



## **AFRICA/BURUNDI - The Bishops of Burundi express their concerns to the Head of State about the insecurity that plague some areas of the country**

Bujumbura (Agenzia Fides) - The Bishops of Burundi expressed their appreciation for the good relations between State and Church to the head of State, but at the same time said they were concerned about the insecurity different areas of the country live in.

According to a note sent to Fides by Don Lambert Niciteretse, Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Burundi (CECAB), on August 16 the President of the Republic, Pierre Nkurunziza, received in audience the Bishops of the country.

The president of the Conference, Mgr. Gervais Banshimiyubusa, Bishop of Ngozi, gave the message prepared for the occasion by CECAB to the Head of State. Each Bishop had the opportunity to intervene to supplement or reinforce the message.

The Bishops thanked the President for the good cooperative relations between Church and State, the policies undertaken in order to stabilize democracy, strengthen the peace process and help the people out of poverty. The members of the Episcopal Conference also pointed out to the Head of State their concerns about the socio-political life. In particular the conditions of insecurity that plague some areas of Burundi, although the government continues to ensure that everything is calm and that this attitude, the Bishops stressed, can undermine the democratic process. Another problem is poverty that heavily affects the population.

The Bishops also discussed the Commission "truth and reconciliation", whose results are likely to be undermined by insecurity and distrust that prevail among politicians. The Bishops call for a real inclusive dialogue between the various protagonists in the national life to avoid further violence.

The Bishops concluded their speech promising to continue to provide their contribution to peace and social human development, through prayer for peace, the proclamation of the Word of God, the diocesan synods that commit Christians to building a culture of peace and reconciliation, social works, education and development, the constant invitation to all Burundians to leave the path of violence and learn to resolve their differences through dialogue.

In his response, the President of the Republic thanked the Catholic Church for her contribution and assured the Bishops that the situation is under control and that the Country is in a phase in which all hopes are permitted.

(L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 19/08/2011)