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AFRICA/SOUTH SUDAN - Clarification of the Bishop of Torit on the contribution for the reconstruction of the Cathedral by Muslim students

Juba (Agenzia Fides) - In connection with the proposal of a group of young Muslims to contribute to the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Torit (South Sudan), a statement, issued on behalf of His Exc. Mgr. Johnson Akio Mutek, Bishop of Torit, clarifies the situation.
The document, sent to Fides Agency, recalls that a year ago a group of Muslim students from Darfur, in a meeting with Mgr. Mutek, declared their intention to help reconstruct of the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul and the Chapel of Kimotong Parish as a gesture of recognition of what Lopez Lomong, American athlete of Sudanese origin (and former child soldier who escaped his captors) was doing for Darfur.
Lamong, a member in "Team Darfur" at the Beijing Olympics, had launched an appeal to the international community to help stop the aerial bombardments of Darfur civilians.
Since this proposal has aroused some misunderstandings among the faithful, Mgr. Mutek would like to clarify the facts in a statement which says: Mgr. Mutek did not seek for any financial contribution from this group, the offer is the result of their own initiative; students are part of a U.S.A-based non-profit foundation known as Sudan Sun Rise which has among its aims to foster reconciliation between the communities of Southern Sudan and Sudan; the reconstruction of the Cathedral is still at a stage of dialogue and consultation between the Diocese and the group of students and no definite decision has been taken, the students clearly stated that they do not have any source of finance but intend to raise funds through a media campaign conducted in the USA and Europe; the Diocese is not aware of any other organization to which students are linked, apart from the Sudan Sun Rise; students have promised a "financial contribution" and not that they would have rebuilt the Cathedral alone.
"The diocese is very attentive and sensitive to the concerns being expressed by the Christians and wants to assure the public, especially its faithful, that nothing still has been concretely implemented. Consultations are still being done to ensure that every aspect of this delicate issue is meticulously addressed, clarified and understood by all," the statement concluded.
The cathedral suffered extensive damage during the decades of the civil war, but "has always been the symbol of a long history of deep faith and religious tradition of the local Church." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 07/11/2012)

> LINKS
The Press release of the Diocese of Torit (in English):
http://www.fides.org/eng/documents/Press_Release_Torit_Diocese.doc:

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