



## **ASIA/IRAQ - Six Christians in the new autonomous parliament of Kurdistan**

Erbil (Agenzia Fides) - Only 6 of the 111 seats in the new Parliament of Iraqi Kurdistan region will be occupied by Christian deputies. We are talking about the six seats reserved for Christian minorities. The results of the election review so far do not give news of other Christian candidates elected in the lists that have collected the most votes.

According to information gathered by Fides Agency, the 5 seats reserved for Chaldean Christians and Assyrians, two went to candidates of the "Al-Rafdein" list: Yacub Gorgees Yako and Lina Azaria Shaba. The list collected 6145 votes. Even the Assembly of Chaldean, Assyrian and sire organizations, with 5730 votes, won two seats, to be occupied by parliamentary Wahida Yaqo Hirmiz and Kamal Marqoz. The list of "Sons of Mesopotamia" collected only 1,093 votes, and will bring MP Saleem Matti to Parliament. While to fill the seat reserved for Armenian Christians will be Yraond Nisan Marqus, who obtained 532 votes.

The elections for the autonomous Parliament marked a major shift in the political balance of Iraqi Kurdistan. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Iraqi President Jalal Talabani is no longer the first party of Iraqi Kurdistan. The force that dominated the political scene of the region for decades received only 18 of the 111 seats, finishing in third place.

The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Massoud Barzani, president of the autonomous region, with 38 seats, has become the majority Party, while Goran (Movement for Change), the main opposition party, obtained 24 seats and finished in second place.

The elections also marked a significant advance of the Islamic Union of Kurdistan: the Islamist formation obtained 11 seats. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 04/10/2013)