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AMERICA/PERU - "Stop the violence and encourage dialogue": Mgr. Bambaren's appeal after 3 deaths yesterday in Celendin

Cajamarca (Agenzia Fides) - The former President of the Episcopal Conference of Peru and Bishop Emeritus of Chimbote, His Exc. Mgr. Luis Bambaren, has denounced the violence that erupted in the province of Celendín in the region of Cajamarca (north of Peru), where people demonstrated against the construction of the Conga mining project, and asked the mediation of the Catholic Church, offered by the Peruvian Episcopal Conference (CEP).
In the note sent to Fides Agency, we read that Mgr. Bambaren said that the central government and social organizations of Cajamarca, which oppose the Conga mining project, should immediately accept the mediation of Father Gaston Garatea proposed by CEP. The Bishop emphasized that father Garatea is a priest with a lot of experience and well accepted in the Andean communities, and could indicate what is best for the development of the Andean region. "Dialogue is the only way to resolve differences in these difficult moments. I appeal to my brothers in Celendín to stop the violence and favor dialogue," concluded the Bishop.
According to local information sent to Fides, at least three people were killed and 20 wounded in a clash between police and demonstrators which took place yesterday, July 3, in Celendin. The demonstrators protested against the Conga mining project, which provides for the opening of a series of mines in the area of Cajamarca. The project, worth over 5,000 million dollars (nearly 4,000 million euros), has long been disputed by the local population (see Fides 06/12/2011). After yesterday's protest, which was the most violent, the government declared a state of emergency in the region of Cajamarca, and ordered military intervention to restore order in the town of Celendín, the center of the anti-mining protest . (CE) (Agenzia Fides 04/07/2012)

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