

U.S. Border Patrol officer who shot teenager acquitted of manslaughter charge



Tucson, November 27 (RHC)-- In the U.S. state of Arizona, a jury has found Border Patrol agent Lonnie Swartz not guilty of involuntary manslaughter for shooting and killing 16-year-old José Elena Rodríguez through the U.S.-Mexico border fence in 2012.

The jury hung on whether to bring a charge of voluntary manslaughter, leaving it unclear whether prosecutors would seek to try Swartz a third time. A previous jury acquitted Swartz on murder charges but deadlocked on lesser manslaughter charges.

Authorities claimed José Elena Rodríguez was throwing rocks at agents over the border fence before Swartz opened fire. But medical examiners say José was shot as many as 11 times, with all but one of the bullets striking from behind, leading them to conclude the teen was shot in the back as he lay on the ground.

The verdict came after President Trump said soldiers deployed to the border could use deadly force, and after he suggested soldiers could respond to migrants throwing rocks with gunfire.

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