



AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICA - The mission of the African Union to contribute to the stabilization of Central Africa begins today.

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) - The African mission in support of the Central African Republic, which should count, once fully operational, about 3,500 men is expected to begin today, August 1. The mission has the task of helping to restore security in the Country where, according to the Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), the rebels of the coalition Seleka have committed at least 400 homicide in 4 months and continue perpetrating serious crimes against civilians.

The Director of Caritas Central Africa, Fr Guedjande Elysée paid the price of the climate of insecurity on 19 July in the capital Bangui. He was wounded in the leg by gunshots fired by thugs who wanted to steal his car .

Fr. Elysée was rushed to hospital where he was operated on and where he is now recovering. According to local sources contacted by Fides Agency, one of the leaders of Seleka visited the injured priest in hospital to apologize for the incident. The Secretary General of Caritas International, Michel Roy, in condemning the violent incident, said: "It seems that the Central African Republic has been abandoned by the world. Fr. Guedjande and other Church operators are next to the people offering them the light of hope to prove that they are not alone. We pray that they may continue their mission".

The African Union has decided to grant the new institutions presided by President Michel Djotodia (one of the leaders of Seleka) a transition period of 18 months in order to organize new elections by September 2014. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 01/08/2013)