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AMERICA/VENEZUELA - The most urgent needs and expectations for 2012, first among all national reconciliation

Caracas (Agenzia Fides) - The 97th Assembly of the Venezuelan Episcopal Conference, CEV (see Fides 10/01/2012) has just ended with the publication of a Message to the people of God, entitled "2012: Year of national reconciliation" , of which a copy was sent to Fides. Presented to the press by His Exc. Mgr. Diego Rafael Padrón Sanchez, Archbishop of Cumaná, and the new President of CEV, the document sets out the concerns in 5 points and the commitment of the Church in Venezuela for 2012: reconciliation concerning everyone, human rights, violence and insecurity, the situation in prisons, active participation in the upcoming elections.
"The most urgent needs and expectations of the country, such as security, employment, housing, health care, education, services and food resources, will need to rely on a rule of law, effective and reliable for the life of society ": this is how the invitation to reconciliation on behalf of the Bishops begins. The text continues: "The desire and need for reconciliation involves the restoration of national coexistence based on mutual respect and on the appreciation and the effective recognition of the political and ideological, cultural and religious pluralism, and tolerance toward others".
The Bishops' message continues: "In support of reconciliation and peace, a key element is respect, protection and promotion of human rights ... To solve the problem of insecurity, one needs to go to the causes of evil, eradicate poverty, not with gifts, but with jobs and quality education".
Another national problem is prisons: "Respect for human rights contrasts with the terrible situation of the Venezuelan prisons. It is necessary to deepen the process of humanization of prisons ... We consider a necessary contribution, for humanitarian and justice reasons, to grant pardons for political prisoners", write the Bishops.
At the end of the document the most important political event in 2012 is recalled: "At the October elections, the Venezuelans should not come as enemies in war. The electoral event in October should be taken in this perspective, human and Christian, of national reconciliation. Therefore, we stress our request to engage in a conscious, free and responsible manner, in law and constitutional duty to vote".
The Bishops' message ends with the invitation of the Catholic community "to join in prayer and all initiatives to promote national reconciliation, and to all the activities this year". (CE) (Agenzia Fides 13/01/2012)

> LINKS

The full document of the CEV (in Spanish):: http://www.fides.org/spa/documents/obispos_venezuela_2012.doc:

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