



AFRICA/RWANDA - "We remain concerned...about a series of disturbing events prior to the election" says American government

Kigali (Agenzia Fides) - "Disturbing events" surrounded the presidential elections held August 9, in which incumbent President Paul Kagame was reelected with 93% of the vote (see Fides 12/8/2010). This is what was affirmed by a statement issued by the National Security Council of the United States.

"We congratulate the people of Rwanda on their national election on August 9. We note reports from the National Electoral Commission that official results have been tallied and President Paul Kagame won reelection with roughly 93% of the vote. We remain concerned, however, about a series of disturbing events prior to the election, including the suspension of two newspapers, the expulsion of a human rights researcher, the barring of two opposition parties from taking part in the election, and the arrest of journalists," reads a statement from Mike Hammer, spokesman for the NSC.

"Democracy is about more than holding elections. A democracy reflects the will of the people, where minority voices are heard and respected, where opposition candidates run on the issues without threat or intimidation, where freedom of expression and freedom of the press are protected."

"We have expressed our concerns to the Government of Rwanda, and we hope the leadership will take steps toward more democratic governance, increased respect for minority and opposition views, and continued peace," the US spokesman concluded. (LM) (Agenzia Fides 17/8/2010)