



AFRICA/BURKINA FASO - The Bishops: "Burkina Faso needs justice, reconciliation and peace"

Ouagadougou (Agenzia Fides) - "Burkina Faso needs justice, reconciliation and peace. The protagonists of the current social tensions (majority and opposition political parties, movements and associations, civil society) must avoid any violence and any action that would worsen tensions, of undermining the dignity of the human person and the common good, and to lead our country into chaos". This is what the Bishops of Burkina Faso wrote in the document drawn up after the Ordinary Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference, held in Ouagadougou from 11 to 14 June, which dealt with the difficult situation that the country is experiencing, marked by social unrest and unrest also fueled by the project to establish the Senate as part of the institutional and political reforms.

In the final document, recently published and sent to Fides Agency, the Bishops highlight that the changes in society have been determined by several factors. First, in terms of demography, the population is much younger (46.4% under 15 and 59.1% less than 20), but is unhappy and discouraged by the lack of social models: "The image of those who exercise some power is rather negative because it is tarnished by corruption and cronyism". It then highlights the growth of literacy (16.17% in 1985, 32% in 2012), access to information thanks to new technologies and a higher level of awareness of women, more and more educated. As for values, money "has become a reference value above the family, the nation, and the republic of God", especially for the young, who are interested in material goods and are ready to do anything to obtain them. We are thus witnessing the paradox that "the rise of religious practice is not accompanied by the need to conform to the precepts of social behavior and religious commandments".

The document points out that the government is increasingly detached from reality and the social gap deepens: mass poverty grows, one Group only splits the political and financial powers, corruption is rampant, young people are hopeless, violence increases. "In such a climate of extreme poverty, in which the needs of basic necessities (health, education, employment, housing, food) are not sufficiently assured and an increasing number of young people have an uncertain future, one can only legitimately question on the opportunity of the creation of a Senate", write the Bishops, and reaffirm that "politics is the use of legal powers to pursue the common good of society".

"On the issue that divides opinion in Burkina Faso, your Bishops reaffirm that the Catholic Church does not intend to be an obstacle to the institutional choice and to the adoption of the Senate – they write in the document -. This is why, after having called the attention of the members of the ACOR (Conseil Consultatif Réformes sur les Politiques) on the inappropriateness of the creation of the Senate, one has complied with the opinion of the majority, not without having expressed one's regret as the content, composition, powers and relations of that institution with the National Assembly, in short, the future configuration of the Senate have not been defined within the CCRP". (SL) (Agenzia Fides 23/07/2013)