehran said the unarmed Global Hawk surveillance drone was on a spy mission over its territory but Washington said it was shot down over international airspace.

"I think probably Iran made a mistake - I would imagine it was a general or somebody that made a mistake in shooting that drone down," Trump told reporters at the White House.

Iran's Zarif tweets that downed U.S. drone took off from UAE

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"We had nobody in the drone. It would have made a big difference, let me tell you, it would have made a big, big difference" if the aircraft had been piloted, Trump said as he met Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in the Oval Office.

The United States, which called the event an "unprovoked attack" in international air space, is pursuing a campaign to isolate Iran to contain its nuclear and ballistic missile programs and limit its role in regional wars.

The incident was the latest in an escalating series of incidents in the Gulf region, a critical artery for global oil supplies, since mid-May including explosive strikes on six oil tankers as Tehran and Washington have edged towards confrontation.

It was unclear how the United States might respond and U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the top Democrat in Congress, said Washington had no appetite for war with Iran

"It's hard to believe it was intentional, if you want to know the truth. I think that it could have been somebody who was loose and stupid that day," Trump said, referring to the drone shooting.

The Trump administration called top congressional leaders to the White House for a briefing later on Thursday on Iran, a source with knowledge of the meeting said.

Iran has denied involvement in the tanker attacks, but global jitters about a new Middle East conflagration disrupting oil exports have triggered a jump in crude prices.

Saudi Arabia, Washington's main gulf ally, said Iran had created a grave situation with its "aggressive behavior" and the kingdom was consulting other Gulf Arab states on next steps.

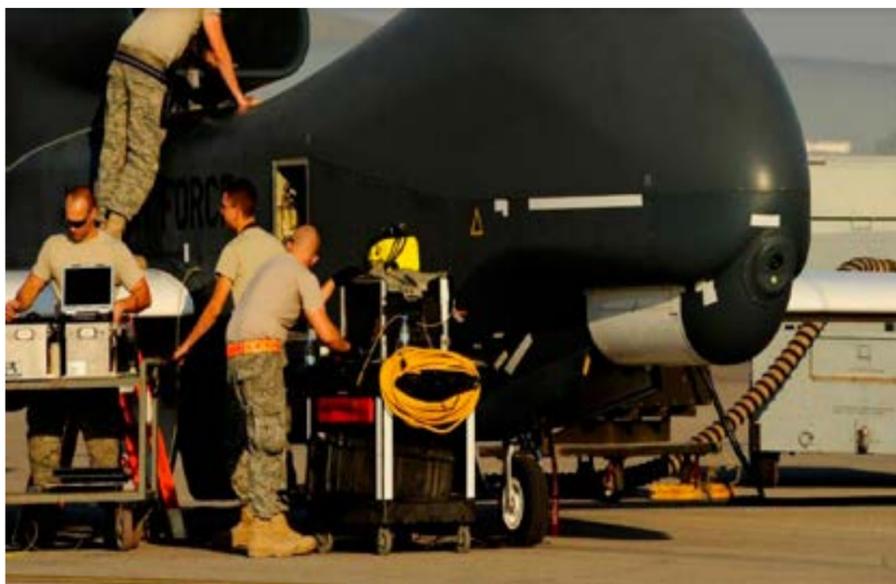
Tensions with Iran flared with Trump's withdrawal last year from a 2015 nuclear accord with Iran and have worsened as Washington imposed fresh sanctions to throttle Tehran's vital oil trade. Iran retaliated earlier this week with a threat to breach limits on its nuclear activities imposed by the deal.

U.S. Air Force maintainers prepare a U.S. military drone RQ-4A Global Hawk for takeoff at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, December 2, 2010. Picture taken December 2, 2010. Courtesy Eric Harris/U.S. Air Force/Handout via REUTERS 'SPY' DRONE

Iranian state media said the "spy" drone was brought down over the southern Iranian province of Hormozgan, which is on the Gulf, with a locally made "3 Khordad" missile.

A U.S. official said the drone had been downed in international air space over the Strait of Hormuz, through which about a third of the world's seaborne oil exits the Gulf. Earlier, a U.S. official had described the drone as an MQ-4C Triton, a similar aircraft.

