



AFRICA/TUNISIA - "Let us trust the new leaders in Tunisia," says the National Director of the PMS

Tunis (Agenzia Fides) - "The elections were held in an atmosphere of joy, peace and emotion. There was a very consistent participation on behalf of voters", says to Fides Fr. awad Alamat, National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) in Tunisia. "Being the first truly free vote in Tunisia, it was a first experience a bit for everyone. Many Tunisians lived the election as 'an adventure' with great enthusiasm. This meant that there were no problems in dealing with long queues up to 4 or 5 hours to vote".

As far as the outcome of the elections is concerned, whose results, albeit partial, see the success of the Ennahdha party with Islamic values, Fr. Jawad said: "The Ennahdha party leaders have made very interesting statements, which we want to believe in. They said, for example, that religious minorities will be respected, as well as freedom of worship and that they will keep an open door towards the West. The promise to keep everything that Tunisia has gained as personal rights is very important, rather, they will be improved. Let us give them confidence".

The National Director of the PMS in Tunisia added that "the new leaders of the country must also take into account the fact that they face a nation that feels strong, after a revolution against an oppressive regime, and is aware of their rights. The candidates of Ennahdha were elected on the basis of the promise to continue the process of democratic reform in Tunisia and modernization of the country, with reference to their Muslim identity".

On this point Fr. Jawel says: "When you start talking about the Sharia law, we must not immediately think of Countries where it is applied in the most conservative and restrictive way. We must not be afraid of these values of Islam, because they represent a need arising from the research of one's own identity. One should listen to our Muslim friends who say that within the Sharia there are values that make culture", said Father Jawad. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 27/10/2011)