



## **AMERICA/EL SALVADOR - The truce between the gangs is a positive initiative, but more needs to be done**

San Salvador (Agenzia Fides) - The "truce" between the gangs in El Salvador is defined as "positive", because it has saved the lives of about 2,000 people. This was reported by the Security Minister David Munguia Payes almost a year since the initiative. However, despite the positive results of this first agreement, 2,110 people have been killed in the country since March 2012 (published by news agencies and collected by the local police).

The "truce", which began on March 9, 2012 (see Fides 28/03/2012), "is a positive initiative in particular for the reduction of the murders," said Munguia Payes in a news conference. In 2011, there were 4371 murders, in 2012, with the "Truce" there were 2376 murders (ie, 1995 less). The minister defended the "truce", emphasizing that "it is the only thing that produces results in combating violence in the country".

In a note sent to Fides it is recalled that "the truce applies to members of the gangs that must not kill each other," but nevertheless the "maras" "are still the main factor of violence in the Country," said Munguia Payes.

The second phase of the "truce" which is to declare municipalities without violence, became operational in January in four of the 262 municipalities in the country. The "truce" is an initiative of His Exc. Mgr. Fabio Colindres and a former member of the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN) Raul Mijango, in agreement with the government, which has denied having negotiated with the gangs. These days, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the agreement, Mgr. Colindres and Mijango have made visits to various prisons in the country in which there are imprisoned leaders of the gangs that have agreed to the truce. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 08/03/2013)