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AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC - Despite the peace agreements, violence against civilians continues

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) - In spite of the peace agreements and the appointment of a Prime Minister in charge of forming a government of national unity, in the Central African Republic incidents of looting and violence against the civilian population continue. Even the Catholic Church was the victim of these acts. Some religious women of the Prefecture of Basse-Kotto (in the southeast) reported that they had been threatened by the rebels who accuse them of denouncing the violence committed against the civilian population in the area. His Exc. Mgr. Juan José Aguire Muonos, Bishop of Bangassou, denounced the violent acts committed in different locations in the Prefectures of Basse-Kotto and Mbomou. Local Church sources refer to Fides Agency that in the diocese of Alindao in the east of the Country, motorcycles, computers, and even a car of Caritas were stolen. In addition to theft and looting, the rebels (but not only them) carry out sexual abuse on women and girls.
"The security forces are deployed mostly in the capital, Bangui. The Country is vast and in this phase of transition it is difficult to control the various rebel groups all over the country, " explain sources of Fides. "In particular, the east and south-east escape the control of the authorities. They are strategic areas, rich in mineral resources. It is also true that Bangassou is somewhat protected by the Ugandan forces (supported by elements of the U.S. special forces) that are found in Central Africa, with the approval of the local authorities to hunt down the rebels of the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army), but other areas remain uncovered." "We are waiting for the new government of national unity and let us see how security forces will be deployed to deal with this situation", conclude our sources. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 30/01/2013)

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