



AFRICA/DR CONGO - A series of initiatives of the Church to say "no" to the division of the country

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - The Church in the Democratic Republic of Congo has launched a series of initiatives to say no to the "balkanization" of the Country, whose territorial integrity is threatened by yet another armed revolt in North Kivu (see Fides 31/5/2012). According to Don Leonard Santedi, Secretary General of the National Episcopal Conference of Congo (CENCO), the initiatives planned are: a three-day prayer for peace, unity and territorial integrity, to be held from July 31 to August 1, with a special prayer to be recited every day at the end of the Eucharistic celebrations and prayer meetings; the "March of Hope" organized in all the dioceses on 1 August to say no to the "balkanization"; a national collection in favor of populations affected by violence; the sending of a motion to raise awareness about the war in the east to national and international institutions (embassies of the Countries members of the UN Security Council, to the European Union and African Union); a pastoral visit of solidarity of the CENCO Presidency, together with Bishops delegates of the ecclesiastical provinces, in the dioceses affected by the war.

North Kivu is devastated by the war led by the M23, a rebel movement officially formed by deserters from the Congolese military, but it is strongly suspected to be sponsored by Rwanda, with the aim of annexing this region rich in mineral resources (see Fides 29/05/2012). Both the Bishops of the region (see Fides 08/06/2012) and CENCO (see Fides 10/7/2012) have already spoken in denouncing the situation created in the area, which has forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee (see fides 11/07/2012). (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 25/7/2012)