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AMERICA/GUATEMALA - At least 38 dead in Guatemala, thousands are homeless in Central America

Guatemala City (Agenzia Fides) - Since 11 October torrential rains lash Central America. Caritas Guatemala has sent a statement to Fides on the situation in the country after the heavy rains in past days. This natural disaster, according to the report of Caritas, has struck so far, all over the country, 524,480 people, in addition to 78,029 victims of other natural phenomena connected. From the first reports we learn that, according to authorities, 29,618 people have had to escape from their homes, of which 14,966 have been accommodated in temporary shelters after their homes have become uninhabitable because of flooding. Unfortunately 38 people have died, 18 wounded and 5 missing. Approximately 22,685 houses are destroyed.
The areas that reported the most damage are Baja Verapaz, Chimaltenango y Solola, Quetzaltenango, Jutiapa, Suchitepequez, Totonicapan, Guatemala, Santa Rosa and Huehuetenango. Caritas Guatemala has appointed in the affected areas responsibles at the diocesan level, in order to distribute the aid as soon as possible. The Archdiocese of Los Altos has published the names and phone numbers of the responsibles for the parishes. The adverse situation does not seem to have ended, according to the report of the meteorological service, several rivers are in danger of overflowing.
In addition to Guatemala, its neighbors are in the same emergency situation, such as El Salvador, which now has recorded more than 32 deaths and more than 50 000 displaced people who have escaped from their homes. The reports of the damage in Central America also mention Nicaragua, Mexico, Honduras and Costa Rica among the many countries that have reported damage due to the rains. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 24/10/2011)

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