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AFRICA/EGYPT - Patriarch Tawadros II pays visit to General al-Sisi

Cairo (Agenzia Fides) - On Sunday 26 January, the Patriarch of Alexandria Tawadros II paid visit to General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, Deputy Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces. During the visit Pope Tawadros expressed his congratulations to the Egyptian Armed Forces on the occasion of the third anniversary since the beginning of the revolution which in February 2011 led to the fall of the regime of Hosni Mubarak. The large delegation that accompanied the Patriarch included 6 other Coptic Orthodox Bishops. Pope Tawadros - the statement said - expressed gratitude "for the price that the Armed Forces are called upon to support them in their fight against terrorism and for the maintenance of security in the Country". Even General al-Sisi in turn expressed appreciation for the Coptic Church and its contribution to the unity of the Country, against any attempt to sow discord among the Egyptians.
The meeting assumes a singular symbolic value if one takes into account the new phase of violence that is shaking the Country: terrorist attacks and deaths in squares during clashes between protesters and security forces. Last weekend, between Friday and Sunday, more than eighty people died across the Country, concentrated largely in the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood.
Despite the violent repression, the army continues to want to be credited as a guarantor of the process that should lead to the roots of the democratic system in the big African Country. The date of the next presidential election is expected to be announced soon, and General al-Sisi is hailed in the streets by his many supporters as a future head of State able to restore stability and security in the Country. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 27/01/2014)

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