



AFRICA/COTE D'IVOIRE - Legislative elections: a strong turnout is not expected because of the outgoing President's supporters' boycott

Abidjan (Agenzia Fides) - "After a week of intense campaigning, the situation is calm.

The party (Ivorian Popular Front), of former President Gbagbo does not show up to protest against his transfer to the International Criminal Court in The Hague. Some members of the party, however, present themselves as independent", say local Church sources to Fides from Abidjan, economic and administrative capital of Côte d'Ivoire, where tomorrow, December 11 legislative elections will be held.

" A strong turnout is not expected due to Gbagbo's supporters' boycott of the vote," say our sources. "This also means that a political party in the Country will not be represented in the new Parliament, a fact that is not positive for the future of Côte d'Ivoire, where a large amount of weapons still circulate, especially in Abidjan and in the west bordering with Liberia".

A recent incident shows how serious this problem is. "Three days ago in Grand Lahou, in the diocese of Gagnoa, a rocket exploded causing the death of at least 3 people who were participating in an electoral meeting of the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire, President Ouattara's party. The authorities said that it was an accident caused by a military unit, although its exact circumstances are still not very clear".

"The biggest challenge of the Ivory Coast remains reconciliation after the civil war that allowed Ouattara's establishment (whose victory in the presidential elections had not been recognized by Gbagbo). The Commission for dialogue, truth and reconciliation, recently established, has a great responsibility to contribute to national reconciliation" say our sources. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 10/12/2011)