



AFRICA/LIBYA-"Come to Libya to help us, the situation is not as tragic as some describe it to be", said Mgr. Martinelli

Tripoli (Agenzia Fides) - "I am sorry to see that only negative news is spread concerning the Libyan situation. I continuously meet many Libyans who have a positive attitude and are confident about the future of their country" says to Fides His Exc. Mgr. Giovanni Innocenzo Martinelli, Apostolic Vicar of Tripoli.

"We need to spread positive news to inspire courage both to the Libyans and also to those outside, and would like to come here to provide their help" continued Archbishop Martinelli. "For example, there are people of Caritas who would like to come to Libya to acknowledge the necessities of the needy, but were discouraged to come. I wonder why, given that ENI and AGIP technicians come to work here without any problems. Why can't operators of Caritas come?" Asks the Apostolic Vicar of Tripoli.

"It is true not that no one can come to Libya. Of course I do not say as tourists, but for certain social services it is possible", he insists. "Can I speak for Tripoli and surroundings - says Archbishop Martinelli-there are occasionally some skirmishes here and there, but generally the situation is quiet and peaceful." Archbishop Martinelli mentions some examples of ordinary life which in his view show the tendency to return to peace: "Yesterday the children in schools celebrated Mother's Day (in the Arab world coincides with the first day of spring). In past days we held elections for the local bodies of Tripoli".

However, there is the problem of weapons, which are still in possession of the militia, and in this respect Archbishop Martinelli observes: "The Libyan authorities are doing everything so that those who have weapons hand them over. It will take some time, but the effort is there". "I wish that Libya was no longer associated, in the collective imagination, to terrorism and instability. Come and help us build the new Libya", concludes Mgr. Martinelli. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 23/3/2012)