A U.S. official said the drone, an RQ-4A Global Hawk, had been downed in international air space over the Strait of Hormuz, through which about a third of the world's seaborne oil exits the Gulf. Earlier, a U.S. official had described the drone as a Triton, a similar aircraft.



U.S. Air Force maintainers prepare a U.S. military drone RQ-4A Global Hawk for takeoff at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, December 2, 2010. Picture taken December 2, 2010. Courtesy Eric Harris/U.S. Air Force/Handout via REUTERS

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FILE PHOTO: Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen speaks during a meeting with China's President Xi Jinping (not pictured) in Beijing, China



A television screen shows Chinese state media CCTV's footage of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Pyongyang, in Beijing



Fired oil contractor employees protest near the Venezuelan chancellery in Caracas



A television screen shows Chinese state media CCTV's footage of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Pyongyang, at a street in Beijing



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**He's Jumping Into The Bayou City Food Scene With Major Plans**  
**Star New York Chef's Big Move And His New Houston Restaurant**



*Chef Aaron Bludorn is saying goodbye New York, hello Houston.*

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

New York chef Aaron Bludorn is kind of a badass. He's got quite the culinary pedigree. He's worked with two renowned Michelin-starred chefs — Douglas Keane in California and most recently the legendary Daniel Boulud in New York.

Bludorn began as a chef de partie at the famed Cafe Boulud before working his way up to executive chef in just five years. And he made his mark in the mainstream as a contestant on season one of Netflix's The Final Table, cooking with chefs across the globe and testing his chops with different cuisines. Plus, the accomplished chef is on the board of nonprofit Careers Through Culinary Arts Programs.

All of which is to say, Bludorn's kind of intense. But above all, he's a nice guy. And Houston's about to find out how nice, thanks to Bludorn's decision to leave the famed Cafe Boulud to open up his very own Bayou City restaurant as soon as 2020.

The down-to-earth chef is making serious moves, hightailing it from the buzz and blitz of New York to settle down in Houston with his wife of one year, Victoria Pappas Bludorn.



*Chef Aaron Bludorn*

Yes, that's the Pappas you're thinking of. Victoria's father is Chris Pappas, co-owner of Pappas Restaurants. The group will not be affiliated with Bludorn's new Houston restaurant, but he's happy to have the connection and holds his in-laws in the utmost respect.

"I bounced around, and my family's kind of scattered. Our whole plan is to start a family, and what better place than Houston? Especially with the roots my wife has there," Bludorn says. "I've had such a great time visiting in the past years. It's a great town to be in food scene, that's for sure."



*Aaron Bludorn worked with chef Daniel Boulud for 10 years.*

"I think right now it's super vibrant. Some great chefs doing fantastic things — Chris Shepherd, Justin Yu, Hugo (Ortega). I've been really reading about the push there for years."

Bludorn does not know where he's going to open his new Houston restaurant yet, but he sees The Heights, Montrose or maybe Midtown as good fits.

His vision for what the restaurant will look like is more clear. "I would like it to be a very celebratory, very polished and charismatic setting but at the same time dressed-down," Bludorn says. Don't expect a suit and tie type place.

He envisions big wood beams, exposed brick in a not industrial but craftsman-like vibe.

His close ties to Boulud — he spent 10 years at Cafe Boulud, the last five as the legendary restaurant's executive chef —

already make Bludorn something of a big name. Even if he does not carry himself that way.



*Aaron Bludorn knows his way around a kitchen.*

"Having the opportunity to work for Daniel Boulud for 10 years was incredible," Aaron Bludorn tells PaperCity. "It's something I couldn't have dreamed of in my wildest dreams when I was in culinary school or even a young cook. I had some great mentors because of it, people that really helped me."

"Especially Daniel, the most humble, incredible chef I've ever worked for, or guy I've ever met."

**Bludorn's New Houston Beginnings** Bludorn is drawn to the merging of all different cultures in Houston, what he calls the kind of thing you'd see in cities like Toronto, Los Angeles and New York. "It's very alive in Houston as well," he says.

But he's not planning to splash on the scene. The humble chef simply wants to do what he does, and do it well.

