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AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICA - "The only institution that still functions is the Catholic Church" says the Archbishop of Douala on a visit in Bangui

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) - "The State no longer exists. The only institution that is functioning is the Catholic Church. Actually, the displaced are living in Catholic parishes", said His Exc. Mgr. Samuel Kleda, Archbishop of Douala and President of the Episcopal Conference of Cameroon, in an interview with "L'Effort Camerounais" (the official organ of the Bishops of Cameroon) on his visit in the Central African Republic. The Country, unfortunately is still in chaos after the expulsion of the Seleka rebels and violence committed by anti Balaka militia.

With his visit to Bangui, Mgr. Kleda wanted to "show our solidarity with our brotherly people of the Central African Republic, and to express our friendship and communion to them, and to let them know that we are praying for them so that they should not feel abandoned at this difficult moment. I therefore took along the fruits of these collections to the Central African Republic to permit the Christians and pastors of that Church to meet the needs of the displaced".

The Archbishop of Douala met with Mgr. Dieudonné Nzapalainga, Archbishop of Bangui and President of the Central African Episcopal Conference, to whom he expressed the solidarity of the Church in Cameroon.

According to Mgr. Kleda "it is very dangerous to speak of sectarian war in Central Africa". In fact, the Country is not facing a religious war (there are, for example, cases of forced conversions, from one religion to another), but a war of predation, carried out first by the Seleka rebels and now by the anti-militia Balaka ("I do not think they are devout Christians, since they wear amulets to protect themselves from bullets", said Mgr. Kleda). "To simply say it is a block of Christians against a block of Muslims is very dangerous and this can contribute to the Country being divided and even create problems in the sub region", concluded the Archbishop. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 08/04/2014)

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