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Fondata nel 1927

AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICA - The Catholic Church at the center of dialogue among the faiths to ease the tension

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) - "We have started dialogue between Muslims, Catholics and Protestants to calm the situation down, otherwise this Country is likely to explode," says to Fides Agency His Exc. Mgr. Juan José Aguirre Munos, Bishop of Bangassou, which is situated in Bangui for a meeting of the Episcopal Conference of the Central African Republic.
"We are offering an opportunity for dialogue so that the life of the population can be brought back to normal. Since Muslims have been accused of being Seleka's complicit we are trying to avoid further violence and revenge that would complicate an already very confusing situation."
"Many NGOs have asked the Catholic Church to coordinate these efforts of dialogue in different parts of Central Africa and we are working in this direction," said Msg. Aguirre Muños.
Meanwhile, the Central African Republic has to face new attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a Ugandan guerrilla group that has placed some of its bases in the east of the Country. Sixteen people, including four members of the LRA died in the attack against two villages near Bria. The new Central African President and leader of Seleka, Michel Djotodia, announced the deployment of troops in the east to hunt down the Ugandan rebels.
"I would not want these statements to be an excuse to enter the Seleka areas in the east that, good or bad, are still protected by the presence of Ugandan and American troops," said Mgr. Aguirre Munos. The Ugandan soldiers are in the south-east of the Central African Republic, on behalf of the African Union, to hunt down the LRA. Seleka, stating that it wants to attack the LRA, wants to prove that the presence of Ugandan troops is no longer needed and therefore have a free hand in that area."
"The LRA has been here for six years, it is not easy to defeat" the Bishop concluded. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 18/06/2013)

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