



AFRICA/NIGERIA - "The Nigerian Church is with you": solidarity visit to Maiduguri of the Bishops of Jos Ecclesiastical Province

Abuja (Agenzia Fides) - "All the Nigerian Church is identified and prays with you," said the Bishops of Jos Ecclesiastical Province in their solidarity visit to Maiduguri, capital of Borno State (Nigeria north-east), where the population suffers the violence of the Islamic sect Boko Haram.

At the end of the visit (April 30-May 2, also see Fides 30/04/2013), a message was released, sent to Fides Agency, which states that "we Bishops of Jos Ecclesiastical Province wanted to show our love and solidarity with the suffering members of the body of Christ of Maiduguri Diocese and the people of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States."

The message points out, among other things, that "while government and security agents are to be commended for their role so far in providing security, we ask that they do more through careful work of building relationships with the people to provide local protection within the limits of the law in this part of Nigeria and across the Country."

In a place of Borno State, in the village of Baga, the Nigerian military are accused of killing several civilians and destroying over 2,000 homes during an operation against Boko Haram (see Fides 02/05/2013).

"We pray for the repose of the souls of those who died in this needless violence, speedy recovery for the wounded, while hoping that government will render assistance to those who have lost property and means of livelihood," the Bishops said.

The document finally pays tribute to "Bishop Oliver Dashe Doeme, Bishop of Maiduguri and his priests and religious who remained steadfast in the faith and committed to promoting peace and harmony, even in the face of unprovoked attacks." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 11/05/2013)