



AFRICA/LIBYA - "Italy should support Turkish diplomatic initiative," says Apostolic Vicar of Tripoli

Tripoli (Agenzia Fides)- "Italy should support the Turkish diplomatic initiative," says Bishop Giovanni Innocenzo Martinelli, Apostolic Vicar of Tripoli, to Fides. "This is because the Libyans have officially stated that Italy, which they thought would lend a hand, seems to have withdrawn it and it's not clear what Italy is waiting for to support diplomatic efforts."

"Italy," says Bishop Martinelli, "must have the courage to make the right choices. They recognised the rebel authorities in Benghazi, but now they should not hold back. They need to foster negotiations between the two sides, supporting the initiative by Turkey," says the Apostolic Vicar of Tripoli.

"A military impasse has been created and it seems that neither side can prevail over the other. So I am pleased that there are still diplomatic initiatives, particularly this one by Turkey. I think the Turkish attempt should be supported and that this kind of initiative should not be discouraged, because it is the only possible way to bring peace," said Bishop Martinelli.

The Turkish Government has drawn up a guide for the pacification of Libya, which provides for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Government forces from some cities. During the crisis, Turkey has maintained contacts with the insurgents and the authorities in Tripoli.

"We did not hear the bombing, although we have been told that targets were hit outside Tripoli," said Bishop Martinelli. "I told the Nuncio to Malta (who is also responsible for Libya), who was asked in the name of European diplomacy if I could confirm the civilian victims of the bombing last week (see Fides 31/03/2011). The person who gave me the news is willing to testify where and how these deaths occurred," says Bishop Martinelli. As for the Church, Bishop Martinelli said that "yesterday, Friday, 8 April, many of the faithful, especially from Africa and the Philippines, attended Mass. Today we will celebrate Mass in French and tomorrow in English. This is because workers can only participate in liturgical celebrations during breaks, especially those working in hospitals." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 9/4/2011)