



## **AMERICA/PERU - Acquittal of missionary Father Bartolini and director of Radio East welcomed with joy**

Yurimaguas (Agenzia Fides) - The Peruvian Bishops' Conference announced that the Amazonian High Court acquitted Father Mario Bartolini, Italian Passionist priest and pastor in the town of Barranquita. Along with him, journalist John Acate from the Apostolic Vicariate of Yurimaguas, was acquitted by the first level of the Amazonian High Court, following the legal proceedings against them for acts of violence which occurred in Bagua, in June 2009. The sentence was read on 21 December, signed by Judge Julio Cesar Aquino Medina, Judge of the first level of the Amazonian High Court, in Yurimaguas. The missionary was accused of the crime of "attack on public transport or communication, and acts against the State", during the bloody events that occurred in Bagua.

Father Bartolini, according to the memo sent by the Episcopal Conference to Fides, spent 35 years in various missions along the Marañón e San Martín River in Barranquita in the Peruvian jungle, and is particularly known for his support to indigenous communities and peoples. In recent years, he supported the indigenous communities in defending their territory against attempts at expropriation. On leaving the courthouse, Father Bartolini showed his joy at the acquittal. The Episcopal Commission for Social Action welcomes with pleasure the acquittal of Father Mario Bartolini, Pastor of Barranquita, and John Acate, director of Radio East, one of the operations of the Apostolic Vicariate of Yurimaguas. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 29/12/2010)