



AFRICA/NIGERIA - "A disturbing and embarrassing situation," says the Archbishop of Jos after the latest violence

Jos (Agenzia Fides) - "Once again a dispute between two groups which erupted into violence and this is worrisome, sad and even embarrassing". These are the words His Exc. Mgr. Ignatius Ayau Kaigama, Archbishop of Jos (Nigeria), expressed in an interview with Fides, underlining the bitterness for the new violence that struck his city last night, on August 29. According to press agencies, a group of Muslims who were preparing to celebrate the end of Ramadan were attacked by some young Christians in a city district in central Nigeria. Mgr. Kaigama who is in Abuja for a meeting of the Episcopal Conference of Nigeria, reconstructed the events for Fides, and warns: "I do not have all the details, but this is the news I was told".

"It was a dispute between a group of Muslims that were heading towards a particular area, and another group of young Christians who went to pray in the same area. A discussion over who owned the area broke out, which unfortunately resulted in violence and caused deaths, injuries and property damage, the destruction of several cars and other vehicles". Authorities have not released a death toll yet.

In Nigeria, the tension remains high after the attack that hit the UN headquarters in the federal capital Abuja (see Fides 27/8/2011). The last toll of this attack, committed by a car bomb, is 23 deaths.

Mgr. Kaigama, referring to the situation of Nigeria, said: "It is really depressing and even embarrassing, to receive daily reports of attacks caused by bombs and violence in different parts of the Country. All this is quite alarming. This situation involves first of all civil authorities who must ensure safety. We hope something is done urgently. The Nigerians also feel sad and feel a sense of shame for the continuing violence. As Bishops, we continue to direct appeals to the authorities to do their duty and the population to adopt dialogue as a way to resolve disputes", concludes the Archbishop of Jos. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 30/08/2011)