



AFRICA/DR CONGO - More than 30 armed groups in the east of the Country: "the weakness of the State favours their proliferation"

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) – There are more than 30 armed groups operating in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly in North Kivu. This is what is stated in a report by the UN Mission for the Stabilization of Congo (MONUSCO). Most of these groups are made up of a few hundred fighters, while the largest group seems to be that of the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR), which has about 3,000 men. These groups, in turn, create shifting alliances with the regular Congolese army and its current adversary, the M23, the movement made up of military deserters that a recent UN report says is supported by the governments of Rwanda and Uganda.

"The attention of the international community of the M23 hides the more complex reality of North Kivu" local sources tell Fides Agency, which trace back to the current instability "March 20, 1993, when Ndoto, in the Walikale territory, the Nyanga and Hunde came together to respond to the provocations of the Tutsi and Hutu: challenging the power of traditional leaders, raising of the flag of Rwanda on Congolese territory, etc.. This war spread like wildfire in the forest and saw its epicenter move to the Masisi territory. "

"The situation we face today in North Kivu, in particular in Rutshuru and Masisi, is an emanation of this war and subsequent conflicts" continue our sources. "With time and the change of circumstances, the Hutu-Tutsi conflict on the one hand, and Hunde- Nyanga on the other, gave way to other claims and the fact that good governance has never been the hallmark of power in our State, the eastern region of the DRC remains the soft underbelly of the whole Country and the soft underbelly of the entire Great Lakes region in Africa." The lack of a State authority, able to ensure the safety of all and to initiate the economic development of the region, coupled with the interference of foreign interests, therefore favored the proliferation of armed groups vying for control of the mines of the area.

"This is not about tribal wars. All segments of society are realizing, and say loudly, that there is no authority in Congo. In other words, power is on the way and when that happens, who is stronger will take it", concludes our source. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 19/10/2012)