



## **ASIA/AFGHANISTAN - Leaders of civil society: "It will take ten years to stop the Taliban, but the people are not with them"**

Kabul (Agenzia Fides) - "In Kabul, everything is back to normal, but big fear remains. The Afghan military forces have put an end to Taliban attacks. The Taliban will continue their fight against terrorism and will bring forward their agenda. It will take at least ten years to defeat them all. Our hopes are strong, because the Afghan society yearns for peace, progress, justice, and are not on their side": is what Aziz Rafiee, Director of "Afghan Civil Society Forum Organization"(ACSF) in Kabul tells Fides, a forum that brings together hundreds of Afghan civil society associations, in the aftermath of the offensive carried out by the Taliban in Kabul. Yesterday, April 15, a barrage of rocket attacks and suicide bombings shook the center of Kabul, hitting the Afghan Parliament, the diplomatic area (the so-called "green zone"), NATO buildings, a police academy and the "Kabul Star Hotel." The leader of the ACSF tells Fides: "It was a well organized action, but the response of the Afghan military forces revealed to be effective. The population is terrified: society understands that terrorism exists and that cannot be stopped overnight. Long and hard work is needed, but we will make it. Today the Taliban, are weak: they are the protagonists of these sensational attacks, but they do not have a base and strong power. It is the government's intelligence to be rather weak, such actions would not be possible otherwise. We are confident for the future: the struggle between the good forces of society and the terrorists will continue, but the consent of the people is not with them. People want peace and is prone to negotiations with the Taliban. Afghan civil society wants and is able to flourish: this is the key to building our future." (PA) (Agenzia Fides 16/4/2012)