agenzia fides
Fondata nel 1927
Organo di informazione delle Pontificie Opere Missionarie
http://www.fides.org

ASIA/PHILIPPINES - A missionary: "Dangerous escalation in Zamboanga: the government has not explored all possible diplomatic channels"

Zamboanga (Agenzia Fides) - The ongoing conflict in Zamboanga between government troops and rebels of the "Moro National Liberation Front" (MNLF), which, in ten days has caused, according to latest figures sent to Fides, about 100 deaths and 100 thousand displaced people, "the government has not explored all possible diplomatic channels before the military option": This is what Fr. Angel Calvo, a Claretian missionary for 40 years in Mindanao (southern Philippines) says to Fides Agency, engaged in Zamboanga in the "Interreligious Solidarity Movement for Peace", which promotes education and work for the peaceful coexistence of Christian and Muslim communities in South Philippines

"We are facing a very dangerous escalation; an immediate cease-fire is necessary and it is equally important to resume the path of dialogue with conscience", says Fr. Calvo, expressing the "disappointment and frustration of many missionaries and organizations of civil society who have been working to build a harmonious and peaceful social fabric, and who see their efforts go up in smoke". "The conflict will always leave open wounds, victims and deaths leave scars that only time will heal", he remarked.

"All the path of peace and demolition of mutual prejudices, built over many years, have been compromised.
I fear that relations between Christians and Muslims will be affected by this protracted conflict", he explains.

"Violence is never the right solution. The decision of a military attack was taken in a hasty manner. The government did not explore all possible avenues for a negotiable solution. Many NGOs offered their skills and knowledge to negotiate with the rebels, but we were not in any way considered", said Fr. Calvo.

On the reasons for the explosion of violence on behalf of the MNLF, Fr. Calvo notes: "The MNLF felt marginalized compared to the agreement signed by the government with another armed group, the 'Moro Islamic Liberation Front' (MILF). So it resumed guerrilla warfare, proclaiming an 'independent Islamic state' in the southern Philippines, which is unacceptable. But the return to legitimate demands for autonomy and not independence, can be reached with dialogue, not with force".

Meanwhile, the appeals for a "humanitarian cease-fire" continue in Zamboanga. In a note sent to Fides the forum "Mindanao Peace Weavers" (MPW), which includes more than 50 civil society organizations, many Christians, call for the release of the hostages and the opening of a humanitarian corridor to allow the rescue of civilians, reaffirming a plea for the end of violence and a peaceful solution. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 17/09/2013)

I contenuti del sito sono pubblicati sotto Licenza Creative Common - http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/deed.it