



## **AMERICA/COLOMBIA - "Decisive support" of the Bishops in the talks of the government with the rebels for a negotiating table of peace**

Bogota (Agenzia Fides) - "Convinced that dialogue is the only way to achieve peace, the Bishops of Colombia have welcomed with joy and hope the proclamation of the President of the Republic about the exploratory talks with the rebel forces to establish foundations for a peace process that might lead, with God's help, to put an end to armed conflict. We offer our strong support to this initiative of the government." This is what the Episcopal Conference of Colombia writes in a statement signed by its President, Archbishop of Bogota, His Exc. Mgr. Ruben Salazar Gomez, in the aftermath of President Santos announcement concerning the start of "exploratory talks" with guerillas to pursue the path of peace.

The Bishops recognize the "prudence and seriousness" with which the Colombian government has come to these preliminary agreements, and reaffirm, before the public, their willingness "to contribute to the search for peace, fostering a climate of forgiveness and reconciliation among all Colombians, and facilitate the meeting and agreement between the government, civil society and the different protagonists of the armed conflict."

The statement concludes by inviting the faithful and all the people of Colombia "to take up the cause of peace, contributing, each according to his/her condition, the elements necessary for the construction of a state law which allows to live together in justice, solidarity and fraternity." (SL) (Agenzia Fides 29/08/2012)