



AMERICA / BOLIVIA - "Insufficient Government action in the fight against drug dealing, but it is a struggle which regards the whole society": Bishops` clarification on the Pastoral Letter

La Paz (Agenzia Fides) - A few days after the presentation of the Letter of the Bishops to the people of Bolivia (see Fides 04/14/2011), some clarifications were requested by the press and various social groups. According to the note sent by Archdiocese of Cochabamba to Fides, the press all over the country, and also the foreign press, have given much space to the phrase of the document which refers to "insufficient action" of the government in the fight against drugdealing, thereby presenting the document as a criticism of the Bishops to President Morales. To clarify any doubt, Archbishop Oscar Aparicio, Auxiliary Bishop of La Paz and Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Bolivia (CEB) said that the vision of the Church and its mission are important as a starting and closing point of the pastoral letter. The Letter deals with different aspects of the country`s reality, social, political, cultural and technical aspects as far as the economical aspect is concerned are guidelines. "It is a long Letter, all the issues explain the points we are dealing with", said the Bishop. The pastoral letter wants to reawaken hope and encourage everyone's commitment to transform the current reality of the country. Faced with questions on specific topics of the Letter, such as cocaine and drugdealing, the Secretary of the CEB has made it clear that the issue affects everyone, so "we must all work to reduce this social evil: it is an appeal to the government, institutions and every citizen so that commitment is taken to this fight against drug dealing...". On his behalf, Mgr Scarpellini, Secretary of the CEB, said that the Church urges all members of society, from government to social organizations, educational institutions, and others, to activate mechanisms and strategies to solve the drug problem that globally affects society, "We launch an appeal because this issue is faced by society on the whole". Bishop Aparicio also recalled that the Letter deals with different problems of Bolivian society and also presents itself as a self-criticism of the Catholic Church, where there is diversity and plurality of thought, but is united by the common love for Christ to accomplish the mission assigned.(EC) (Agenzia Fides 18/04/2011)

> LINKS

The Bishops' document (in Spanish):: http://www.fides.org/spa/documents/los_catolicos_en_la_bolivia_de_hoy_2011.pdf: