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AFRICA/SOUTH SUDAN - "We have nothing to do with the fundraising for our cathedral," says the Diocese of Torit

Juba (Agenzia Fides) - The Diocese of Torit (South Sudan) states that it has not accepted the proposal of a group of Muslim students in the United States to raise funds for the reconstruction of the cathedral of Torit nor that it has signed an agreement to that effect. This was reported in a statement sent to Fides Agency by Fr. Mark Opere Omol, diocesan representative in Europe, Canada and the United States.
"It has come to the attention of the Catholic Diocese of Torit that an American based foundation, Sudan Sunrise Foundation, will be holding a fundraising event at the Catholic University of America in Washington on May 16," the statement said. "The event is being organized by a group of Muslim students from Darfur, who two years ago visited Torit and proposed to help rebuild the local cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul."
"The proposal raised many concerns and worries among the Christian community of Torit, as to what were the reasons behind such move" says the document. On 3 November 2012 late Bishop of Torit, Akio Johnson Mutek, authorized the release of an official statement to clarify that the diocese had not solicited any help from the Sudan Sunrise Foundation (see Fides 07/11/2012).
The new statement intends to formally inform "the Archdiocese of Washington, the Catholic University of America and the Embassy of South Sudan in Washington that the organizers of the fundraising event do not have any support or approval from the leadership of the Catholic Church, and that there is no formal acceptance by the Diocese of Torit, to authorize a group of Muslim students to proceed with the project of rebuilding the cathedral."
"The fundraising event of May 16 at the Catholic University of Washington is a surprise and has nothing to do with Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral of Torit. This notice is the official position of the Diocese and with it this issue is to be considered closed once and for all" the document concludes. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 08/05/2013)

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