



AFRICA/DR CONGO - The M23 surrenders but first bombards civilians, accuse local sources

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - On November 4, dozens of civilians were killed in the territory of Rutshuru in North Kivu (eastern Democratic Republic of Congo) due to artillery bombardments of the M23, despite the fact that the day before the rebel group had declared a unilateral ceasefire. This was referred in a note sent to Fides Agency by the Provincial Coordination of Civil Society of North Kivu .

"Until 11.30 pm local time on November 4", - reads the note - our facility received warnings from the population regarding several shells shot on numerous locations, especially on Bunagana and Chengero. If the provisional toll was 12 victims and twenty wounded, with bombs dropped during the night, the toll will be higher". According to the note "seen the use of the M23 of long-range weapons", it is likely that also some Ugandan areas of the Kisoro district were affected, close to Bunagana ,

"Several homes were damaged by shots fired by the M23 against civilians. It is a pure war crime".

The M23 announced on November 5 to "put an end to the rebellion" and will continue its struggle through peaceful means. The advance of the Congolese army, backed by the Blue Helmets of MONUSCO, has inflicted heavy losses to the armed group, as reported by a further note sent to Fides stating that at least 5 officers of the M23 were killed in Mbuzi alone. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 05/11/2013)