



## **AMERICA/ARGENTINA - "The country is sick of violence": proposal of Bishops to respond to this reality**

Lomas Zamora (Agenzia Fides) - The Bishop of Lomas de Zamora (Argentina), His Exc. Mgr. Jorge Rubén Lugones, S.J., rejected the criticisms expressed by members of the government to the document entitled "Blessed are the peacemakers", published on May 10, at the conclusion of the Plenary Assembly of Argentine Bishops (see Fides 05/05/2014), which denounces violence and lack of security in the country, and examines the causes of violence, including corruption, lies, delays of justice and the problems related to prisons.

The Bishop reiterates that those who deny that the Argentine society is sick of violence do not want to face the reality: "we note the issue of violence with sorrow and concern. One who denies that we are sick of violence, I think looks the other way", says the note sent to Fides by a local source that reports the words of the Archbishop. "I do not know if many of those who criticize today have ever walked through neighborhoods as we do – says Mgr. Lugones - . A radio station said that Bishops are like Princes of the Church. I want to invite this reporter, if he wants, to put on a pair of shoes suitable for mud and to accompany and walk with me in the diocese. There are many who speak without knowing, without basis".

The whole country is experiencing a climate of tension between Church and government (encouraged by the media) because of reactions to the Bishops' document. The intention was to make a reflection on reality, on the violence that the country lives, as several members of the Episcopate reiterated, offering to work for the formation to Christian values and renewing the commitment to work to ensure "life, peace and integral health to our beloved homeland". Recalling the evangelical beatitude "Blessed are the peacemakers", the document points out that "many are already doing it", promoting initiatives in schools, parishes, groups and social organizations. "We encourage them to continue to be instruments of peace - the Bishops write - . In particular, we urge the leadership to develop dialogue that promotes consensus and state policies in order to overcome the current situation". "The document is a positive and educational proposal" said Father Jorge Oesterheld, spokesman for the Bishops,. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 14/05/2014)

### > LINKS

*The full text of the Bishops, (in Spanish)::*

<http://www.episcopado.org/portal/actualidad-cea/oficina-de-prensa/item/871-declaraci3n-felices-los-que-trabajan-por-la-paz.html>: