



AFRICA/SUDAN - "We are on the brink of an open war between Sudan that threatens to cause a catastrophe," says Caritas Internationalis

Khartoum (Agenzia Fides) - Caritas Internationalis fears an imminent open war between Sudan and South Sudan with serious humanitarian consequences for both Countries, unless further military actions are stopped. This is what a statement sent to Fides says, which also expresses concern about the situation in Darfur, the western region of Sudan where a series of guerrilla movements fighting the Sudanese army and militias affiliated to it operate.

"Caritas Internationalis is trying to get more details after the office of Sudan Aid (associate organization of Caritas) in Nyala was closed by the security forces. In Darfur, Sudan Aid participates in the care of 500,000 people by providing food, clean water, medical assistance and more."

A new humanitarian front has opened in Heglig, occupied by the troops from South Sudan and reconquered later by Khartoum at the end of bitter fighting.

"The displaced people from the area of Heglig could be around 35,000 but it is estimate difficult to confirm, since the area is not currently accessible," says to Fides Patrick Nicholson, of Caritas Internationalis.

Caritas is concerned about the precarious situation of the 500,000 natives of South Sudan who live in Sudan. April 8 was the deadline imposed upon them by Khartoum: either they register as a resident in Sudan or they return to South Sudan. it is feared that these people are forced to return, which in part is already happening. "Finally it should be noted that guerrilla movements operate in some States of Southern Sudan, such as Jonglei, which help to generate more refugees," Nicholson recalls.

Meanwhile in a new bombing perpetrated by the aviation in Khartoum on two places in the southern Sudan State of Unity, 16 people have died. The southern Sudanese President Salva Kiir, who is visiting China, said that Khartoum has declared "war on Southern Sudan," While Khartoum accuses Juba of trying to undermine its stability by supporting the guerrillas operating on its territory. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 25/4/2012)