



## **ASIA/LEBANON - Suicide bombing in Beirut. Father Karam: sectarian violence is plaguing the Middle East**

Beirut (Agenzia Fides) - More than 20 people were killed in the suicide bombing this morning in the south of Beirut, not far from the Iranian Embassy. The dead - refer Lebanese agencies - are 23 and nearly 150 wounded. According to preliminary reports provided by Lebanese security sources, a suicide bomber on a motorcycle carried out a first attack, immediately followed by a car bomb.

The Iranian Embassy in Beirut, in a statement, denied it was the target of the attack. But among the victims there is also the cultural attaché of the embassy, Ibrahim Arsari. In the same area, a stronghold of the Shiite Hezbollah movement, Sunni jihadists had already carried out in recent months attacks against Shia targets. While the Hezbollah militias continue to operate in Syria in support of the military government in military operations against rebel forces.

"Unfortunately", says to Fides Fr. Paul Karam, Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Lebanon – today's bombing is not an isolated incident. Sectarian violence serves a purpose, and wants to set fire in order to destabilize the entire Middle East. For their delirious plots they do not have any qualms about killing children who go to school, or adults who go to work or return home. As Christians we share the pain of our people, and we keep saying that in no way similar acts of terror can seek justification with religious reasons". (GV) (Agenzia Fides 19/11/2013)