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AFRICA/RWANDA - The Catholic Church signed an agreement with the police to combat violence against women

Kigali (Agenzia Fides) – The Rwanda National Police (RNP) and the Catholic Church have entered a partnership to strengthen the campaign against Gender Based Violence (GBV). The partnership comes one year to the end of a Catholic Church project, which started in 2010 to sensitize the public against GBV, identify and counsel victims and help them access justice and health services.
The three-year programme, funded by the European Union, through Caritas International, also meets health insurance costs of the victims and offers legal services.
His Exc. Mgr. Servilien Nzakamwita, Bishop of Byumba and President of the Episcopal Commission "Justice and Peace", observed that despite the achievements realized, challenges still remain which need to be addressed immediately.
"There are people who have no knowledge on the law that penalizes GBV offenders while others do not know where to seek help", said Mgr. Nzakamwita when officially opening the meeting at the police headquarters in Kacyiru. The Bishop of Byumba noted that some victims do not get the necessary services on time and the culprits do not face the hand of Justice accordingly. The Bishop also denounced the fact that doctors do not help GBV by providing medical documentation necessary to report the accident.
"GBV offenders are protected by some civil servants who at times help them escape. There is also corruption at various levels," said Mgr. Nzakamwita, who promised the support of the Commission "Justice and Peace" to victims, in order for justice to be served. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 08/03/2012)

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