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AFRICA/EGYPT - The ecumenical sensitivity of Patriarch Tawadros approaches the creation of a Council of Christian Churches

Cairo (Agenzia Fides) - The new climate of openness and collaboration that has been recorded in recent months among the various Christian communities in Egypt could soon lead to the establishment of a Council of Christian Churches in Egypt. This was reported to Fides Agency by the Auxiliary Bishop of Alexandria of the Catholic Copts, Botros Fahim Awad Hanna, adding that the shared intent could be outlined on the occasion of the upcoming Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, to be held from January 18 to 25. "In recent times, even to help a common discernment of the facts and phenomena related to the Arab Spring," Anba Botros explains to Fides "more than ten meetings between representatives of the various Christian denominations took place. Now we have to spread the statutes of an organism that expresses a shared understanding of Egyptian Christians especially in the areas of political and social issues."
Pope Tawadros II, Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church has given his contribution to the new climate of dialogue and proximity among Christians since last November 4. On Tuesday, January 8 Tawadros welcomed Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, in the scenario of the visit carried out by the Cardinal in Egypt. In December, during the Christmas holidays, the Coptic Orthodox Patriarch wanted to personally pay homage with a visit to all the heads of Christian Churches in Egypt who follow the Gregorian calendar. "On that occasion," says Bishop Hanna "he expressed the desire to meet at least once a month. New Patriarch Tawadros is aware of the crucial importance of the ecumenical journey, and at the same time he reveals his profile as a pastor. He said: the doctrinal issues must be left to theologians. We, as pastors, have to express in front of all our fraternal love, in mutual love. It should be noted that his motto is the phrase of the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians: love will never have an end."
At an ecumenical level, observers register signs of discontinuity compared to the predecessor Shenouda III, whose theological approach was not immune to prejudice against other Christian Churches. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 11/01/2013).

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