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ASIA/HOLY LAND - The Catholic bishops of the Holy Land: no Vatican ok to the separation wall in the Cremisan valley

Jerusalem (Agenzia Fides) - The Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land strongly condemns the project of the separation wall that the Israeli authorities want to build in the Cremisan valley, between Bethlehem and Jerusalem, and categorically denies any vatican "green light " to the work, deemed illegal even by the standards of international law.
In a statement sent to Fides Agency, signed by all the members of the Assembly of Bishops, the Catholic Bishops of the Holy Land stress that the people of the Bethlehem area, and in particular the village of Walaja , 58 Christian families in Beit Jala and two religious communities in the area will pay the price of the initiative. "The local community" emphasize the Catholic Bishops will lose one of its last big agricultural and recreational areas as well as a crucial water source for farmers."
The Cremisan valley is the main "green lung" for the population living in the Bethlehem area. If the project is carried out, the four hundred children attending the Salesian Sisters' school will spend their childhood in a sort of open-air prison, surrounded by barriers and checkpoints.
The Catholic Ordinaries deny the existence of any agreement - explicit or implicit – between the Vatican, the local Church and the Israeli authorities regarding the construction of the wall, denying rumors circulated in recent days.
The Bishops' statement also refers to the pronouncement of the International Court of Justice that in July 2004 established the illegality of the separation wall. In this respect, the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of the Holy Land confirms that it sent the Catholic organization for Human Rights Yves Saint Society to file a case against the Israeli military authorities, with the intention of using legal means to stop the implementation of the project at issue. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 24/10/2012).

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