



AFRICA/DR CONGO - Precarious situation in Masisi for the presence of various rebel groups, while the arrival of the M23 is feared

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - "The inhabitants of Masisi are living in fear of the imminent arrival of the rebel group M23 and the effects of violent attacks on behalf of several other groups in the area," said a statement sent to Fides Agency by the Jesuit Refugee Service of the Great Lakes Region.

Masisi district is about 100 km from Goma, North Kivu capital (eastern Democratic Republic of Congo) occupied by the rebel movement M23 in recent days.

According to news agency, the men of the M23 are leaving Goma this morning, November 28. "We abandoned our homes unable to bring food with us. We fled into the forest with only one objective in mind, our security. And we do not have any idea of when and how we will return home," said a resident of Masisi, who left his home on November 25 following the outbreak of fighting between the Congolese army and Mai-Mai militia.

The severe fighting broke out as a result of the attempt of the Mai-Mai militia, which is believed to be allied with the M23, attempted to take control of the weapons of the Congolese army." When we heard gunfire we witnessed the mass flight of the population of Masisi.

In the beginning, many sought safety in the parish, then they began fleeing towards Nyabiondo. People had the look of fear in their eyes," said a staff member of the JRS of Masisi.

Several IDPs found refuge in the nearby Bukombo camp, where they crowded together in school buildings. "We do not have anything to eat or drink.

Above all, the women and children are in a state of shock. And we have no idea when we will finally have peace. Today we fled from the Mai-Mai militias, tomorrow it may be from the M23" says one of the displaced persons.

Notwithstanding the deterioration of the crisis in North Kivu, JRS team in Masisi district briefly re-established its formal and informal education activities, including the construction of a secondary school. After the latest violence, JRS, however, was forced to suspend all activities in Masisi. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 28/11/2012)