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AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICA - Christian and Muslim religious leaders try to break the cycle of sectarian violence

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) – The situation in the Central African Republic remains extremely precarious, despite the intervention of French troops and African Union, particularly in the capital, Bangui.
The French Defence Minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, who is on a visit to the military engaged in the "Sangaris" operation said that the Country risks sinking into anarchy.
In Bangui, which has one million inhabitants, 110,000 are displaced, while acts of aggression and revenge for religious reasons multuply. The Seleka rebels, who overthrew former President François Bozizé in March, and are mostly Muslims, were responsible for many acts of violence against the population, especially against Christians. The self-defense groups, the so-called "anti-Balaka", formed mainly by Christians, in turn commit reprisals not only against Seleka but also against Muslim civilians, considered to be close to the rebels.
To try to break the cycle of hatred, Christian and Muslim religious leaders have taken a number of initiatives. On December 11, a meeting of reconciliation between the Muslim and Christian communities in the presence of a hundred people was held in the PK13 area of Bangui. On the same day, Christian and Muslim religious leaders carried out another symbolic gesture: the distribution of food to 10,000 internally displaced people in the capital.
(L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 13/12/2013)

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