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AFRICA/GUINEA BISSAU - Still no reaction of the coup leaders to the ultimatum of ECOWAS

Bissau (Agenzia Fides) - In Bissau, there are still no reactions to the ultimatum launched yesterday by the ECOWAS to the military junta that seized power in Guinea Bissau with the coup on April 12. "We do not know if the delegation that represented Guinea Bissau at the summit of ECOWAS in Abidjan has come back in the Country" says to Fides Fr. Davide Sciocco, a PIME missionary and director of Radio Sol Mansi.
"We are hunting for news, but so far there have been no reactions of any kind," said Fr. Sciocco. "The situation is calm but the Country appears blocked: schools and public buildings are closed. The salaries of state employees will not be paid until there is a new government. "
At the end of the Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which ended on April 26 in Abidjan, an ultimatum was issued to the Junta coup in Bissau: if within 72 hours, the authors of the coup do not restore "constitutional order", sanctions will be carried out against them, as well as diplomatic, economic and financial sanctions towards Guinea Bissau.
The summit of ECOWAS also addressed the crisis in Mali, a Country rocked by the announced secession of the north (in the hands of various armed groups) and the coup of 22 March. It was decided to grant a period of 12 months to the transition started with the agreement reached on 6 April between representatives of ECOWAS and the coup leaders. On the basis of the agreements, on April 25 a new government led by Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra was formed. ECOWAS has asked the military "to return to the barracks" and release the personalities they arrested after the coup.
It is expected that a military force of ECOWAS will be sent both in Guinea Bissau and in Mali, "to defend the democratic institutions" and, in the case of Mali, also "prepare for all eventualities, hypothesizing the use of force to recover the 'territorial integrity of the Country." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 27/4/2012)

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