



AMERICA/CHILE - Discrimination against the Mapuche people continues, also victims among children

Santiago (Agenzia Fides) - The indigenous Mapuche peoples of the Chilean region of Araucania, 680 kilometers south of Santiago, continues to suffer acts of racism and repression after being forced to leave their land of origin (see Fides, 25/07/2012). Unfortunately violence continues to grow and, in recent weeks, there have been many arrests and injuries, including boys and girls. Lately, in the Mapuche communities Temucuicui, there were 25 more incidents in which military forces fired guns and threw tear gas bombs. According to some local testimonies, in these clashes 12 people were arrested, three of them minors, who alleged they had been victims of all types of harassment, beatings and sexual harassment by the police. The repression continued outside the hospital in Collipulli, one of the towns in the area, when police fired on a group of people who were waiting friends and relatives who went to have their wounds treated. Among the victims of this latest violence, there is a 12-year-old girl, hit by bullets, and a 16-year-old teenager, shot in the head. According to the Fundación Anide, between 2001 and 2011, Mapuche children between nine months and 16 years of age were the target of bullets, wounds, beatings, kicking and torture, among other humiliating violence suffered on behalf of the Police. Violence against children is becoming part of normality, because in every fight at least three or four are injured, although Chile has signed over the years, various international treaties for the protection of human rights and children and, in particular, the Convenio 169, of the International Organization of Labour concerning the indigenous peoples. Meanwhile, the National Institute for the Protection of Human Rights and the United Nations Fund for Children continue to seriously condemn violence against children and to seek solutions by monitoring the situation which has become uncontrollable. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 31/7/2012)