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AMERICA/CHILE - Complaint by a religious group for violence against Mapuche children

Santiago (Agenzia Fides) - A group of men and women religious and priests engaged in the pastoral work with Mapuche communities, composed of the original Amerindian inhabitants of Central and Southern Chile and Southern Argentina have reported serious violence on behalf of government forces against children of this ethnic group. A statement released by the religious reports how the minors are humiliated. Even parents are threatened, abused in their presence, deprived of all kinds of goods such as personal items, mobiles and computers. These children are terrified, afraid of being raped and abused again in the house. The religious insist that despite the complaints against the police and the sentences of the courts of justice, the fundamental rights of children continue to be violated. The communities of Trapilwe and Mawidache have recently suffered sudden raids, the children have been abused in their homes by agents completely masked when they got up in the morning to go to school. "We urge the National Service of Minors (SENAME) to rule on these facts, since its mission is to protect and restore the rights to children and adolescents," say the religious adding that in this way one is feeding a vicious circle of violence instead of promoting justice in these communities. "It seems that this way of behaving is becoming a normal way of acting on behalf of the institutions that should be the first to respect the rights of children and the elderly in Mapuche communities" conclude the religious. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 29/05/2013)

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