



AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICA - Bishop of Bangassou describes most recent Ugandan rebel attack as "unprecedented violence" in correspondence with Fides

Bangassou (Agenzia Fides) - "The rebels used an unprecedented level of violence on the poor defenseless civilians. They hurt the people first and then ended their lives with machetes," Fides is told by His Excellency Bishop Juan Jose Aguirre Munos of Bangassou, in south-eastern Central African Republic, in describing the assault of the Ugandan rebels of the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) in Agoumar, a village which is located about two kilometers from Rafai, the town attacked a fortnight ago.

"The LRA rebels reached Agoumar on Sunday, March 21 around 2:00 in the afternoon, said Bishop Aguirre Munos. There were about thirty of them, including 5-6 women. Several of them were no more than 17 years old. They killed 18-20 people, some of them in a barbaric manner, with machetes. They looted everything they could find and then fled forcing 20-25 children to follow them as porters.

"People are terrified," says the Bishop of Bangassou. "I was forced to send a car to bring to 5 terrorized Congolese nuns who ran a school in the area, to Bangassou. Thanks to the courage of Father Kodian, a Polish Franciscan, the unfortunate victims of the attack were given a proper burial, as the other people fled.

Bishop Aguirre Munos said that "the LRA rebels act in this area with total impunity. The Central African Army does not appear anywhere, while the military contingent sent to Uganda two years ago, with the consent of local authorities, is deployed on the border between the Central African Republic and Sudan, and therefore, too far away to worry about the rebels." (LM) (Agenzia Fides 23/3/2010)