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AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICA - The new President launches an appeal to lay down arms

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) - "The situation is gradually improving. The election of the new President has brought a bit of hope in the population", say to Fides sources of the local church in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic, where yesterday, 20 January, the National Transitional Council (CNT, the transitional parliament) elected Mrs. Catherine Samba-Panza, mayor of the city as Head of State.
The new President has launched an appeal to members of the anti-Balaka militia and coalition of former Seleka rebels (both referred to as "my children") so that they "give a strong signal by laying down arms". "As of today I am the President of all Central Africans without exception".
President Samba-Panza added that her priority is to put an end to the suffering of the people and to restore security and State authority throughout the country".
Fides sources point out that in Bangui, "the majority of the displaced remain in makeshift shelters at the airport and in the various Catholic missions.
It is hoped that with the gradual improvement of the security situation, the displaced will be invited to return to their home. This in turn will have a positive impact on public policy because most of the looting and murders occur at night, the different gangs are taking advantage of the fact that neighborhoods are practically deprived of their inhabitants". (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 21/01/2014)

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