



## **AFRICA/ZIMBABWE - "Political divisions increase while conditions of life worsen", denounce the Bishops**

Harare (Agenzia Fides) - "The political fault lines and their impact on all aspects of the lives of Zimbabweans are set not only to deepen, but also to stand in the way of progress and ultimately in the way of peace" the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference said in a December 03 pastoral letter.

"We note with apprehension that ... there are no visible prospects for improvement in the spheres of life in Zimbabwe", denounces the document, reported by CISA Agency in Nairobi.

The Bishops recall "daily water and power cuts, shortage of medicines, equipment and professional personnel in our hospitals, chaos and carnage on our roads, raw sewage flowing in the streets of our towns and cities".

The pastoral letter also stresses that it is necessary to "restore Zimbabwe's historical status as the breadbasket of the southern Africa region with guaranteed food security for her people" while "our industrial sites carry the appearance of ghost towns because the once-vibrant manufacturing sector is now largely moribund".

The July elections in which 89-year-old President Robert Mugabe was re-elected "have left Zimbabweans more polarized than they were before and during the unity government formed after disputed 2008 elections", the bishops said.

Although the unity government drew criticism, "it would be hard to deny that some visible progress was made to improve the lot of our people, particularly the lot of the poor in our society (...). What made this improvement possible was the fact that Zimbabweans, including the political parties, worked together for the common good", said the pastoral letter.

"Zimbabwe is blessed with abundant natural resources and resilient, God-fearing and highly skilled people," they said, noting that this abundance "gives us encouragement and hope that Zimbabweans can transform this unsatisfactory situation and in its place create a better life for all Zimbabweans" conclude the Bishops. (L.M.)  
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