



## **AFRICA/ANGOLA - "Abortion is a threat to the very existence of the nation", the Bishops said**

Luanda (Agenzia Fides) - Abortion not only goes against the law of God, but also against the Angolan cultural identity and is therefore a threat to the very existence of the nation. This is what the Angolan Bishops said in the pastoral message issued at the end of the Plenary Assembly of the CEAST (Episcopal Conference of Angola and Sao Tomé).

Remembering that life is sacred "from conception" because "we are faced with an independent life with one own's DNA", the message stresses that "no human being can claim the right to suppress it under any pretext. Thus, parents, friends, educators and health care operators should not recommend or facilitate abortion. Rather, they should encourage the acceptance of a new life, regardless of the circumstances in which it was conceived".

The Bishops also argue that from the the Angolan culture point of view "abortion is a disregard for the fundamental values of Angolan society. For any Angolan, regardless of religion, with or without the knowledge of the Gospel, life is always sacred. Therefore, any threat against life, radically destabilizes our society".

"For this reason - the Bishops continue – we believe that the possible decriminalization of abortion would be a real attack on national security and to our survival as a people. In fact, as experts of population policy say, "procreation determines the future of nations".

"We remind everyone that Angola has been a Christian country for centuries. Therefore, it is expected that Parliament elected by a large majority of Christians and mainly composed of believers, fulfill the duty to respect the wishes of their voters", the message concludes.

In the final communiqué of CEAST, the Bishops express their solidarity to the Bishop of Viana and all Christians of Angola for the desecration of the sanctuary of Muxima (see Fides 28/10/2013). It also recalls the drama of the population in the south who are suffering food emergency, while a multidisciplinary study (with the involvement of anthropologists , psychologists, sociologists and theologians) is being announced to determine the basis of the cultural phenomenon of children accused of witchcraft, especially prevalent in the north of the country. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 07/11/2013)