



AFRICA/CONGO DR - "A genocide is developing in the territory of Lubero" reports local clergy

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - In North Kivu (north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo) there is a "genocide in the making". This was revealed by the clergy of the diocese of Butembo-Beni in a message published by the Catholic DIA of Kinshasa, approved by Bishop Mélchisédech Sikuli Paluku of Butembo-Beni.

"In spite of the slogans on safety, and although some estimate that the country's situation is improving by the day, and security problems in the east are described as 'residual', populations in the east of the country remain subject to a regime of growing terror: insecurity, violence, massacres, sexual violence and murders are recorded every day", the document states.

The statement lists the episodes of violence, from the kidnappings and the disappearance of people to the murder of young people, intellectuals, journalists, business people, fathers and mothers, families, and peasants. Among the latest victims was Don Christian Mbusa Bakulene, Pastor of Saint Jean-Baptiste de Kanyabayonga, killed on 8 November (see Fides 9 and 10 November 2010). "The attacks against pastoral servants, clergy and civilians have no doubt intended to sow fear and panic among those who are the voice of the voiceless, so to silence an entire people," write the priests of Butembo-Beni.

Suspicion is growing that they want to create space in the area for other peoples to the detriment of the local: a policy that is described as a "genocide in the making".

The clergy of Butembo-Beni appeals to all parties involved to assure the safety of the peoples of the territory of Lubero. In particular, they acknowledge the "guilty silence" of MPs elected in the territory of Lubero, the failure of MONUSCO (the UN Stabilization Mission in DRC) which has "remained passive", despite urging, following the murder of Don Bakulene. Finally they recall that the duty of soldiers and police is to defend the population and not to plunder it. (LM) (Agenzia Fides 27/11/2010)

> *LINKS*

Message from the clergy of Butembo-Beni (in French):

http://www.fides.org/fra/documents/Message_du_Clerg_de_Butembo-Beni.doc: