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AMERICA/PANAMA - The Church asks for peace and dialogue, after the death of a child in the fighting for ZLC land

Panama (Agenzia Fides) - According to the latest information Fides Agency received, the government of Panama has considered the opportunity to start a dialogue on the sale of land in the ZLC area after the riots on Friday, October 19, which caused the death of a child, twenty wounded and many arrests. The violence broke out in the city of Colon, 80 kilometers north of the capital, where on the same day on 19 October, the President of Panama Ricardo Martinelli, had approved a law allowing the sale of land in the ZLC, the main one in the whole of America. Institutional groups in the country and the Catholic Church have expressed opposition to the sale.
The Bishop of the Diocese of Colón-Kuna Yala, His Exc. Mgr. Audilio Aguilar Aguilar, has spoken out publicly against the violence on Friday 19 and against the sale of land of the ZLC, calling for dialogue and peace. The Minister of the Presidency, Roberto Henriquez, announced his intention to meet Bishop Aguilar to start a process of dialogue with the various leaders of the groups of protesters in Colon. Unfortunately, the government's initiative does not raise confidence, so the Chamber of Commerce has announced today, Monday, October 22, a general strike against the law. The "Front Amplio de Colón", a platform for trade unions and civic organizations, today announced that it will join the strike and also threatened to block all access roads to the port city on the edge of the entrance to the Panama Canal. The ZLC is the second largest "free zone" in the world after Hong Kong.
(CE) (Agenzia Fides 22/10/2012)

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