



AFRICA/CHAD - Mgr. Russo can return to Chad and guide the diocese of Doba

N'Djamena (Agenzia Fides) – His Exc. Mgr. Michele Russo, Bishop of Doba, can return to Chad and resume his apostolic ministry in his diocese. This was announced in a press release by the Ministry of Communication of Chad, confirming the news that had been circulating earlier in different environments. The Bishop, a Comboni missionary in Chad for almost thirty years, had been ordered to leave the Country last October (see Fides 13/10/2012). The reason for his expulsion dates back to criticism expressed by the Bishop himself on the management of oil revenues through the diocesan radio station "La Voix du paysan", the first free radio of Central African Republic, which Mgr. Russo entrusted to the Franciscans of the Immaculate in 2010, under the direction of Fr. Clement M. Bonou. For the Chadian government criticism was expressed by the Bishop during a sermon translated into gambay language and broadcasted via radio. The same broadcasting station, one of the few that is concerned about the integral development of the population, was suspended by the High Council for Communication.

"It is a misunderstanding created by the translation of my homily – Mgr. Russo had declared to Fr. Alfonso Bruno, a spokesman for the Franciscans of the Immaculate, consequently involved in the story -. The radio presenter peppered with idiomatic expressions of the local culture a well-known situation of injustice. It was not the first time that, with the same terms, dramatized this time from the clumsy translation, I denounced the state of affairs, driven by the reference to the Gospel and sensitive to the doctrine of the Church and to the needs of the flock of souls entrusted to me. This reveals, however, a real and disturbing intolerance towards ordinary people." According to information sent to Fides Agency by Fr. Bruno, the religious and clergy present in Doba contributed to the maintenance of calm, despite a widespread feeling of strong indignation. This attitude denies that the statement of the High Council for Communication of Chad, which showed that, in delivering the homily, the radio station had chosen to "undermine public order on purpose." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 02/01/2013)