"I hope to play a small auxiliary role to start," Bludorn laughs. "I'm not there to fix anything or to make anything better. I'm there to fill my own niche of what I've been doing lately through working with Daniel, and also what my career has been up to this point."

That looks like a French-American restaurant in the style of New York chef Charlie Palmer — namely, American dishes through and through carefully crafted with the finest classic French

techniques.



*Aaron Bludorn's wife Victoria is part of the Pappas family.*

"I wouldn't say the menu is going to be marked up with classic French dishes. Rather just using those techniques to create something really delicious. One of the things I really like to do is evoke the sense of dining that includes pretty much everyone, right? By being able to have a lot of dishes to share, large format with the main courses," Bludorn says. Expect a fair share of shareable plates.

Is he interested in the ingredients and flavors Houston and the Gulf Coast have to offer?

"One hundred percent," he chuckles. "I'm really excited about the seafood down there and all the seafood the Gulf has to offer. It's also pretty amazing you have tomatoes, beautiful tomatoes growing in January."

For Bludorn, it's all about the discovery, a kind of food-finding mission. "It's been more exploratory as of right now. Definitely been down there, made friends with Chris and his chef at UB Preserv, Nick Wong, has been a friend of mine," he says.

He's hitting up Houston chefs for the inside scoop, tips on farmers markets, ranches and beyond to make the most of local ingredients. "It's something I've done in New York that's taken me time to get there," Bludorn notes. (Courtsy <https://www.papercitymag.com>)

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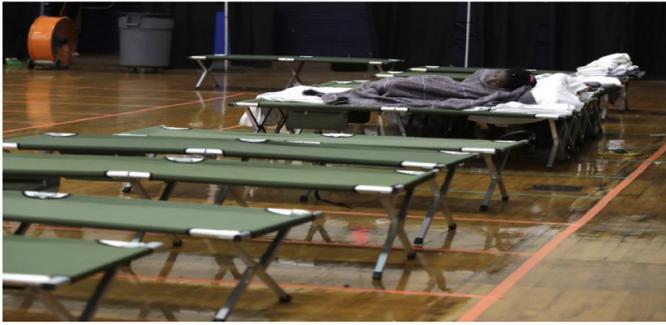
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## Record Number Of African Migrants Coming To Mexican Border



In this June 13, 2019 photo, a migrant woman sleeps on a cot inside the Portland Exposition Building in Portland, Maine. Maine's largest city has repurposed the basketball arena as an emergency shelter in anticipation of hundreds of asylum seekers who are headed to the state from the U.S. southern border. Most are arriving from Congo and Angola. (AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Undaunted by a dangerous journey over thousands of miles, people fleeing economic hardship and human rights abuses in African countries are coming to the U.S.-Mexico border in unprecedented numbers, surprising Border Patrol agents more accustomed to Spanish-speaking migrants.

Officials in Texas and even Maine are scrambling to absorb the sharp increase in African migrants. They are coming to America after flying across the Atlantic Ocean to South America and then embarking on an often harrowing overland journey. In one recent week, agents in the Border Patrol's Del Rio sector stopped more than 500 African migrants found walking in separate groups along the arid land after splashing across the Rio Grande, children in tow.

That is more than double the total of 211 African migrants who were detained by the Border Patrol along the entire 2,000-mile (3,200-kilometer) U.S.-Mexico border in the 2018 fiscal year.

"We are continuing to see a rise in apprehensions of immigrants from countries not normally encountered in our area," said

Raul Ortiz, head of the U.S. Border Patrol's Del Rio sector.

The immigrants in Texas were mostly from the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola. Cameroonians have also been traveling up through Mexico and into the U.S. in larger numbers and seeking asylum at ports of entry.

Cameroonians generally fly to Ecuador because no visa is required and take about four months to reach Tijuana. They walk for days in Panama through dense jungle, where they are often robbed and held in government-run camps. They come from Cameroon's English-speaking south with horrifying stories of rape, murder and torture committed since late 2016 by soldiers of the country's French-speaking majority, which holds power.

A few days after the big groups of African immigrants were apprehended in Texas, federal officials dropped off dozens of them in San Antonio. Officials in the Texas city sent out a plea for French-speaking volunteers for translating work "and most importantly, making our guests feel welcome." Many were bused to Portland, Maine, about

as far as one can get from the Mexican border and still be in the continental United States. Word has spread among migrants that the city of 67,000 is a welcoming place. Somali refugees were resettled in Portland in the 1990s.



