

Rossana Perez

Presented before the [Los Angeles City Council on June 25th, 2010](#)



Rossana at City Hall

My name is Rossana Pérez. I am from El Salvador. I live in District 13, Council President Eric Garcetti's district.

I was a University student helping the campesinos and teachers in San Salvador. My husband was a university professor, he left one day and never came back- He was disappeared. Soon after that, the death squads in the middle of the night captured me. I was blindfolded, tied up, taken away from my daughter, forcefully naked and beaten. I was constantly tortured while I was in prison, persecuted for trying to build a democratic society.

When I came to Los Angeles, the horrors of the war haunted me until I found out about PTV's program. I came to PTV and found a place where I could get help with all my complicated needs, medical, psychological, legal, and social services. I am thankful to Ana Deutsch who was my therapist, and Dr. Quiroga who was my doctor and to the wonderful PTV staff; I was able to rebuild my life, and to help others who had endured experiences like mine.

Thanks to the help of PTV, I am able to help my community. I have become an active member of my community, helping to start El Rescate and Clinica Monseñor Romero Community based refugee and immigrant health care organizations. To this day I am a strong advocate on immigrant, refugees and women's rights. PTV gave me the strength to continue and give back to my community. At the same time I have overcome the pain the torture left in me. Those scars will remain with me for the rest of my life, but they would not destroy me as a human being. Thanks to PTV, I have regained my dignity as a woman, and as a survivor of torture.

The first time, I came to Los Angeles City council was in 1986, I came to request council to accepted a resolution to be passed to protect refugees

from El Salvador and Guatemala. City Council passed the resolution to make Los Angeles a Sanctuary City, and called Los Angeles a City of Refuge. Today, I am grateful and proud to be a Los Angeles citizen. It means a lot to us that you are recognizing Los Angeles as a home to immigrants and refugees who have been survivors of torture. Besides, honoring the lifesaving work that PTV does. And also declaring United Nation International Day against torture, as victims of torture day in the city of Los Angeles. Thank you!



Rossana Perez is donating 20% of what a customer pays for purchase of her book [Flight to Freedom: The Story of Central American Refugees in California](#) to the Program for Torture Victims **from June 26th 2010 to June 26th 2011, when you mention PTV and order the book directly from her.**

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