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ASIA/PAKISTAN - New Report on the state of human rights: "intolerance is tolerated"

Islamabad (Agenzia Fides) - "A pervasive intolerance is widely tolerated in Pakistan", says a new Report on the state of human rights in the country, published by the "Human Rights Commission of Pakistan" (HRCP), one of the most important Ong's in the country. The Report, sent to Fides Agency, documents the serious human rights violations registered in 2012, highlighting some key points that touch the lives of religious minorities.
The text sent to Fides says that "violence and persecution of ethnic and religious minorities continued in 2012, while little effort was carried out to bring the perpetrators to justice". The figures speak for themselves: 583 people were killed and 853 injured in 213 incidents of attacks or sectarian clashes. In such episodes as many as 20 Ahmadis citizens (a sect considered heretical by Muslims, ed) were killed because of their religious identity, while in Karachi, six churches were attacked in 2012.
One chapter is dedicated to the question of the reform of the blasphemy law, implored by many, but "was left intact." There has been a worrying "political paralysis": legislative measures planned to improve the lives of minorities - says the text - have been set aside. In 2012, 23 charges of blasphemy were registered against Muslims, 8 against Christians and 5 against the Ahmadis. The Report of the HRCP calls for the abolition of the blasphemy law and recommends that the cases fall under the authority of the High Court, not the courts of first instance, sensitive to pressure from extremist groups. In addition, it is observed, many defense lawyers seem reluctant to take charge in these cases for fear of retaliation.
The Report also places its attention on the situation of the Province of Baluchistan, which remains unstable, stating that between 2008-2012 758 members of the Shiite community were killed, and in 2012 alone, 100 Shia Hazaras.
Ethnic and sectarian violence spread to Karachi in 2012 - notes the text - where 2,284 people died in ethnic, religious clashes or politically motivated and 356 political activists were killed. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 25/07/2013)

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