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# AFRICA/DR CONGO - More than 500,000 displaced people from 66 villages destroyed by the rebels in Katanga

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - There are more than 500,000 people forced to flee from their villages because of the violence carried out by the Bakata Katanga militia in the province of Katanga, in the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo.
This was reported by Radio Okapi, according to which 66 villages have been burned in the past 5 months in the triangle formed by the territories of Mitwaba, Manono, Pweto, as well as in the territory of MalembaNkulu.
The militia in this way tend to punish the local population accused of supporting the army in clashes last November.
According to the coordinator of the NGO MEEDAF the Bakata Katanga burn entire villages, including schools, health centers and churches, sometimes without plundering anything and without killing anyone.
The Bakata Katanga seem to advocate secessionist ideas.
The province of Katanga was the protagonist of the most serious secessionist attempt in the history of Congo in the aftermath of the independence of the Country from Belgium (30 June 1960). After three years of war conducted with the support of UN peacekeepers, the central government had managed to restore order in the province, one of the richest of the DRC, thanks to the presence of important mines of copper and cobalt. (L.M.)
(Agenzia Fides 30/01/2014)

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