



## **AFRICA/SOUTH SUDAN - Agreement reached on a ceasefire between government and rebels**

Juba (Agenzia Fides) - Thanks to international pressure an agreement for a cease-fire between the two rival factions of the SPLM (Sudan People's Liberation Movement) that have been fighting in South Sudan since December 15 has been reached.

The agreement was signed yesterday evening, January 23, in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, by representatives of President Salva Kiir and those of former Vice President Riek Machar and will enter into force within the next 24 hours. The agreement was reached when the government in Juba agreed to release 11 people linked to Machar, arrested shortly after the outbreak of the fighting.

The cease-fire is only a first step to restore peace. There will be new negotiations to reach a political agreement between the two parties. Many have also emphasized that it will take an intense effort to reconcile the minds of the population, because the political battle has now taken a tribal and ethnic connotation, between the Nuer and the Dinka.

Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation in South Sudan remains serious. In the capital, Juba, fuel is scarce, while we hear news of mass killings and sexual violence against civilians in the area directly affected by the fighting.

(L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 24/01/2014)