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AFRICA/MALI-Clashes between army and rebels, while in the capital protests continue

Bamako (Agenzia Fides) - "We know that there were clashes between last night and the early morning of today, around the area of Konna, between the army and rebels, but the authorities havenot given precise information about the number of deaths and wounded, " says to Fides Agency Father Edmond Dembele, Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Mali. The clashes took place in Konna, 70 km north of Mopti, the city in the center of Mali that marks the boundary between the area controlled by the army and the rebels, who since March 2012 have conquered the north of the Country.
The situation remains uncertain because the talks to be held in Burkina Faso between the authorities in Bamako and two rebel groups in the North (the Ansar Dine and MNLA) were postponed.
In the capital Bamako high political tension also remains, as reported by Fr. Dembele. "At the moment several protesters are flowing into the center of the city to continue to protest the suspension of the national consultations, in spite of the police, the gendarmerie and the army have been deployed to prevent further events," the priest said. "During yesterday's demonstrations slogans calling for the resignation of the head of state were shouted. In addition to the protests there were expressions of support for the armed forces, " continues Fr. Dembele.
Following the protests, involving students as well, the government has decided to close all schools and faculties of the capital. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 10/01/2013)

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