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AMERICA/GUATEMALA - "It is not with repression that problems are solved": the call of Bishop Ramazzini

Totonicapán (Agenzia Fides) – His Exc. Mgr. Alvaro Ramazzini Imeri, Bishop of the Diocese of Huehuetenango, publicly called for the government to meet the needs of the population of Totonicapán through dialogue and not repression. The Bishop addressed the representatives of the legislative, executive and judiciary power, stressing that they should listen to the people.

On October 4, the indigenous of the 48 cantons in the area of Totonicapán had blocked five points in the highways that connect the capital of the department to protest against the high price of electricity and the proposed constitutional amendment submitted by the Executive. The army, arrived at the demonstration, called Alaska, to unblock the streets, opened fire for reasons still not defined. Six indigenous died in the crash and many of the protesters were injured. On October 15, the UN called on the government of Guatemala to clarify the situation and to establish a dialogue with the indigenous.

The note sent to Fides Agency reports that Mgr. Alvaro Ramazzini addressed the thousands of indigenous people who participated, on Tuesday, October 23, at the 7 km peaceful march which took place without blocking the streets. The march ended in the square of San Miguel in Totonicapán, where the Bishop led the prayer for those who died in the accidents in Alaska and concluded his speech with a public reflection addressed to the government.

With regard to the law on rural development, which is not taken into consideration, Mgr. Ramazzini said: "It is a slap in the farmers face. It is like putting more pressure on the wound and on the suffering of the brother farmers. It is necessary to change mentality and actually become the representatives of the legitimate interests of the people of Guatemala." Then, talking about what happened with the Mining Law, he said: "The Minister of Energy and Mines proposed a reform without taking into account that we are opposed to a development model based on the mining sector." (CE) (Agenzia Fides 25/10/2012)

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