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ASIA/SYRIA - Bishop Audo: war devastates the hearts; and the work of Caritas opens new fronts

Aleppo (Agenzia Fides) - The ongoing conflict is killing the Syrian people also at a psychological level, and this pushes Caritas to take charge of new emergencies, such as those of the block of work activities and psycho- social assistance. This was reported to Fides Agency by the Chaldean Bishop of Aleppo, Antoine Audo, President of Caritas Syria, giving an account of the week of formation for Caritas Syrians which was held in Lebanon in Harissa, in the first decade of March.
"For the first time", explains the Chaldean Bishop "Caritas workers operating in six regions in which we divided Syria gathered all together. They were about a hundred. They realized the critical situation the Country is experiencing and what they are called to deal with especially in terms of human aid".
"In addition to food parcels, health care and relief to the poor", says Bishop Audo "we have identified two new fields of action: psycho-social assistance and the help to engage young Syrians in micro-work projects, especially in villages and in the countryside".
The intent is to help above all children, women and young people to resist the tragedy in which they have been living for three years. We risk having entire generations of children and young people devastated by the experience they lived. For this reason we have decided to take this new direction linked to work and psycho-social assistance. But this also requires time and training. Our operators had never immagined of having to cope with a humanitarian commitment of this magnitude".
Caritas Syria is counting on the Caritas of other Countries (Italy, USA, Germany, France). Representatives and operators of other national Caritas will be involved in a working group to support Caritas Syria in the new fields of action. Meanwhile, the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Syria - which took place in Beirut on March 12 - has established that the donations collected in churches across the Country on the first Sunday in June will be donated to Caritas. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 17/03/2014)

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