



AFRICA/IVORY COAST - "Thank you for the peaceful elections": message from Archbishop of Abidjan

Abidjan (Agenzia Fides) – "The elections that we asked for with all our hearts have become a reality. Yes, indeed, peace is closer than ever," writes Archbishop Jean-Pierre Kutwa of Abidjan in a message posted yesterday, November 2, in the Ivorian press, on behalf of the Council of Religions present in Ivory Coast, after his meeting with Prime Minister Guillaume Soro following the presidential elections held October 31.

"For this reason, we, your religious leaders, united in the Collective of Religious for peaceful elections in Ivory Coast, at this stage of the election, would like to thank and congratulate all the political leaders for their compliance with the code of good conduct during the elections," said the message of Archbishop Kutwa, also sent to Fides.

"We also want to congratulate the Ivorian people for having fulfilled their electoral duty in calm and serenity," says the message that also extends its gratitude to the ONUCI (the United Nations Mission in Ivory Coast). Today, November 3, the ballots are being counted. So far, more than half have been counted. The first results show the outgoing president, Laurent Gbagbo (37% of the vote) in the lead, followed by Alassane Ouattara (34%).

Awaiting the outcome, Archbishop Kutwa urges everyone to do everything possible to avoid violence, accepting the decisions of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). "To give more hope to the success of the elections, we have freely accepted an institution, the Independent Electoral Commission (EC), which is the sole authority in declaring the results."

"Each person will have to answer for their actions before his own conscience," warns the Archbishop. "At this time in which we are awaiting results, which we should accept with joy, let us never forget to make reference to our faith in God, who commands that we go forth in peace! We pray that the mighty and loving hand of God may rest upon Ivory Coast and its people," concludes the message. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 03/11/2010)