



ASIA/THAILAND-Buddhists massacred by Islamic rebels in the South: the first challenge for new government

Bangkok (Fides Service) - While the country is looking for a "common ground" on which to rebuild the fabric of a split society, and seeks paths for "national reconciliation" after the general elections won by the young leader Yingluck Shinawatra, the Muslim onset in the south of the country strongly returns. Violence and bloodshed are carried out against defenseless families: the victims are mostly Buddhists in the extreme south of Thailand, in the three provinces where most of the people are Muslims (Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat) on the border with Malaysia, and this is where the victims, a small minority live and are targeted by rebel groups who use terrorist methods.

As sources of Fides in southern Thailand inform- asking for anonymity for security reasons - recently a Buddhist family was massacred and two boys beheaded and left to bleed to death. "They are all innocent victims, guilty only for not being Muslims", notes the source of Fides, referring to the text of a pamphlet distributed by the terrorist groups operating in the area: "We will kill, burn, and destroy all Buddhists: you will never be able to live in peace here". "The Pattani Islamic guerrillas announce that they will never stop the slaughter of infidels of Siam until the land of Pattani does not become an Islamic state", the text says.

Fides source says that a significant role in spreading such subversive ideas is due to the "madrasas" schools that Islamic jihadist groups set up to indoctrinate the minds of children and young people and that, unknown to the journalist, "should be controlled and closed by state authorities".

"The Thai government cannot and must not remain indifferent to this conflict, which is also fueled by Islamic terrorist organizations abroad, from Pakistan and Bangladesh, and in front of an unprecedented violence against innocent people. The conflict, among the deadliest and most horrific of Southeast Asia - the source of Fides remarks - must become a priority on the agenda of the new government".

In about seven years of armed insurgency and guerrilla warfare, Islamic terrorist groups in southern Thailand have claimed more than 4,000 victims, particularly police officers, teachers and Buddhist monks, accused of spreading an educational model incompatible with Islam. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 07/14/2011)