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AFRICA/ZAMBIA - Christian leaders: "We are extremely disturbed and greatly saddened by the electoral violence"

Lusaka (Agenzia Fides) - "We are extremely disturbed and greatly saddened by the violence and the loss of precious life in the heat of the recent campaigns for the Livingstone parliamentary by-election," said a statement sent to Fides Agency, signed by the leaders of principial Christian denominations in Zambia, Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC).
The campaign for the partial renewal of Parliament (the elections are held today, February 28) was marked by tensions and violence that resulted in the murder of a politician, Harrison Chanda, who was killed on February 25 in Livingstone.
"Our hearts and prayers go out to the family of the deceased and all victims of violence. At the same time, we condemn in the strongest terms possible, any form of political and electoral violence," the statement said.
"We further wish to appeal for calm and maximum restraint from the various political parties in Livingstone and also from the Zambia Police Service. It is incumbent on all of us not to do or say anything that might worsen an already volatile situation."
"This is not the time for finger-pointing. What is needed now is for all stakeholders to do some serious soul-searching: Is this the level our politics has come to? Is this the path we want to pursue in our democratic dispensation?" The document concludes. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 28/02/2013)

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