



AMERICA/BRAZIL - The campaign for the reception of Haitian migrants in Brazil

Manaus (Agenzia Fides) - The Jesuit Refugee Service in Latin America and the Caribbean (SJR/LAC) continues its campaign to raise Latin American citizens awareness concerning the Haitian migrants and the need to understand why they left their country. For this reason, the Jesuits have made a video that shows some aspects of the dramatic reality of those who arrived in Brazil in search of a better and more dignified life.

The video (which can be seen on YouTube at the address below) offers a series of testimonies from volunteers, Portuguese teachers, Haitian immigrants who managed to find work, and the group that operates at the Pro-Haiti Volunteer Service of the SJR, created especially for the large number of Haitians who arrive in Manaus, in the northern Amazon of Brazil.

According to data collected by Fides Agency and a report sent by Adital Agency, there has been a considerable increase of emigration from Haiti after the 2010 earthquake: French Guyana became the place to reach for many Haitians, in order to enter, then in France or the United States. Following the closure on behalf of France of the border with South America, Brazil became, in particular the region of Tabatinga (city on the border with Colombia and Peru), the new destination.

From a first calculation of SJR, one observes that of the 6,000 Haitian immigrants who arrived in Brazil, 5,000 passed from Tabatinga. In Tabatinga emigrants ask the police permission to enter, then with all means they try to arrive in Manaus, bustling center that offers more opportunities. The SJR reports that in 2010, 456 Haitians arrived in this city and the first seven months of 2011 other 925 arrived. In January 2012 there were 3,600 Haitians living in Manaus. Since May Haitians continue to arrive, but their number has decreased: about five to ten arrive per week. Although many have found work not only in Manaus but also in Sao Paulo, Parana, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and Minas Gerais, there is still a high number of job seekers. Currently, nearly two thousand immigrants living in Manaus have to straighten out their position. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 20/7/2012)

> LINKS

Video of the Service Pro-Haiti's SJR.: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=v-GSY1ZjLkQ: