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AMERICA/GUATEMALA - "Life is not respected any more in the country" alarm of the Church in the fight against drug trafficking

Petén (Agenzia Fides) - "It is terrible that life is not respected any more in Guatemala": this was strongly denounced by the Archbishop of Santiago de Guatemala, His Exc. Mgr. Oscar Julio Vian Morales, S.D.B. referring to the killing of nine people, including two girls, which took place in an area called La Isla, in San Luis (Petén), between Friday 7th and Saturday 8th February. The note sent to Fides by a local source, reports the words of the Archbishop in the usual meeting with the community after Sunday Mass, on February 9: "this is the second massacre, because in May 2011, 27 farmers were killed. This time the aggression was attributed to the Zetas, in Los Cocos farm, in La Libertad, Petén".
According to press reports, the authorities attributed the murder of the nine people to a dispute over the ownership of land by drug dealers. Mgr. Vian Morales recalled on Sunday that in his pastoral letter "El Grito de la Selva" in 2000, "drug dealers were increasing in Peten, and nothing had been done against them. Petén had become a no man's land, now it is a land of drug dealers". At the time, from 1996 to 2007, the Archbishop was Apostolic Vicar-Bishop of Petén.
Mgr. Vian Morales added: "I understand that it is difficult to fight this scourge because of the extension of the borders with Mexico and Belize and also for the lack of security in the area, but I ask that interventions are carried out with major authority". (CE) (Agenzia Fides 12/02/2014)

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