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ASIA/SYRIA - Missile on an Armenian church in Aleppo during Mass

Aleppo (Agenzia Fides) - The Armenian Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity in Aleppo was hit by a missle while the faithful were attending mass. The attack damaged the dome and broke the windows, but caused no injuries. This was confirmed to Fides Agency by the Armenian Catholic priest Joseph Bazuzu, pastor of the church.
"On Monday afternoon", says Father Joseph, "a number of missiles fell on the neighborhood of al-Meydan. One hit and damaged the dome of our church during the Eucharistic liturgy. Thank God no one was hurt. After so many years of violence, fear has become a sentiment that accompanies each day. People live with fear".
The missiles devastated some houses in the area surrounding the church, inhabited mostly by Armenians. "Before the start of the conflict" refers to Fides Fr Joseph, "the Armenian Catholic families of Aleppo were about 250. But the liturgy in the Armenian language was also attended by the Armenian Orthodox, for a total of eight hundred families. Now at least three hundred of them have had to leave their homes".
At dawn on Friday 21 March, the city of Kessab on the border with Turkey, was occupied by anti- Assad militias during the offensive launched by them to reach the coastal city of Latakia. Hundreds of Armenian families were forced to flee. According to Armenian sources, the three churches of Kessab were desecrated by Islamist militants of al-Nusra Front.
Meanwhile, in Armenia, the projects of the "New Aleppo", the residential area intended for Armenian refugees from Syria are about to be completed. In the initial phase, the residential complex should accommodate at least 500 families. According to data provided by the Armenian Ministry for the diaspora, about 11 thousand Armenian Syrian refugees have found refuge in Armenia. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 28/03/2014)

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