



## **AMERICA/PANAMA-Immediate suspension of the Barro Blanco Hydroelectric Project, the first agreement between the parties**

Panama City (Agenzia Fides) - The government of Panama and indigenous leaders belonging to the ethnic group Ngäbe Bugle have agreed to a temporary suspension of the controversial hydroelectric project Barro Blanco (see Fides 09/02/2012), which should be developed in part within the region inhabited by the ethnic group. In the meantime an environmental management plan will have to be prepared.

The government and indigenous leaders have announced such decision in a statement read at the end of the dialogue session on March 5, in order to define the exploitation of natural resources in the region Ngäbe Bugle during this weekend, behind closed doors, at the United Nations Headquarters in Panama. The mediator between the parties, the Bishop of the western diocese of David, His Exc. Mgr. José Luis Lacunza, publicly read the declaration which lays down the terms for a technical review, "with immediate effect", of the environmental impact of the hydroelectric project. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 08/03/2012)