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ASIA/SYRIA - Bomb at a funeral, a family beheaded: Christians and Druzes targeted in Damascus

Damascus (Agenzia Fides) - A terrorist attack hit innocent Christian faithful and innocent Druzes in the area of Jaramana, a suburb of Damascus: yesterday, August 28, at 2 pm, a bomb in a car was detonated while a crowd of faithful, families, elderly people, women and children, were heading to the cemetery to bury two young people. The two had died the day before, on August 27, also victims of an IED. As the crowd, after the funeral, was accompanying the deceased to the burial, a taxi exploded causing 12 deaths (according to other sources 27), including 5 children, and injuring more than 50 people. In Jarmana about 600 thousand people live, mostly religious minorities: there are 250 thousand Christians (Assyrians, Armenians, Chaldeans, Melkites, Orthodox and other denominations), as well as Druzes and about 120 thousand Iraqi refugees, who fled to Syria in past years. As reported by Fides sources in Damascus, the Christians in the suburbs of Jaramana (south-west of Damascus) and Zamalka (South-East of the city) are under pressure from armed groups jiahdisti and are terrified. Today in Zamalka a family of Armenian Christians was found murdered, and all members of the family horribly decapitated. The execution brings to mind the work of radical Islamist Salafis.
These acts, which affect innocent people, have generated anger and confusion in the Christian community. A leader of the Latin Catholic community of Damascus, who requested anonymity, told Fides: "These are terrorist acts: we do not know who is behind, some are groups that want to destroy Syria. Armed gangs of jihadists have begun to sow terror. The point is that even in the West, Christians are often portrayed as friends of the regime or collaborators of the repression, but it is not true. Christians are with the Syrian people and just want peace. But this propaganda gives terrorist groups, infiltrators among the rebels, a pretext to attack us." (PA) (Agenzia Fides 29/08/2012)

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