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AFRICA/KENYA - Bishops of Kenya stress need to amend new Constitution as soon as possible

Nairobi (Agenzia Fides) – "We played our role of directing our flock along the road of proper choice. We have not shied away from stating unequivocally what are the tenets of our faith in regard to some issues in our new Constitution," John Cardinal Njue, Archbishop of Nairobi and President of the Kenyan Bishops' Conference, said when he addressed the media at Holy Family Basilica in Nairobi.
The press conference was convened following a meeting of the Kenyan Bishops to discuss the outcome of the referendum of August 4, which approved the new Constitution of the country (see Fides 06/08/2010). The Catholic Church, while acknowledging some positive aspects of the text, had opposed the new Constitution because Article 26, paragraph 4 reads: "Abortion is not permitted unless, in the opinion of a trained health professional, there is need for emergency treatment, or the life or health of the mother is in danger, or if permitted by any other written law." It is especially the last statement ("if permitted by any other written law") that alarms pro-life advocates, as it opens the way for the legalization of abortion.
At the end of their meeting, the bishops accepted the decision of Kenyans to approve the new constitution, but reiterated the need for the errors contained in the new constitutional provisions to be addressed and corrected as soon as possible.
The Conference of Bishops also criticized the results of some polls that claim Kenyans have more faith in politicians than in the Church.
Cardinal Njue said that while a majority of Kenyans voted in favor of the new Constitution, this does not mean you can ignore the truth.
"Credibility is not about numbers, but about the truth. Historically truth has never been popular, but the Church has always and will have its role to play in society. As the shepherds placed to give moral guidance, we still reiterate the need to address the flawed moral issues in this new Constitution. That voice will never be silenced." (LM) (Agenzia Fides 20/8/2010)

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