



AFRICA/D.R. CONGO - Thousands of children fleeing to Uganda

Kamango (Agenzia Fides) - Following the recent outbreak of violence on 11 July near the town of Kamango, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), between the Ugandan rebel group of the Allied Democratic Forces, ADF and the army of the DRC, more than 66,000 Congolese, 55% of them children, were forced to seek refuge in neighboring Uganda. Many of the small refugees described chaotic scenes of armed attacks which occurred in the middle of the night, causing panic and said that many members of the same family fled in different directions to avoid being killed. In the confusion, some children were separated from their parents and siblings and headed towards the border of Uganda alone, walking for about 12 hours. The humanitarian situation continues to be very serious. It is estimated that up to June 2013, 4,500 children were enrolled among the forces of armed groups, including about 2,000 in the province of North Kivu. The Uganda Red Cross has recorded at least 37,037 young refugees, of whom 122 minors who are completely alone. So far, about 63 of them have been reunited with a family member. There are also serious problems for the access of humanitarian aid. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 05/08/2013)