



AMERICA/COLOMBIA - FARC thanks Pope Francis for his interest regarding peace talks

Havana (Agenzia Fides) - FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) have asked the Catholic Church to continue to follow, thanks to the encouragement expressed by Pope Francis, the peace talks being held in Havana, without, however, being in a hurry to conclude them as soon as possible, as some government representatives would hope for, in view of the upcoming elections.

The note sent to Fides Agency refers the surprise request on behalf of FARC, expressed by their spokesman, Rodrigo Granda, with these words: "The Pope has never said that (the peace process) should be accelerated. The Pope said: I hope this reaches a positive ending". Granda spoke to reporters during a brief press conference held during the 23 session of talks with negotiators of the Government of Colombia, which began on April 4 in Cuba (see Fides 31/03/2014).

FARC thanked the Holy Father for having made reference to the Colombian conflict during the brief conversation held with the Vatican's Foreign Minister Maria Angela Holguin, who attended the canonization of Pope John XXIII and John Paul II Sunday, on April 27.

The note sent to Fides by the Colombian Episcopal Conference quoted the words of the Holy Father to Holguin: "Tell the President to persevere in the process of the search for peace in the country. To persevere in continuing to look for the solution". The Bishops' note adds that the Minister had met with the Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, on April 26, and the Cardinal had asked information concerning the progress of peace talks taking place in Cuba (CE) (Agenzia Fides, 29/04/2014)