A total of 170 asylum seekers arrived in recent days. Hundreds more are expected in an influx that City Manager Jon Jennings called unprecedented. With one shelter already full, a basketball venue called the Portland Exposition Building was converted into an emergency shelter.

Portland officials tweeted Thursday that rumors some of the migrants are carrying the Ebola virus "are patently false," and said that as asylum seekers, they are in the United States legally.

On Thursday afternoon, families in the Expo chatted in French and Portuguese as children kicked a soccer ball near rows of cots. One of the men, 26-year-old Prince Pombo, described himself as a pro-democracy activist and said he had fled his native country, the Democratic Republic of Congo, because of political oppression. He went to neighboring Angola, then flew to Brazil. There, he met a local woman and they had a baby they named Heaven. Now 16-months old, she giggled as she played with her mother in the Expo. Pombo said his journey from Congo to America took three years. More migrants are on the way. Mexico is on pace to triple the number of African immigrants it is processing this year, up from 2,100 in 2017.

Human Rights Watch says 1,800 people have been killed and half a million have fled their homes in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon since late 2016. A United Nations official says 4.3 million people need humanitarian assistance.



"We don't have jobs in the English part, the educational system is poor, they are looking at us as dogs," Ambi said as a crowd of migrants jostled outside an immigration center in Tapachula, waiting for their names to be called to collect their travel document. Ambi has been waiting every morning for six weeks.

"We just have to be patient, because there is nothing we can do," he said.

The explosion in immigration to the United States from sub-Saharan Africa coincides with a steep drop in the migration flow across the Mediterranean to Europe after European countries and two main embarkation points — Turkey and Libya — decided to crack down. From Jan. 1 to June 12, only 24,600 migrants arrived in Europe by sea, compared to 99,600 over the same period in 2017, according to the International Organization for Migration.

But IOM spokesman Joel Millman doubts the migrant path for Africans has swung over from Europe to America.

Pombo, who was a teacher in Congo, learned in an internet search and by asking around that Portland is good place for migrants. He said his next step is to start rebuilding a life for himself and his family. (Courtesy <http://apnews.com>)

### Related

#### African Migrant Apprehensions Spike at Southern US Border

WASHINGTON - The number of African migrants apprehended by U.S. border officials has spiked, from a total of less than a hundred in years past, to more than 600 in just the last few weeks.

The group is part of a small but increasing proportion of migrants from countries other than Mexico and Central America who cross into the southern United States without authorization.



Mainly Haitian along with some African migrants wait in men's and women's lines to request documents giving them temporary legal status in Mexico, outside

the Siglo XXI detention center in Tapachula, Mexico, June 12, 2019.

While the overwhelming majority of people apprehended by the U.S. Border Patrol along the US-Mexico boundary are from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, migrants from outside those areas accounted for 4.3% of 303,916 total apprehensions in Fiscal Year 2017, and 6.8% of 593,507 total apprehensions so far in FY2019, based on government data.

Beginning in late May, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) officials in one Texas sector encountered several large groups, sometimes with more than 100 people, from African nations, including Angola, Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, Nigeria, and Somalia.

"Over the probably the last three or four months, we've seen an increase of folks from the continent of Africa... and so this continues to be something that is awfully concerning for us," said Raul Ortiz, US-CBP chief for the Del Rio sector in Texas.



African and Haitian migrants intending to seek asylum in the U.S. rest on mattresses inside a shelter in Mexicali, Mexico, Oct. 5, 2016.

In FY2018, citizens from the same list of countries accounted for 67 apprehensions along the entirety of the US-Mexico border, compared to some 640 apprehensions in recent weeks, according to data provided by Ortiz to VOA on June 7 and earlier USCBP statistics.

"One of the things we do know is that these folks have been traveling for some time — between four and six months, most of them ... and then for whatever reason, whether it was the cartels or a smuggling organization, have pushed them into our area of responsibility. And so we're starting to see and encounter them in and around the river country that we're patrolling," Ortiz said. (Courtesy voanews.com)

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