



ASIA/MALAYSIA - After the election, a plan of "national reconciliation"

Kuala Lumpur (Agenzia Fides) - A new process of "national reconciliation" to dampen the ethnic and religious polarization in Malaysian society: is the path outlined by Prime Minister Najib Razak, of the "Barisan Nasional" party, after the general elections. The ruling party "Barisan Nasional", leader of the coalition UMNO ("United Malays National Organization"), was confirmed in power, obtaining 133 parliamentary seats in the general elections held yesterday. The opposition coalition "Pakatan Rakyat" - which includes the PKR (People Justice Party), PAS (Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party) and the DAP (Democratic Action Party - holds 89 seats. In a rather balanced result, the coalition government did not have a majority in the provinces of Selangor and Penang, where the opposition won, albeit with slight margin. Voters of Malaysian Borneo (provinces of Sabah and Sarawak) have largely confirmed the confidence in Barisan.

Prime Minister Najib Razak observed "the racial bias in the expression of the vote," saying that "this could lead to conflict in society." "So - he said - we will undertake a process of national reconciliation to put aside all forms of extremism and inter-community tensions, with policies based on moderation." "I hope, for the good of the country, that all parties, especially the opposition, accept this decision with an open heart, allowing the democratic process to proceed smoothly," he remarked.

In an interview with Fides, Fr. Lawrence Andrew, Director of the Catholic weekly "Herald" hopes that "the government does not use religious issues for political advantage" and that the country will start on a path of "reform, transparency, anti-corruption, justice," which can "restore the unity and hope to the country." (PA) (Agenzia Fides 06/05/2013)