



## **AFRICA/CONGO DR - "President, reinforce the presence of the State" is what civil society in North Kivu asks Kabila**

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - The announced visit of the President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Joseph Kabila in North Kivu was welcomed by local civil society with a statement sent to Fides Agency. "The visit which takes place after the defeat of the M23 (the main rebel movement in the region) was expected by the people in the aftermath of the liberation of the Territories of Nyiragongo and Rutshuru by FARDC (Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo)" emphasizes the statement in which civil society asks the Congolese President to bring peace to the region.

First of all the disarmament of other armed groups operating in eastern DRC. Some of these, according to reports from the local press, have begun to lay down their arms (especially in South Kivu), but others still threaten the population.

It also asks to consolidate the State's authority in the Province, to initiate programs for the reintegration of displaced persons and refugees and to rebuild infrastructures (bridges, roads, public buildings) destroyed or damaged by 20 years of war and left all this time without maintenance.

Particularly sensitive is the issue regarding women and girls who are victims of war rapes, a heinous crime which even the soldiers of FARDC are not alien.

The statement in fact concludes saying that "in the context of the fight against impunity and to strengthen military discipline, it is important that the Head of State does not ignore the trial of the military accused of sexual violence and other crimes against civilians along the Minova ace in November 2012". (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 22/11/2013)