



## **ASIA/HOLY LAND - Bishop Shomali: the houses of the Israeli government in the Occupied Territories is a challenge and a retaliation after the UN vote**

Jerusalem (Agenzia Fides) - "The decision to build 3 thousand housing units in East Jerusalem is a retaliation after the recognition of Palestine as a non-member State of the UN. It expresses a clear rejection and a challenge respect to the step taken by the the Assembly of the United Nations, as well as representing a kind of outburst, an instinctive reaction." So says to Fides Agency His Exc. Mgr. William Shomali, Patriarchal Vicar of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. "The recognition took place at the UN with broad consensus of the international community," stresses the Bishop, "it implies that the recognized Palestinian State would be situated within the borders in force before June 1967. So the situation of that 22 percent of Territories that are occupied and not 'fought over', as the terminology used by Israeli politicians suggests, should not be absolutely changed." The new housing units should stand in an area on the road that leads from Jerusalem to Jericho and to the Dead Sea, at the beginning of the Judean desert. "It is clear that there is no urgency to build new houses there. This policy, which damages the solution of the two States, gives rise to opposition from politicians even in Israel, and could cause embarrassment to the United States," notes Mgr. Shomali. With regards to the danger of isolation that Israel could face, according to the Palestinian Bishop "the Israeli government will not feel isolated, until it has the unconditional support of the United States." (GV) (Agenzia Fides 03/12/2012).