



AFRICA/CONGO DR - Deceptions of war on the border between Congo and Rwanda

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) – To create a "plausible" pretext to the Rwandese army in order to officially enter the Congolese territory. This seems to be the purpose of the artillery shots fired on and around Gisenyi, a Rwandese city in the immediate vicinity of the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (see Fides 31/08/2013). Gisenyi is situated on the border with North Kivu where the Congolese army backed by the Blue Helmets of MONUSCO (United Nations Mission in the DRC) is trying to put an end to the actions of the M23, the rebel movement backed by Rwanda.

According to a note sent to Fides by the Peace Network for Congo, "Rwanda immediately accused the Congolese Army of being behind the fall of such howitzers on its territory, threatening to be ready to intervene for the safety of its population and its territory. A version decidedly denied by the military authorities and Congolese government, according to which it was the M23 that launched howitzers on the Rwandese territory". "This second version - emphasizes the note – was accredited by a report of the under- Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, presented to the Security Council during a closed-door meeting, on August 29, on the current situation in the DRC". In this report, Edmond Mulet said that MONUSCO was able to ascertain "the artillery fire of the M23 launched towards Rwanda" and that he has never seen the Congolese government forces (FARDC) shoot on Rwanda. "The artillery fire came from areas where FARDC were not present", he said adding that, "according to the surveys carried out, the howitzers launched against Rwanda came from positions occupied by the M23".

"Such operation would serve not only to cover or to formalize the current military presence in Rwanda at the side of the M23, with the "official" arrival of new Rwandese troops, but also to provoke a war at an "international" level between the Congolese and Rwandese army, in order to put MONUSCO in an entirely new situation which would distort its mandate", the statement said.

"The ultimate goal of this strategy would be to block all types of operations on behalf of the intervention brigade of MONUSCO at the side of FARDC and to obtain, probably, not only its withdrawal, but also that of the entire UN contingent from the DRC. At this point, Rwanda would have all the doors open on North Kivu and not only" concludes the statement concludes. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 05/09/2013)