



AMERICA/NICARAGUA - Taxi strike blocks the capital, Archbishop appeals for calm and dialogue

Managua (Agenzia Fides) - The Archdiocese of Managua (Nicaragua) informs that the ecclesiastical authority, after meeting with the leaders of the union of taxi drivers in the capital who had sought the intervention of the Church, has called on the Government authorities to open a dialogue that meets their needs. The note sent to Fides Agency reads: "The Archbishop Mgr. Leopoldo José Brenes and his Auxiliary Bishop, Mgr. Silvio Jose Baez, informed of the situation, have launched an appeal to the relevant institutions so that they do everything possible to give a complete solution to these problems through dialogue and negotiation, taking into account the complex reality of the sector, always in an attempt to combine the right to work, the economic issues, the legal system, public safety and social harmony of the community".

The Church's appeal, comes after protests by taxi drivers in Managua, some of which have degenerated into violent clashes with the police, which led to a dozen serious injuries among taxi drivers and police officers, and 40 arrests. Taxi drivers ask for the subsidy for petrol, which has increased significantly (\$ 5 a gallon), and the intervention of the authority to regulate the service of the "motortaxis", motorcycles equipped to carry up to 2 passengers competing with taxis in a capital where public transport is almost non-existent. The number of taxis is so high that the demonstration of the drivers managed to paralyze the capital, just when the country prepares for elections. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 05/10/2012)