



## **AFRICA/CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC - Sixteen unarmed civilians, including three local health workers for Doctors Without Borders, killed at Boguila Hospital**

Boguila (Agenzia Fides) - On April 26, dozens of heavily armed Muslim rebels opened fire in a hospital in Central African Republic, killing at least 16 people, including three local health workers for Doctors Without Borders. The statement sent to Fides Agency adds new details about the tragic event, commenting on the numerous incidents of violence in the Country.

"We are extremely shocked and saddened by the brutal violence used against our health workers team and against the community. This scary incident has forced us to withdraw staff and suspend activities in Boguila" said the Head of Mission for DWB in the Central African Republic. According to the statement sent to Fides, the attacks occurred when armed members of ex-Seleka, surrounded Boguila Hospital, where a meeting with 40 community leaders invited by DWB was taking place to discuss the population's access to medical care. While some of the gunmen robbed the DWB office at gunpoint and fired shots into the air, other armed men approached the meeting place where DWB staff and community members had gathered together. Unprovoked, the armed men started firing heavily into the crowd, leaving both dead and critically wounded. DWB is the only group working in much of the impoverished country and has kept up its efforts despite the fighting.

Since the coup in March 2013, Boguila has been unstable, tensions and violence continue which in August 2013 caused a massive displacement of the population in the area. In December 2013, the Muslims escaped from the violence in the neighboring village of Nana Bakassa, seeking refuge with families living in Boguila, before heading towards the north. Recently, on April 11, almost 7,000 people fled into the countryside after a convoy came under attack in the area. As many as 40 people sought refuge at the DWB clinic at the time. Since 2006, DWB has been running the hospital in Boguila with 115 beds, offering primary and specialized health care. The teams also give support to 7 health centers around Boguila. Each month between 9000 and 13 000 general visits are carried out, and from 5000 to 10 000 people are treated for malaria. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 29/04/2014)