



AMERICA/BOLIVIA - Children sold for sexual and labor exploitation and for the sale of organs

Potosí (Agenzia Fides) - Child trafficking continues to increase silently in the region of Potosí in Bolivia, the poorest in the Country. According to a recent report published by the local press, until 2012, 15 000 children were sold at a cost that goes between \$3,000 to \$5,000 to traffickers of two neighboring Countries. Many of the victims are sold for as low as \$ 500, to be exploited in agricultural fields in the north of Argentina. According to the local police the phenomenon does not exist or has never been reported. In the south of the Country, human trafficking remains only a secret passed down orally. In 2011 children in Potosí were bought at a price ranging from three to seven dollars and it is feared that about 15 thousand children each year have illegally crossed the border towards Argentina, without any hindrance from the authorities. In addition, many of the children and young people up to 15 years of age are sold not only for sexual or labor exploitation but also for the sale of organs. The penalty for human trafficking is 10 years in prison, this is what happened to 4 women who took part in the sale of a one-year-old child, among them also the child's mother. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 28/04/2014)