



AFRICA/NIGERIA - At least 12 policemen died in an attack claimed by MEND

Abuja (Agenzia Fides)-The Movement for the Emancipation of the Delta (MEND) claimed responsibility for the attack on 6 April in the lagoon of Azuzama, Bayelsa State, southern Nigeria, in which at least 12 policemen were killed. The accident occurred when a boat with several policemen who were escorting a former militant of MEND at the funeral of his mother, had a technical problem and was attacked by armed men.

At first the police denied that the attack was carried out by men of the MEND, and said that 12 policemen were "missing".

The statement by MEND states that threats sent in recent days of a resumption of hostilities (with the code name of "Hurricane Exodus") are real, contradicting the statements of local authorities."

MEND associates the resumption of violence in South Africa to the condemnation of its alleged leader Henry Okah. Okah, who denied having anything to do with MEND, had been arrested in South Africa by the Nigerian authorities due to charges of some terrorist attacks carried out in Nigeria in 2010. On March 26, the court in Johannesburg sentenced him to 24 years in prison for acts of terrorism.

The members of the MEND militants who had laid down their arms benefitted from an amnesty. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 08/04/2013)