



AMERICA/PARAGUAY - Food emergency for hundreds of indigenous communities without provisions due to drought

Asunción (Agenzia Fides) - At least 313 indigenous communities are mostly affected by lack of food caused by the drought which has affected Paraguay since the end of November, for this reason President Fernando Lugo signed a decree yesterday which declares food emergency for 90 days. About 110,000 natives, belonging to twenty ethnic groups living in poverty in Eastern and Western regions are those mainly affected by the gravity of the situation. The scarcity of rainfall has also caused a series of fires that have destroyed acres of pasture, thereby reducing food for animals. What also raises concern is the lack of water for domestic use, which may cause the spread of diseases related to the use of polluted water. The decree orders the organs of state to take all necessary administrative and financial measures to provide an immediate response to problems related to food production. Drought affects mainly the cultivation of soy, the main economic source of Paraguay, of cotton, corn, sesame and peanuts. Commercial shipping is also impossible due to low water levels in rivers. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 18/01/2012)