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Organo di informazione delle Pontificie Opere Missionarie
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AFRICA/EGYPT - "The fundamentalist message can not take root among the youth of the revolution," says Fr Verdoscia from Cairo

Cairo (Agenzia Fides) - "The arrest of Mubarak was probably also determined by the former President's speech on television. The promoters of the revolt in Tahrir Square criticized Mubarak for defending himself, pointing out his merits in the development of Egypt, and for not apologising for the many deaths during the revolution and his ensuing responsibilities," explains Fr Luciano Verdoscia to Fides, a Combonian missionary, who has long been living and working in Cairo.
On 9 April, there were violent clashes between the army and demonstrators in Tahrir Square in Cairo, who were demanding the arrest of the former President. On 10 April, in an audiotape broadcast by Al Arabiya, the former President defended his actions. On 13 April, Mubarak had been placed in custody for 15 days, along with his two sons, Alaa and Gamal Mubarak. The former President is now recovering in intensive care due to a heart attack.
"After the recent clashes in Tahrir Square, the situation is calmer, but such events have not been forgotten. At some time the issue will come up again," says Fr Verdoscia. The missionary then questions the evolution of Egyptian society in the wake of the upheavals of recent months: "I saw that there is ongoing debate about its meaning. Some people says that this is not a revolution. In my opinion, however, it is a revolution, but it has not yet produced its results."
Fr Verdoscia recalls that "in the Egyptian newspapers recently, news appeared about the return of about 3,000 Salafists in Egypt, Islamic extremists who claim to be 'pure', primordial Muslims. They are Egyptians who were involved with Al Qaida and other extremist organizations and they are returning to direct the evolution of local society. This is because the fundamentalists are well aware that Egypt will influence the situation in the Middle East. Talking to people on the street, they seem to be aware of the danger of Islamic fanaticism. The Egyptians do not want them. Their fundamentalist message has not caught on among young people of the revolution, who know what it means. The people want to live." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 13/4/2011)

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