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AFRICA/ANGOLA - Bishops' note on 35th anniversary of independence: “We recognize the progress made, however more needs to be done.”

Luanda (Agenzia Fides) – Tomorrow, November 11, Angola will celebrate its 35th anniversary of national independence. "Of these 35 years, 27 have been spent in a climate of war and 8 in a climate of peace. In time of war, many wounds have been opened in the heart of the Angolans, which, fortunately, are healing. We pray to the Lord that this healing is complete, without the risk of any repercussions," say the Bishops of Angola in a pastoral note published on the occasion.
"We welcome the progress made in these eight years of peace: the lines of communication, in themselves vital to progress, have improved, giving credit to the government and easing the lives of citizens. In particular, links with the capital from the suburbs have seen a major breakthrough," says the note. "With no less joy, we welcome the schools established in the municipal and local centers of the country, as well as health facilities."
The bishops continue: "However, we recognize that further progress is needed. Not only schools, but also the basic health services, should be established in our villages so that every patient, pregnant women included, can receive due attention."
Among other basic services that the bishops consider appropriate to provide to all Angolans are drinking water, electricity, and modern communications systems.
The memo also calls for recognition of the Church's contribution in the educational and social sectors: "Helping the Church rebuild its schools and its health infrastructure is not an extra; it is a way of cooperating in the country's development."
The bishops finally expressed there concern at the increase of victims of road accidents and domestic violence, and also called for respect for the environment. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 10/11/2010)

> LINKS
Nota Pastoral sobre o 35º Aniversário da Independência de Angola (in Portuguese):
http://www.fides.org/por/documents/NOTA_PASTORAL_sobre_o_35_Anivers_rio_da_Independ_ncia_de_ANGOLA.doc:

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