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AFRICA/CONGO DR - North Kivu: "the Church replaces the State in failure", says the President of Secours Catholique

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - A million refugees distributed in thirty tents are welcomed in Goma, the capital of North Kivu (eastern Democratic Republic of Congo), where fighting between the Congolese army and various rebel groups (including the M23) have disrupted the lives of the people of the area.
In an interview, François Soulage, President of Secours Catholique (Caritas France) reports the situation after a recent visit to Goma. The refugees welcomed in tents "are forced to cut down trees to get wood to keep them warm. They do not have any resources and depend on the World Food Programme (WFP), with which Caritas Goma collaborates to distribute food".
North Kivu is nevertheless a region rich in agricultural resources, which could easily feed its population, but because of the depredations committed by the rebels, the farmers do not have the necessary means to farm while cattle have been stolen or destroyed.
The countrysides are depopulated and towns and villages are crowded and the rural communities on the run.
To cope with this situation Caritas Goma in collaboration with Secours Catholique has created small local aqueducts, but has especially constituted "living ecclesial communities". We are talking about thirty families with a responsible Caritas that collects a part of the collections to support the needy in the community.
"It is certain that at present, the Church replaces a State in failure", said the President of Secours Catholique.
(L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 06/08/2013)

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