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# ASIA/PAKISTAN - Archbishop Coutts : "The government has to seriously address the issue of sectarian violence "

Karachi (Agenzia Fides) - "The government has to seriously address the growing religious and sectarian violence that has reached alarming proportions, as evidenced by the incident in the Church of Peshawar": says, in a note sent to Fides Mgr. Joseph Coutts, Archbishop of Karachi and President of the Episcopal Conference of Pakistan. Mgr. Joseph Coutts says: "Killing innocent people in a moment of prayer is a shameful act of cowardice. We ask the government to take immediate steps to arrest those responsible for this attack and to protect places of worship of all religious minorities in the country". With regards to the possible dialogue with the Taliban, the Archbishop says: "On this point, as a good citizen, we will stick to what the government decides, with the aim of maintaining peace in the country.
As fides learns, in Karachi, a city in the province of Sindh (Southern Pakistan), there is a very tense social situation. In past days, after widespread protests on behalf of Christians, riots broke out in front of a mosque and a Muslim man was killed. In a joint meeting held yesterday at the Trinity Church in Karachi, Mgr. Joseph Coutts, and the Anglican Bishop Sadiq Daniel, express their saddness "for one of the most serious and fatal attacks in the history of the Pakistani church", they invited the faithful "to keep calm and not to give in to the temptation of violent reactions".
"The Christian community in Pakistan - remarked Bishop Sadiq Daniel - is a peaceful community that offers an excellent contribution in the field of education and health, for the development of Pakistan". The Bishop, recalling that the Taliban are a threat to the entire nation, not only for Christians, expressed his gratitude for the solidarity on behalf of religious leaders of other communities, such as Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, as well as the leaders of political parties: "Jamat Islami", "Pakistan Peoples Party" and "Muthaida Quami Movement". (AG- PA) (Agenzia Fides 25/09/2013)

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