



ASIA/MALAYSIA - The Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur: "a meeting between the voice of moderation and the voice of peace"

Vatican City (Fides Service) - "The voice of moderation - Prime Minister Najib Razak - met the voice of peace, justice, human rights, the reasonableness of faith, who is the Holy Father Benedict XVI. I am very happy for this meeting and its outcome, and I hope it will bear abundant fruit. I hope that it can have major success and a positive impact in our country ": with these words His Exc. Mgr. Murphy Pakiam, Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, commented to Fides about yesterday's meeting between the Pope and the Prime Minister of Malaysia, after which the Holy See and the Republic of Malaysia announced the establishment of diplomatic relations.

The Archbishop, who attended the meeting and was, according to Fides sources, one of the mediators who allowed the accomplishment of the historic step, told Fides about the friendly atmosphere between the Vatican and the Malaysian delegation, recalling that the Premier presented his plan for a "global movement of moderates". As for the local Church, she "looks to the future with hope and confidence", said the Archbishop, relying on a continuous improvement in institutional relationships. Between the needs and demands of the Christian community to the executive, notes Msgr. Pakiam, "there is the establishment of an Inter-Religious Council (project started in the past); the establishment of a ministry for non-Muslims; examination with regards to the issues of education and Catholic schools which, over the years have been nationalized by the Government, which had complete control: the Church asks to have the possibility to go back to being the protagonist of the formation of the young and can spend her energy in education quality".

The hopes and expectations of the Catholic community in Malaysia are many and the reactions were very positive, says sources of Fides, even if the hot issues remain: the issue on the use of the word "Allah" for non-Muslims (a legal battle is under way); the protection of human rights and religious freedom of all citizens, without discrimination; the presence of Islamic courts and fundamentalist currents of thought and in Islamic jurisprudence, which tend to control and impose limitations to the life of the whole Malaysian population. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 19/07/2011)