



AFRICA/EGYPT - Elections at Easter: Copts protest, possible postponement

Cairo (Agenzia Fides) – The decision taken by President Morsi to hold parliamentary elections in Egypt on a date which would coincide with Coptic Easter celebrations may be reconsidered, following a protest by Egyptian Christians. Fides was informed of this by the Auxiliary Bishop of Alexandria of Coptic Catholics, Bishop Botros Fahim Awad Hanna. “A possible postponement” Bishop Anba Fahim Hanna told Fides “could be explained with the subterfuge that the second round of elections would coincide with the national holiday of Sham al-Nasseem, a festivity of pharaonic origin which celebrates Spring and falls on Easter Monday”.

The first date of political elections has been set for 27 April, the Saturday before Palm Sunday. The second round of elections would fall on 5 May, the Sunday on which this year Coptic Christians celebrate Easter. “Our political leaders chose the dates because they never take the calendar of Christian festivities into consideration” the Coptic Catholic Bishop told Fides “because no one around them is in a position to advise when a date is inopportune. In these matters they are completely in the dark. This is why yesterday we saw an explosion of protests on the social network. However, certain prominent Christians were able to make their voices reach the Presidential offices, in order to warn those responsible that the inconvenient choice of election dates the could cause fresh social tensions and revolts.” (GV) (Agenzia Fides 23/2/2013).