



## **AMERICA/UNITED STATES - Children who migrate alone without papers is becoming a "humanitarian crisis"**

Washington (Agenzia Fides) - The Catholic Bishops of the United States have called on the Obama administration and Congress to take concrete steps to protect undocumented children traveling alone as immigrants. The note sent to Fides Agency reports that, according to the United States Catholic Bishops' Conference (USCCB), given the dangers that children face in this venture, the situation has become a humanitarian crisis", the origin of which can be found in conditions of poverty and increasing violence. All this needs to be addressed as part of a long-term solution (see Fides news on El Salvador 20/05/2014).

The President of the USCCB Committee on Migration, His Exc. Mgr. Eusebio L. Elizondo Almaguer, M.Sp.S., Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle (Washington), born in Mexico, said : "It is a very complex problem, but its roots are to be addressed both by our government and by the governments of the region". Bishop Elizondo Almaguer's words, are directed primarily to the current administration because, according to data collected by Catholic sources, there has been an 92% increase of children who have been stopped between 2013 and 2014 (see Fides 30/05/2014). "These children are extremely vulnerable to human traffickers and unscrupulous smugglers, and must be protected", said the Bishop.

The Bishop launched this appeal, as expressed previously (see Fides 13/05/2014), following the publication of the report, on Tuesday, June 3, 2014, of the Customs and Border Protection office, which reports that over the past 20 months the Border Patrol and other border federal agencies have arrested more than 71 thousand children under the age of 17, the majority on the southern border of Texas. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 05/06/2014)