



AFRICA/CÔTE D'IVOIRE - The Nuncio in Abidjan denounces the serious violations of human rights and gives witness to the aid to victims provided by the Church

Abidjan (Agenzia Fides) - "Civilians are the first victims: they suffer serious violence," says Archbishop Ambrose Madtha, Apostolic Nuncio to Côte d'Ivoire, to the French section of Aid to the Church in Need (Aide à l'Église en Détresse, AED), which sent Fides a statement about it. "There have been many killings (by the blows from heavy weapons, slaughters, people burned alive), there are kidnappings, looting, etc.," complains the Nuncio. "Families are fleeing the violence and taking refuge mostly in churches." The Diocese of Man (particularly the cities of Abidjan and Duékoué, where mass graves were discovered of hundreds of corpses) and the Archdiocese of Abidjan and Gagnoa are the most affected.

"The displaced people are really deprived of everything, because they were forced to leave everything in order to escape," said Archbishop Madtha. "They are lacking food, clean water, medicine and clothes. We are assisting these people by sharing with them the little that we have. But faced with the seriousness of the situation and their great need, we need help," says the Nuncio.

The AED sent 25,000 euros as emergency relief funds. "We are not specialists in emergency aid," says Marc Fromager, Director of AED, "but we can not remain indifferent to the drama that is unfolding before our eyes." Today, 6 April, Pope Benedict XVI launched an appeal for an end to violence in Côte d'Ivoire. "With great concern I continue to follow the dramatic events that the dear people of Côte d'Ivoire and Libya are experiencing," adding that he issues "a new and heartfelt appeal to all parties, that they may begin the work of peace and dialogue and avoid further bloodshed." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 6/4/2011)