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AFRICA/CONGO DR - "Unspeakable violence in Katanga" denounce the Bishops of the Province

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - "Let us say it loud and clear that our populations are not cannon fodder" say the Bishops of Katanga (in the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo) who denounce the serious situation of their province because of the violence of the "Bakata - Katanga" armed group.
The Pastoral Letter, published at the conclusion of the Episcopal Assembly of Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Lubumbashi, highlights that "after the escape of the warlord, Kyungu Mutanda called 'Gedeon', from the prison in Kasapa, Lubumbashi in September 2011, different areas of the Katanga province have returned to a cycle of insecurity and violence that sows death among peaceful citizens and pushes thousands of others to flee.
The Bishops remind us that "there exists democratic means to express ones frustrations and aspirations".
"The Pastoral Letter describes how the young are "continually subjected to magical practices" to the point that they "ransack, rape, kill, torture and burn".
The consequences on the population are heavy: thousands of refugees, deprived of humanitarian assistance, with high mortality rates".
The natural riches of Katanga are in fact the stakes of this tragedy, which also causes serious environmental damage: water pollution, high levels of radioactivity.
"The dramatic situation in Katanga has multiple causes: weakness of State authority, poor distribution of wealth, economic imbalance between urban and rural, frustration, impunity ... " conclude the Bishops, hoping that "those responsible at all levels are working to find effective solutions". (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 21/02/2014)

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