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AMERICA/EL SALVADOR - "The situations of violence are extremely serious and threaten the collapse of society," Archbishop of San Salvador affirms

San Salvador (Agenzia Fides) – The Catholic Church in El Salvador has today proposed to seek help from other nations, especially the United States and Brazil, to combat violence in the country, which she sees as "very serious" and something that "threatens to overwhelm society." "One can receive aid from other nations, especially the United States, for assistance strategies in this area," said Archbishop José Luis Escobar Alas of San Salvador, in a press conference after Sunday Mass, citing Brazil or "so many friends." Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who is highly regarded in El Salvador, has plans to visit the country in late February.
"The escalation of violence has no limits: just as good is infinite because it comes from God, so evil cam be without limits," said the Archbishop. "If society tolerates and allows an increase in violence, then where are we going? We must put a stop now, to put an end to this situation. Now." Archbishop Escobar Alas commented on the climate of violence that rages in the smallest country in America: the year 2009 ended with the frightening figure of 4,365 murders, the highest in the last 10 years according to police statistics. And the year 2010 began with the same rhythm. The Archbishop described the "deeply worrying level of violence" in El Salvador, referring to the massacres recorded on the night of Saturday, February 6, when at least five people were killed and six others were injured, and to similar episodes on February 2, when seven suspected gang members were killed by an armed group.
"One thing is clear to everyone: the situation of violence is extremely serious and threatens the collapse of society, so we must respond promptly and effectively," said Archbishop Escobar Alas. In January alone, in El Salvador there were 404 murders, which means an average of 13 every day, according to the National Civil Police (PNC). On January 30, the Conference of Bishops issued a document calling on the entire community to reflect on the country that "is suffering an epidemic of violence" and asked that action be taken to work against it. The Bishops are very clear when they write: "Not even countries at war lose as many lives as ours from violence... putting into practice the teachings of Christ, we can establish social peace." (CE) (Agenzia Fides 08/02/2010)

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