



## **AFRICA/SOUTH AFRICA - "Violence on the rise: trade unions are losing control of the protest" said the Bishop of Rustenburg**

Johannesburg (Agenzia Fides) - "Violence is growing and I do not know what will happen. The unions are losing control of the miners in protest. The miners are abandoning unions and want to choose their own representatives. One is risking now to overcome the regulations adopted by the Government and the trade union centers to control labor conflicts" says to Fides Agency His Exc. Mgr. Kevin Dowling, Bishop of Rustenburg (South Africa), where yesterday, October 11, two people were killed in a slum close to a platinum mine. Meanwhile, workers in gold mines have rejected, deeming inadequate, an increase in offer put forward by the employers.

"The striking miners continue to intimidate those who go to work, even in the mines where there are no strikes. Adding fuel to the fire of protest is also a Trotskyist group, the Democratic Socialist Movement," said Mgr. Dowling. The Bishop of Rustenburg also reports that yesterday in Marikana there was a meeting of the heads of the various Christian churches to establish a path of Community reconciliation. Marikana was the scene of the massacre of 16 August, when police opened fire on the miners in the Lomnin mine, who were protesting, killing more than 30 people. The Marikana crisis had been settled with a wage increase which, however, sparked claims on behalf of workers in other mines.

Mgr. Dowling announces that "on October 28, the local Catholic parish will hold a prayer meeting for peace and reconciliation. The meeting will then be held each month in a different place of Christian worship." "It is an excellent idea because in Marikana, despite the agreement that provides for a 22% wage increase, there are still tensions, different groups in fact are not satisfied with the agreement. Our priests and pastors want to take control of the situation before it degenerates, working with the local community," the Bishop concluded. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 12/10/2012)