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AFRICA/BURUNDI - Parliament rejects the Constitutional Revision

Bujumbura (Agenzia Fides) - The National Assembly of Burundi has rejected the constitutional amendment that would have allowed President Pierre Nkurunziza to run for re-election in 2015 for a third term (see Fides 18/03/2014) . "84 votes were in favor, zero no's and zero abstentions. The Constitution of Burundi establishes a four-fifths majority of the National Assembly for the adoption of the Constitutional Revision, that is to say 85 votes. The draft constitutional amendment has therefore been rejected" announced the President of the Chamber, Pie Ntavyohanyuma at the end of a vote by show of hands, on March 21.
"The Uprona party, the former chief ally of the President's party (CNDD-FDD), did not vote in favor of the constitutional amendment", refer local Church sources to Fides Agency. "Now they are discussing whether to hold a referendum to change the rule which sets a limit of only two presidential terms. Several constitutional law experts say, however, that the revision of the Constitution is possible either with a vote in Parliament or with a referendum.
"The situation is very delicate because one does not know how the situation will evolve. In addition, there are tensions related to the allegations of university students for the abolition of scholarships.
The State University has been closed. Most students need a scholarship to complete their studies. So far, only 150 out of 15,000 university students have enrolled" say our sources. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 25/03/2014)

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