



AFRICA/MADAGASCAR - Alert in the country for the arrival of the devastating tropical cyclone "Giovanna"

Antananarivo (Agenzia Fides) - A violent tropical cyclone near the Madagascan town of Toamasina on the east coast is expected, which will head to the capital Antananarivo. Named cyclone Giovanna, will have such a violent impact on the country. According to the local responsible of the humanitarian organization CARE, if Giovanna continues to forecast the consequences it will be catastrophic. Such a destructive phenomenon has not happened since cyclone Indlala in 2007. Giovanna is compared by the Malagasy Meteorological Service to the cyclone Geralda, which in 1994 hit densely populated areas, killing around 200 people, registered 40 000 IDPs and damaged another 500 thousand people. The area of initial impact is expected in the north-east area of Fenerive East and the south-east area of Vohipeno. The regions most severely affected should be Antsinanana and Analanjirofo, according to a report on behalf of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The cyclone may isolate the city of Toamasina, as well as the areas of Brickaville, Mahanoro, Vatomandry and Fenerive East. In addition communication systems may be subject to interruptions in the two regions most affected. An aid worker based in Antananarivo said that even if citizens of the capital are usually well informed about events, they were unaware of the imminent arrival of Giovanna. The cyclone should happen in conjunction with the first anniversary of Cyclone Bingiza that killed 14 people, destroyed about 6 000 houses and registered 19 000 refugees. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 14/2/2012)