



AMERICA/COLOMBIA - The Bishop of Tumaco: "here the State has not existed for years, childhood is abandoned to its fate"

Tumaco (Agenzia Fides) - "In Tumaco children are taken away by the FARC and criminal gangs, they are simply taken away for their war": is the complaint by His Exc. Mgr. Gustavo Giron Higueta, OCD, Bishop of Tumaco, who points out that the Colombian State has long left childhood "to its fate" or rather has delivered childhood to "the strongest and to the law of the jungle".

According to information sent to Fides Agency from a local source, the Bishop expressed himself in these terms commenting on the attack that took place on May 14 in Tumaco: a 14-year-old teenager died while throwing a grenade with explosives against a group of police. A 12-year-old boy died, too and seven police officers were injured. Colonel Hugo Márquez, commander of the Police in Nariño, attributed the criminal fact to a group belonging to the FARC, but could also be attributed to criminal gangs.

For the Bishop, in the city of Tumaco alone, with approximately 150 thousand inhabitants, the children recruited by criminal groups are at least 50, maybe even 60. This is why, according to Archbishop Gustavo Giron Higueta, "childhood years have been abandoned here and elsewhere. There are not enough schools, no health care, no jobs, no services. In short, there is no State and therefore it is very easy for any group to approach children and take them away, where they want". Mgr. Giron Higueta also stated that "most of the children that are taken away are orphans". (CE) (Agenzia Fides 19/05/2014)