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AFRICA/LIBYA - More than 125,000 irregular armed fighters, divided into hundreds of militias: the complaint of a report

Tripoli (Agenzia Fides) - In Libya, there are 125,000 irregular armed fighters. According to a report by the International Crisis Group (ICG), which warns about the presence of hundreds of militias that control chunks of the territory in the country. In the last few days clashes between militias in different parts of the Country were reported.

"Their number is a mystery - the report says - according to some 100 thousand, three times as much according to others. It is claimed that more than 125,000 Libyans are armed. "The ICG points out that "these groups do not consider themselves at the service of a central authority; they have separate procedures for registering members and weapons; they arrest and hold suspects; they constantly collide with each other."

This situation stems from how the revolt against Gaddafi's regime was structured: a highly decentralized rebellion, which different local tribes and clans had a predominant role in. The National Transitional Authority struggles to impose itself on these groups which continue to maintain their arsenals in self-defense and as a means to promote their own interests.

In order to face this situation, the ICG makes some proposals to put into practice at the Transitional National Authority level and at local levels, both civilian and military. These include: strengthening the legitimacy of the central institutions, ensuring greater transparency in decision making; starting programs for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants in close coordination with militias and local councils; involve civil and religious leaders in these programs. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 17/12/2011)

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