



## **AMERICA/PANAMA - The "Electoral Ethics Pact" promoted by the Church signed by the parties, not by the government**

Panama (Agenzia Fides) - The "Electoral Ethics Pact", promoted ahead of the 2014 elections by the Catholic Church in Panama City, was signed by all political parties in the country, except for the one currently in power, the Democratic Change (CD). As reported to Fides, the Archbishop of Panama, His Exc. Mgr. José Domingo Ulloa Mendieta, expressed the hope that the agreement will soon involve not only political parties, but also other organizations and independent candidates for presidency.

A Commission in charge of the Catholic Church will meet every 15 days as a "permanent consultative body", to verify compliance with the "Electoral Ethics Pact" which was also signed by the media. The spokesman of the Commission "Justice and Peace" reported to Fides that in every meeting reports and complaints will be examined and, if necessary, one will see whether to apply moral sanctions for breach of the Agreement. Despite the coalition government, formed by the "Democratic Change" (CD) and the "Molirena" group, did not sign the Pact, the assessment of compliance with the pact does not exclude them, the Commission said.

This formula was proposed to promote a "democratic and participatory electoral process," which, at the same time, tries to "stop the unfair comparison and mutual disqualification between parties and candidates in the elections."

The agreement (see Fides 21/02/2013) promotes a campaign without violence and aims to prevent the sale of the vote and corruption. The Pact will last until August 4, 2014, ie, three months after the general elections. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 09/03/2013)