

**RESOLUTION**

MAR 04 2009

**Supporting Fair Elections in El Salvador**

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal government body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles is home to the largest concentration of Salvadoran nationals in the United States making it inextricably linked to the nation of El Salvador;

WHEREAS, Salvadorans constitute the second largest Latino community in California; and

WHEREAS, the twelve-year Salvadoran civil war, which began in the early 1980s and took the lives of over 70,000 Salvadorans, resulting in a massive influx of refugees to the United States; and

WHEREAS, during the 1980's, the majority of these individuals lacked legal status in the United States, which left them in a highly tenuous and vulnerable position in our society; and

WHEREAS, despite these challenges, after over twenty years of hard work and lobbying for inclusion in the political and economic life of the United States, Salvadorans are beginning to experience a series of legal and social transformations; and

WHEREAS, many Salvadorans now enjoy permanent legal residence and have become US citizens, participate as active voters in the U.S. political system, hold important leadership positions in private companies and government agencies; own hundreds of businesses and are involved in civic and educational organizations; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2009, El Salvador will participate in another transformation as the country will hold presidential elections and many Salvadorans abroad will have the opportunity to return home and participate in the democratic election of a new president, and in doing so support the growth and stabilization of a democratic institution; and

WHEREAS, the presence of international observers becomes crucial in a country with a history of fraudulent elections and a fragile emerging democratic system; and

WHEREAS, these elections will have a major impact on over one million Salvadorans residing in major cities such as Los Angeles and San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles has a long-standing record of supporting democracies abroad, and also through its Sister Cities program; and

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WHEREAS, the 2009 presidential elections represent an historic opportunity for change for the Salvadoran people who struggled for more than 100 years under a system that denied basic human rights to many of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, in this context, the presence of international observers becomes crucial to ensure that the election is conducted in a manner free of intimidation or irregularities.


NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2009-10 Federal Legislative Program support for the effort by members of the Los Angeles City Council and their representatives as well as hundreds of international observers, including the Organization of American States (OAS), Salvadoran organizations such as the Salvadoran American Leadership and Educational Fund (SALEF), Salvadoran leaders, Congressional representatives, and State elected officials to monitor the El Salvador presidential elections taking place on March 15, 2009 to ensure they are fair and transparent, free of intimidation, and that the decision of the voters and results of the elections will be respected.

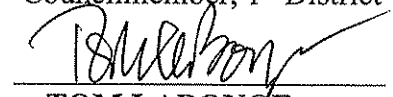
AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the spirit of building on the Sister City relationship between Los Angeles and San Salvador, the City of Los Angeles hereby joins thousands of Salvadoran residents in Los Angeles in requesting that U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Rodham Clinton and the Obama Administration take any appropriate legislative and/or administrative action to support the efforts of the monitoring group and recognize the right of self determination of the people of El Salvador to elect a president of their choosing, to respect the results of the elections, and work constructively with the newly elected president, whoever that is, to further stabilize and encourage a democratic system in El Salvador.

PRESENTED BY:   
**JOSE HUIZAR**  
Councilmember, 14<sup>th</sup> District

  
**ED REYES**  
Councilmember, 1<sup>st</sup> District

  
**ERIC GARCETTI**  
Councilmember  
13<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY:   
**WENDY GREUEL**  
Councilmember  
2<sup>nd</sup> District

  
**TOM LABONGE**  
Councilmember  
4<sup>th</sup> District

**ORIGINAL**