



## **AMERICA/NICARAGUA - "Recognizing the limits and demonstrating without violence": the President of the Episcopal Conference after the elections**

Managua (Agenzia Fides) - The President of the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua, the Archbishop of Managua, Mgr. Leopoldo José Brenes Solórzano said there was a lack of transparency in the elections held on November 6, where the outgoing president, Daniel Ortega, was widely re-elected, with accusations of fraud by the opposition. "The conduct of the elections was not strictly transparent as we expected," said Monsignor Brenes to Channel 2 television on November 12. The Archbishop explained that the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE), in charge of elections in Nicaragua, is a "human institution has its weaknesses," so he asked the members to "recognize their limits." "We humbly recognize that there are weaknesses," he said. Mgr. Brenes, who also stressed that the electoral process still had "many positive things," like a big turnout, which was "a beautiful thing."

With 100% of polling stations counted, the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE) approved Ortega's re-election with 62.46% of votes. Ortega's main opponent was, the entrepreneur Fabio Gadea, of the Independent Liberal Party (PLI), who received 31% of the votes, but he denounced the "unprecedented fraud" and called for new elections, calling on his supporters to a "peaceful resistance". The Nicaraguan opposition indeed protested violently against the Ortega's re-election in different parts of the country, with a toll of four victims, 49 injured policemen and hundreds of injured civilians.

Mgr. Brenes asked "winners and losers" to promote their demands "without violence". "The protests, requests must be made without violence. Those who have won should not attack those who make such requests, all must be developed in a climate of dialogue". (CE) (Agenzia Fides 15/11/2011)