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AFRICA/CONGO DR - Kinshasa accuses: "Goma hit by the Rwandese territory"

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - The tension between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda increases after the Congolese government accused Kigali of having hit Goma, capital of North Kivu (in the north-east of the DRC), with artillery coming directly from the Rwandese territory. The government spokesman in Kinshasa, Lambert Mende, described "the action of Rwanda against the civilian population as war crimes and crimes against humanity".
The incident dates back to August 22, causing 4 deaths and 12 wounded, according to the official toll.
In North Kivu, the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) launched an offensive against the various guerrilla groups operating there, the main of which is the M23, which Kinshasa claims to be sponsored by Rwanda.
The Congolese offensive is backed by the special brigade of UN intervention and the Blue Helmets of MONUSCO (the UN Mission in the DRC). After the explosion of shells, the population of Goma took to the street in the city to claim the protection of the Blue Helmets. The protest degenerated into an assault against the headquarters of MONUSCO, and two protesters were killed. An investigation to determine if the demonstrators were hit by the military of the Uruguayan contingent of the UN or the Congolese police has been opened.
"This last episode is a further indication of the exasperation of the population of North Kivu" say local sources to Fides. The desperation of the local population was reported by a delegation of civil society in North Kivu who met representatives of the U.S. Congress and the White House in Washington.
"Looking at the failure on behalf of Rwanda and Uganda regarding the application of the Framework Agreement in Addis Ababa and the liabilities of the Intervention Brigade of the UN to act against the negative forces in North Kivu, civil society warns the U.S. that the exhausted population will soon take things into its hands", said a statement sent to Fides.
The crisis in North Kivu risks involving other States after the government of Kinshasa signed a tripartite agreement with Angola and South Africa, for the "stabilization of the Great Lakes Region". On the basis of agrements, Luanda and Pretoria are committed to providing assistance to the Congolese armed forces and police.
(L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 26/08/2013)

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