



AFRICA/CONGO DR - Suspension of talks in Kampala: the Congolese government denounces the tactic "talk and fight" of the M23

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - The government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo rejects the responsibility for the suspension of peace talks in Kampala (Uganda) on the M23 guerrilla movement. On October 21, Lambert Mende, spokesman for the government in Kinshasa, announced the suspension of the talks in progress in the Ugandan capital between the Congolese authorities and the guerrillas.

Mende accused the counterpart of using negotiations only to gain time, according to the tactic "talk and fight". The Congolese spokesman denounced in particular the strengthening of the M23 military rebels through the transfer of weapons and men (including child soldiers) from the nearby Rwanda in North Kivu (eastern DRC). The government of Kinshasa has also expressed concern about the transfer to Rutshuru from Rwanda of more than 2,000 people with the unbeknown of the government of the DRC and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "According to trustworthy sources, among these people, Rwandan citizens expelled recently from Tanzania and Rwandan armed officers who lead them have been identified in North Kivu. A good number of these false return of Congolese refugees have begun to undergo hasty military training while the less skilled people (women, children and the elderly) are meant to serve as a human shield for the M23 in the context of the planned offensive", said Mende.

Meanwhile, the UN announced that the deployment in North Kivu of the Action Brigade of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has been completed, which should help to ensure the safety of the area and the disarmament of the various guerrilla formations who work there. (LM.) (Agenzia Fides 23/10/2013)