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ASIA/PAKISTAN-New structure of the Ministry for Religious Minorities

Islamabad (Agenzia Fides) - The Ministry for Religious Affairs in Pakistan has a new structure, sanctioned by the entrance in the government of the Pakistan Muslim League-Q. After a political agreement concluded two days ago, today the Pakistan People party, the ruling party, which holds the relative majority, has passed the new ruling alliance, which will also be launched in view of the general elections of 2013. Seven federal ministers and seven deputy ministers swore this morning that they will be an effective part of the new government. The reshuffle was an opportunity to define the structure of the Ministry of Religious Minorities, which risked to be abolished and dismantled in four provincial branches.
The structure of the department shall be composed as follows: the Catholic Paul Bhatti, brother of the murdered minister, and now Special Adviser to the Prime Minister for the affairs of religious minorities will be the guide, with the status, the portfolio and skills of, "Federal Minister" . Beside him, a new entry in the role of vice minister, the lawyer of Lahore Akram Gill, a Catholic as well, member of parliament, and member of the Pakistan Muslim League-Q. The –General-Secretary is Javed Akhtar, who was already in the public administration at the time of Shahbaz Bhatti. These personalities will lead the Ministry for the next two years, until the next elections
The hypothesis of a decentralization of the Ministry was therefore set aside, with great satisfaction for religious minorities in the country. It goes without saying that there are feelings of doubts, however - sources of Fides in Pakistan say-concerning the entrance of the Pakistan Muslim League-Q. in the government. In recent months, the League-Q had been lined up with the “Alliance to defend the honor of the Prophet”, a network of Islamic religious parties took the field with demonstrations and protests against the abolition or amendment of the blasphemy law.
(PA) (Agenzia Fides 03/05/2011)

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