



AMERICA/COLOMBIA - The Church encourages dialogue between the government and rebels in the region of Cauca

Cucuta (Agenzia Fides) - The indigenous people of Cauca and the Colombian government have agreed to start a dialogue "at the highest level" next Monday, July 23, to seek a solution to the crisis in the South-West region of Colombia: because of violence between indigenous groups and police force, last week two civilians died and 30 were wounded. Tension remains high in the area: the indigenous have tried to expel members of the military base in Cauca that, ultimately, was reoccupied by the army and police.

The government of President Juan Manuel Santos has accepted the proposal of dialogue to solve the problem of the population of Cauca, tired of living in the midst of a "perpetual war", they would like to get rid of both garrisons of law enforcement, and groups of guerrillas of the FARC, to return to live peacefully in their ancestral lands.

In a note sent to Fides Agency, the Apostolic Nuncio, Mgr. Aldo Cavalli, strongly deplores the violence in this region. Last Sunday the representative of the Holy Father during the celebration of 425 years of the veneration of the Virgin of Chiquinquirá in the city of Cucuta, expressed very strongly the intention of the Church to remain present in this area, despite the violence. "The Church is there and will not go away, because its people are there. The mission of priests - the Nuncio said- has become very difficult, but their job is vital, and God is with his Church. "(CE) (Agenzia Fides 21/7/2012)