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AMERICA/PERU - Mining conflict: there is still no dialogue, despite the repeated requests of the Church

Lima (Agenzia Fides) - The Catholic Church denounced the police for having unjustly accused her of instigating the violent anti-mining events that occurred in the southern province of Espinar, where last week two demonstrators were killed (see Fides 31/05/2012). "We have been accused of being violent, of having caused the demonstration in the town of Espinar. These allegations are false and outrageous, " said the Vicar General of the Prelature of Sicuani, Father Eduardo Adelmann. According to information Fides received, the representatives of the Vicariate of Sicuani, of the Vicariate of Solidarity and of the Social Action Commission of the Peruvian Episcopal Conference, spoke during a press conference in Lima, where they stressed that "their voice is that of the Church. " They also expressed their surprise at the arrest in Espinar of two collaborators of the Vicariate of Solidarity, accused by the police for carry ammunition in a vehicle of the institution.The Vicar General of the Prelature of Sicuani, Father Adelmann, noted that the Church is constantly concerned about the welfare of the population, and also maintains good relations with the Swiss mining company Xstrata. Residents and authorities in Espinar therefore ask the mining company to accurately assess the environmental impact caused by the extraction of copper in Tintaya and to increase from 3% to 30% its voluntary contribution to the community. Last week's protests in Espinar caused dozens of injuries and arrests, including the Mayor Oscar Mollohuanca, and led to the declaration of a state of emergency for 30 days.
The President of the Peruvian Episcopal Conference, Mgr. Salvador Piñeiro, speaking to a news agency in the country, urged people to take the path of dialogue, and asked the people to dialogue with government representatives to permanently solve the problem, referring explicitly to the two places in conflict: the Conga Project, Cajamarca (see Fides 30/11/2011) and the town of Espinar, Cusco. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 08/06/2012)

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