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Resolution in Support of Free and Fair Elections in El Salvador

Whereas, the U.S. government has a sordid history of intervening in the sovereign affairs of El Salvador, including providing over \$4 billion in funding to the violently repressive Salvadoran government, thereby fueling the country's 12-year civil war that took the lives of 75,000 Salvadoran civilians; and

Whereas, since the 1992 Peace Accords ended the civil war, the labor movement and social movement have been struggling against anti-worker governments that have systematically eroded worker protections, attacked unions, and starved the state ensuring that it could not meet the basic human needs of Salvadoran workers, families and the vast majority of the population; and

Whereas, in 2009, the labor movement and social movement were successful in campaigning to elect a government that is largely responsive to their needs, has expanded worker rights, strengthened worker protections, increased the minimum wage, protected the right to form a union, and allowed for the creation of dozens of new unions; and

Whereas, the labor movement and social movement are currently campaigning for a presidential ticket that will further expand the positive changes of the past few years; and
Whereas, the anti-worker forces are working to defeat the current administration (or governing party) so as to roll back these gains, destroy unions and increase profits by impoverishing workers; and

Whereas, these historically anti-worker forces that collectively represent El Salvador's corporate elite - including the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) party responsible for setting federal worker policy from 1989 through 2009, the corroborating political parties, the National Association for Private Enterprise (ANEP), and other aggressively profit-driven private business associations - have involved the United States in intervening in the democratic process to keep them in power; and

Whereas, U.S. corporate and interests are also pushing the U.S. government to intervene in the elections; and

Whereas, U.S. political intervention is manipulating the electoral process to get investment policies that facilitate union-busting, mass lay-offs and huge wage cuts and strengthen the hand of U.S.-based transnational corporations to pit Salvadoran workers against U.S. workers in a vicious race to the bottom; and

Whereas, U.S. corporate interests also are pushing the U.S. government to intervene in the elections; and

Whereas, U.S. Congressional Republicans have historically used threats of retaliation against Salvadorans for exercising their right to vote for a candidate of their choice, for example, to cut off remittance monies that Salvadoran workers send home to their families and to jeopardize their immigration status in the U.S.; and



Whereas, before the 2009 elections, the Obama administration made a public commitment to respect the results of the elections and continue positive diplomatic relations with whichever presidential candidate the Salvadoran people elected and this statement neutralized the threats made by Congressional Republicans,

Therefore be it Resolved, the San Francisco Labor Council will send a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry urging the U.S. State Department to issue a pro-active statement of neutrality in advance of the February 2014 Salvadoran elections to ensure that Salvadorans can vote in a president of their choosing without fear of U.S. government retaliation; and

Be it Further Resolved, the San Francisco Labor Council will send a letter to the offices of our Congressional representatives urging them to sign on to a "Dear Colleague" letter to Secretary of State John Kerry to issue a statement of neutrality on the Salvadoran elections; and

Be it Further Resolved, the San Francisco Labor Council will support members and affiliates in participating in delegations to the offices of our Congressional representatives to encourage their action for free and fair Elections in El Salvador; and

Be it Further Resolved, the San Francisco Labor Council endorses the Campaign for Free and Fair Elections in El Salvador; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council will encourage delegates and affiliates to promote participating in an election observer delegation to El Salvador to join the Salvadoran labor movement in protecting free and fair elections; and

Be it Finally Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council will send this resolution to the South Bay, Monterey Bay, San Mateo, Contra Costa, and North Bay Central Labor Councils, and the AFL-CIO for their concurrence and action.

Submitted by Rodger Scott, AFT 2121, and adopted by the Executive Committee of the San Francisco Labor Council on December 2, 2013 and affirmed by the Delegate Body on December 9, 2013.

Respectfully,



Tim Paulson
Executive Director