



## **AFRICA/GUINEA BISSAU - Hypothesis of an ECOWAS military dispatch in Bissau, while civil servants do not receive their salary**

Bissau (Agenzia Fides) - The Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are thinking of sending a military force of 600 soldiers in Guinea Bissau. This is what has been circulating on the eve of the Summit of the Heads of State member Countries which opens today in Abidjan (Ivory Coast), dedicated to the crisis in Mali (open after the coup on 22 March) and in Guinea Bissau (where the military toppled the government on April 12). The military of the ECOWAS from Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal and Burkina Faso, have the task of protecting the institutions and local political figures from arrests carried out by coup leaders. In past days an agreement was reached between the military and some political parties to begin a transition period in order to facilitate the return of democratic legality. The agreement, however, was judged "not conform to the constitution" by ECOWAS, which had also expressed disappointment for the continuation of arrests of politicians by the military coup. "The military force dispatch of ECOWAS is currently only a hypothesis that is not much shared by its own members" says to Fides Fr. Davide Sciocco, a PIME missionary and Radio Sol Mansi's director. The military coup leaders have thus made it clear that they do not want foreign troops interventions". Coup leaders motivated the coup with the need to prevent the Angolan military contingent in the Country to have a role in local politics. Father Sciocco reports that "the population is awaiting the conclusions of the ECOWAS summit, but the biggest concern was released yesterday by the command of the military junta, about the inability to pay civil servants' salaries." The economic difficulties related to the collection of cashews (see Fides 24/4/2012) will play a leading role in resolving the crisis. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 26/4/2012)