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AMERICA/COLOMBIA - Diocese threatened by armed group

Tumaco (Agenzia Fides) - In a statement released by the Diocese of Tumaco (Colombia) says that the Commission for the Social Pastoral of the Diocese was declared "objective and permanent military enemy" by a movement that calls itself the "Grupo Armado Los Rastrojos ".
The statement informs that other 94 social organizations working for the rights of people have been threatened. "Our commitment as Catholic Church is inspired by the Word of God and the message of Jesus Christ, therefore, our duty has been, is and will be to defend life, to contribute to building peace and denounce all forms of violation of the human rights," the statement said.
The statement calls on the armed group to respect the work of organizations engaged in the defense of human rights and the government to supervise and ensure the safety of the population and the organization threatened.
The note was sent to Fides by the Episcopal Conference of Colombia at a time when the Country continues its campaign to promote dialogue for Peace.
Death threats have a concrete meaning in a country where only in the first 5 weeks of 2013 three priests were murdered. The figures are really impressive. A growing number of pastoral workers have been killed in Colombia since 1984. To be precise, 83 priests, five religious women, three religious men, three seminarians, an archbishop and a bishop and 17 bishops and 52 priests have received death threats. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 13/04/2013)

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