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AFRICA/EGYPT - Sisi triumphs in presidential elections; Copt Catholic Bishop of Guizeh contests voices on low turnout

Cairo (Agenzia Fides) – Egypt's Presidential elections decreed the triumph - expected for some time - of former general Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. According to unconfirmed results issued by electoral offices, al-Sisi won 93,3% of the ballots counted, defeating leftist candidate Hamdin Sabahi. Reportedly almost 21 million Egyptians voted for al-Sisi. First comments by international observers underline the percentage of the voters : according to unofficial sources, only 46 % of the country's eligible voters cast their ballots, and the percentage of non voters was higher in some areas of Egypt than others.
Copt Catholic Archbishop of Guizeh, Bishop Antonios Aziz Mina, told Fides he rejects theories that the percentage of voters, – less than 50% - points to the weakness of the new President. "Official results have yet to be released " says Anba Antonios, "and in any case these percentages cannot be compared with the times of Mubarak, when only a few million Egyptians went to vote. In this vote the results were predictable, there was no proper competition. This is why many, older people especially, stayed away from the polling booths also because of the tremendous heat in recent days". The Bishop says the decision of the electoral Commission to add another day of voting to increase the number of participants" is useless and awkward": "both candidates" says Anba Antonios, "criticised the decision". Moreover the Bishop considers groundless rumours that in certain areas Christians were able to vote only if they went to the booths under military escort. "The security forces" says Anba Antonios, "guaranteed tranquil electoral operations to the advantage of everyone. And we thank God that all went well. Something not to be taken for granted, threats were made. There are forces which do not want this country to pull itself up on its feet. Because they know that if Egypt regains its balance, the process, in time, could spread to the whole area". (GV) (Agenzia Fides 30/5/2014).

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