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AFRICA/MALI- Tensions on the line of demarcation between the army and rebels, waiting for the talks in Ouagadougou

Bamako (Agenzia Fides) - The tension on the front line in the Mopti area are probably related to the negotiations which should open in Ouagadougou. This is the opinion that prevails in Mali, as reported to Fides Agency by Fr. Edmond Dembele, Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Mali.
"The army fired warning shots against the rebels who were getting too close to the line of demarcation between the governmental area and that controlled by them," says Fr. Dembele. "Both the Malian army and the rebels appear ready to fight, but it is unknown if the tension will result in a real battle. Some local commentators think that both parties want to present themselves in a strong position during the negotiations which begins on January 10 in the capital of Burkina Faso."
In Ouagadougou talks are scheduled under the auspices of the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, between representatives of the Government of Mali and those of two different groups that have been occupying since March 2012, the north of Mali: the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad and Ansar to Dine.
"In Bamako so far an increase in security measures has not been felt," said the priest. "However, demonstrations of sectors of civil society continue. Last week, for example, there was a march of students who ask for the reopening of the university, whose courses have been stalled for months. Another demonstration was organized by a political party to ask the organization of national consultations to be held in December, but which have been suspended indefinitely." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 08/01/2013)

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