



AMERICA/UNITED STATES - The Bishops: "We adhere to the Holy Father's appeal for a peaceful solution to the conflict in Syria"

Washington (Agenzia Fides) - On Friday, 30 August, in a letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, the Bishop of the Diocese of Des Moines (Iowa), His Exc. Mgr. Richard E. Pates, President of the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace stated that "the path of dialogue and negotiation among all groups of the Syrian society, with the support of the international community, is the only option that can lead to the end of the conflict". In addition to asking negotiations and an immediate cease-fire, the Bishop also urged to provide humanitarian assistance in a neutral manner to all parties involved and had encouraged to build "an inclusive society in Syria that protects the rights of all its citizens, including Christians and other minorities".

The content of the letter sent to the Secretary of State is now being re-launched through a statement bearing the signature of Bishop Pates, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: "We are saddened - reads the document – by the terrible suffering of the Syrian people and we affirm again the need for dialogue and negotiation in order to resolve this conflict that has produced so much devastation. Since - continues the statement - our national leaders are considering military action, it is particularly urgent and appropriate that we, in the United States, adhere to the Holy Father's appeal for prayer and fasting on September 7 in order to obtain a peaceful solution to the conflict in Syria and to put an end to every violent conflict".

In the note sent to Fides Agency it is emphasized that, for these reasons, the Episcopal Conference of the United States of America asks "all Catholics in the United States and people of good will to join us in witnessing the hope we have in our hearts for peace for the Syrian people. May our prayers, fasting, our support promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Syria. And may Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us and for the people of Syria". (CE) (Agenzia Fides 05/09/2013)