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AFRICA/MOZAMBIQUE - Southern African Bishops' Appeal for Peace in Mozambique

Maputo (Agenzia Fides) - Cautious opening of the Mozambican government 's with regads to the request of RENAMO (Mozambique National Resistance) to involve domestic observers in the dialogue to resolve the crisis that saw the national army attack the headquarters of the former guerrilla movement in the forests of Sadjunjira in the central province of Sofala, on October 21 . The leader of RENAMO, Afonso Dhlakama, managed to escape and hide in an unspecified place .

Since then, in attacks committed by men of RENAMO to government institutions and along the roads, dozens of people have lost their lives.

José Pacheco, Minister of Agriculture and head of the government commission for dialogue with the main opposition party, said that the government is ready to recognize the participation in discussions with RENAMO of Lourenco do Rosario, Rector of the private "A Polytechnic" University, and Mgr. Dinis Sengulane, Anglican Bishop of Lebombo, but rejected the idea of involving foreign mediators, saying that "we Mozambicans can solve internal affairs".

Meanwhile in the administrative elections boycotted by RENAMO, the ruling party, FRELIMO, was re-elected at the head of the administration of the capital Maputo.

The Mozambican crisis was recalled by IMBISA Assembly (Interregional Association of Bishops of Southern Africa), the body that brings together the Bishops of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, which was held in mid-November in Gaborone (Botswana). "We follow with concern, says the message of IMBISA, what is happening in Mozambique in recent times. It seems that the weapons are being replaced, bringing suffering and death, to dialogue and cooperation of all for the consolidation of peace".

Referring to the peace agreements of 1992, which put an end to a war which lasted 17 years, the message said that "Mozambique and its leaders are taken as an example of how to end a long war through dialogue".

"Mozambique plays a very important role in our region. Its progress and stability are vital for our Countries to consolidate their development. We therefore call on our governments to join their voices to that of the people of Mozambique to demand the cessation of all acts of violence and the use of weapons and to encourage all efforts of dialogue", the document concludes. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 27/11/2013)

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