



AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICA - The humanitarian crisis in Central Africa is a drama that threatens to inflame the entire region

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) - "More than 60,000 children and their families suffer from serious food shortages and more than 200,000 children and their families were forced to flee their homes over the past 6 months," says a complaint appeal signed by 9 humanitarian organizations operating in the Central African Republic and by His Exc. Mgr. Dieudonné Nzapalainga, Archbishop of Bangui.

The document traces a dramatic picture of the situation in Central Africa a few months after former President François Bozizé was thrown out and the coming to power of Michel Djotodia, leader of the rebel coalition Seleka. "Most of the health centers in the Country have been closed for 6 months, approximately one million children do not go to school and the population is deprived of the most basic services." To worsen the situation is the lack of security that affects the weakest and most defenseless: "children and especially girls are exposed to a large number of abuses, including sexual violence and early marriage." Thousands of children are forcibly recruited into the ranks of armed groups.

The humanitarian presence is minimal: only forty UN workers are still in the capital, Bangui. The 9 NGOs call for the collection of 60 million euro to meet the most urgent humanitarian needs. The Archbishop of Bangui points out that the Central African drama threatens to inflame the neighboring States. "Our country borders with six of the most fragile nations in Africa (Chad, Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Sudan, ed.): There is a real risk of destabilizing the entire Central Africa Republic," concludes the Archbishop. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 04/07/2013)