



AFRICA/NIGERIA - Negotiations between the government and Boko Haram? For the Archbishop of Jos, "maybe it would be better to identify the sponsors of the sect"

Abuja (Agenzia Fides) - "I do not know what the government is doing, but I know that Boko Haram is a ruthless group that sends people to kill themselves to kill others. I do not know how you deal with them " says to Fides His Exc Mgr. Ignatius Ayau Kaigama, Archbishop of Jos, in northern Nigeria, commenting on the rumors of indirect negotiations between the Nigerian government and the Boko Haram sect. It is thought that the sect is behind the 11 March suicide bombing against the church of St. Finbarr, in Jos (see Fides 12/03/2012).

"What the government should do is identify the sponsors of Boko Haram" said Mgr. Kaigama. "There are powerful elements that provide members of the sect, bombs, cars, money and logistical support. We must know who these people are that have a bad program for Nigeria".

On the possibility that there are foreign sponsors behind Boko Haram, the Archbishop says: "If one looks at the sophistication of the bombs used by Boko Haram, it seems to me that this means that these people have had an excellent training outside Nigeria. But, I repeat, it is the responsibility of our security agencies to find out who are the terrorists, their supporters, where and who trains them, and so on. Until recently there were no suicide bombings and attacks in Nigeria with sophisticated bombs. All of this comes from somewhere. I hope that our government, with the help of the international community, can discover the roots of all this".

Mgr. Kaigama has not lost hope: "At the moment we are in the Governor's house. We intend to express our concern and our solidarity with the victims, as well as reaffirming the Catholic Church's commitment to peace. He can rely on the work of our priests, men and women religious and lay people who work to pacify the souls. Despite the latest violence in Jos, the situation is calm. Nobody wants to be involved in unnecessary violence. Although there is anger at the deaths caused by the attacks and the fighting in recent days, the population has returned to its normal activities", says the Archbishop. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 16/3/2012)