



## **AFRICA/CONGO DR - Still looting and violence against civilians on behalf of the M23 despite peace talks**

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - Despite peace talks being held in Kampala (Uganda) between the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the rebels of the M23, the latter continue to plunder and harass civilians in North Kivu (east of the Country).

According to a note sent to Fides Agency by the coordination of civil society in North Kivu, in the night between 9 and 10 September, elements of the M23 looted houses in the villages of Kingame, Kitambi, Kashawa and Bunyangula, in central Rutshuru, stealing food, goats, chicken, money and valuables. "To take away the spoils, the guerrillas used a truck they had stolen last November during the occupation of Goma" says the release. Due to intimidation and threats of the M23 "the people live in psychosis" denounces the coordination of local civil society.

The press release also states that the M23 takes advantage of the talks in Kampala to strengthen and prepare new offensives against the regular army. "Taking advantage of the respite afforded by the ICGLR (International Conference of the Great Lakes Region under whose aegis negotiations take place in Kampala, ed.) Rebel movement is growing stronger militarily with the help of the Ugandan and Rwandese army".

To coordinate the upcoming offensives, denounces the coordination of civil society, members of the M23 met recently with Rwandan officers. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 11/09/2013)