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AFRICA/SOUTH SUDAN - Cardinal Wako launches an appeal for peace in South Sudan

Juba (Agenzia Fides) - Cardinal Gabriel Zubeir Wako, Archbishop of Khartoum, has launched an appeal to political leaders in South Sudan so that they go beyond their personal interest and solve the crisis the Country is experiencing.
Cardinal Wako is in Juba, capital of South Sudan, to attend the meeting of the Episcopal Conference of Bishops of Sudan and South Sudan, and has urged the South Sudanese to realize that we are all sons of God, and must not kill. The clash between the two strong men of the ruling party (SPLM, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement), President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar, has assumed an ethnic dimension involving the two major tribes in the Country: Dinka and Nuer.
Meanwhile, despite negotiations taking place in Ethiopia between representatives of the two contenders, the war continues. Fighting is concentrated in Malakal, capital of the Upper Nile State (north-east). On January 18, the army had regained control of Bor, the capital of Jonglei State (East). It is precisely the States where oil resources are concentrated in the Country to be at the center of the fighting that broke out on December 15. The other State involved is in fact Unità whose capital is Bentiu.
The fear is that if fighting does not stop soon, South Sudan will sink into an even more bloody and destructive civil war, involving other armed and ethnic groups in the conflict. The conflict has already taken on an international dimension: Ugandan troops have intervened on Kiir’s side while even Kenya has also sent its troops ostensibly to protect their citizens who live and work in the Country. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 20/01/2014)

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