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AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC - "I am the first on the rebels' list of people to be hit" denounces the Bishop of Bangassou

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) – Mgr. Juan José Aguirre Muños, Bishop of Bangassou, sent to Fides Agency the following testimony on the conquest of the Central African city on behalf of a faction of the rebel coalition Seleka (see Fides 12/03/2013).

"The rebels of SELEKA arrived in mid-December from the north of the Country. Many Chadians, others Sudanese, all speak Arabic and want to overturn the government to create an Islamic republic. They have already conquered five dioceses and more than 10 cities.
They entered Bangassou on March 11 after having clashed with the few Central African forces who were in town. They stole a dozen mission cars, of the minor seminary of the second parish in Bangassou. They destroyed the home of the Spiritan Fathers, of the Franciscan Sisters, then they stole and destroyed the rector's house of the diocesan minor seminary, the carpenter's shop, the internet center, the Catholic college, the pharmacy, the new surgery block. They brutalized the people, fathers and nuns. They have a list of people to hit: I am the first, followed by my vicar then the prosecutor and others.
They destroyed the townhall, the general hospital, throwing the patients who had an IV in the arm on the floor to steal the mattress. They respected only mosques and Muslim traders to whom they gave our goods to sell.
Then the rebels left on 15 vehicles packed with stolen goods and Bangassou and headed towards Bambari (400 km away), leaving a brutalized population and afraid, that is dispersed in the forest.
Along the way they occupied one mission after another, camping in the house of the missionaries. Now except for the 3 missions in the East, the other 8 are in their hands.
To the east we have another rebellion, the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army), that for 7 years is raging on civilians. We have witnessed the horrors of every kind: murders, children torn from their parents and taken into the forest, burning of villages, rapes, people's rights trampled on ruthlessly .. Now we have the Seleka rebels and I do not know how long they will stay. We just have to pray to the Lord." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 21/03/2013)

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