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AMERICA/COLOMBIA - "We are asking for help to get out of violence": the appeal of the Diocese of Buenaventura

Buenaventura (Agenzia Fides) - "We are asking help to national and international opinion so that they pay attention towards Buenaventura, in order to get out of violence": this is the appeal by His Exc. Mgr. Héctor Epalza Quintero, Bishop of Buenaventura, for the serious situation of violence that this region lives. "The Life, Justice, Solidarity and Peace Commission of the Diocese of Buenaventura, will publish this complaint that I, as a Pastor, fully support because we believe that the reality of Buenaventura, the critical moment it is going through, affects not only the authorities of Buenaventura, but also the Region and the Nation," said Mgr. Epalza Quintero in the statement sent to Fides Agency. The Bishop calls for an urgent action from the national government and the various supervisory bodies, so that "in exercising their constitutional and legal duties, they provide the guarantees of rights to communities and the territory."
The request is also forwarded to the human rights organizations, national and international, to make known the reality and show "th=e situation of barbaric violence that the city's inhabitants constantly suffer, particularly the suburban areas and rural communities." The press release of the diocese refers to clashes between paramilitary groups calling themselves "La Empresa" and "los Urabeños" who are fighting for the control of the territory and dominion of the areas of ports, which are coveted trafficking routes and mineral resources.
Mgr. Epalza Quintero warns that this situation of violence can be seen every day through the murders, disappearances and forced displacements. According to official data, since 6 October there have been 40 murders (committed with barbarity and cruelty), 35 shootings and 75 disappearances reported by the local Police station.
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