

Situation Report EIPA HORN No. 80 - 09 February 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 08 February)

- Reported that UAE is evacuating its base in Assab, Eritrea, from where it engaged in the war in Tigray.
- Reported today from Agew at the border of Tigray, Ethiopia, that the Eritrean army “went in en masse”. The soldiers killed civilians today in Addi Awso near Samre.
- Reported today that fighting is ongoing near Shire in the direction of Aksum.
- Report today from Aksum that Federal Ethiopian soldiers are coming in and taking more control, while the Eritrean army is told to go into the countryside.
- Report from Wukro that there is a reduction of Ethiopian soldiers and an increase of Eritrean soldiers.
- Reported that of the 224 health facilities in Tigray, before the war, only 17 are operational at the moment. This information is based on info from the provisional administration in Tigray.
- A witness speaks of “very disturbing sadism” in an account of the war going from village to village on foot for two months. (published in: [Ethiopia insight](#))
- The witness states that “initially, the soldiers were primarily on the main roads. (..) But soon enough, no village, no matter how remote or difficult to reach would escape the wrath of the occupying forces.”
- The witness states that he saw Eritrean and Ethiopian forces engage “in the widespread killing of civilians; they would randomly shoot and loot, mainly (..) chickens, cows, and products such as honey.”
- Soldiers took anything they could find: “It was not just food that they took. They stole the clothes of farmers, their mattresses, and even cooking utensils. I also witnessed Eritrean soldiers taking jerrycans, plastic containers that people use to store water. Perhaps to deprive farmers of accessing water.”
- The witness states that “the soldiers used big trucks with Eritrea license plates to load looted goods. I saw many empty trucks with ER plates being driven towards central Tigray, and loaded trucks leaving towards Eritrea via the direction of Adwa and Axum.”
- The witness concludes that the Eritrean soldiers came prepared for looting: “They brought car mechanics with them to help them unlock cars, Sino trucks, and dozers. They took away some vehicles and burned others after taking out all the valuable items inside. I saw Eritrean soldiers doing this countless times across central Tigray.”
- According to the witness Ethiopian soldiers looked on and did not protect the civilians: “Ethiopian soldiers were idly watching the Eritrean soldiers as they did all this. Worse, some were praising them.”
- The witness reports sadism: “The soldiers would kill or ruin basic possessions such as animals, food, and other items. In Wukro, for instance, a relative of mine told me that Ethiopian soldiers put Omo detergent inside her food and her stored wheat so that they spoiled. Her case was not an exception. (..), it was typical of the occupying forces to take what they can and ruin the rest.”
- The witness reports hateful acts to civilians: “The relative told me her store was completely looted. Ethiopian soldiers stayed in her house for days, drinking. All her food was spoiled, her belongings

taken, and she is currently struggling to survive along with her children. In another village, residents told me that the soldiers would squash chicks under their feet.”

- The witness states that the invasion was “a mission of spite and destruction intended to break the people of Tigray physically and spiritually.”
- The witness states that in Aksum “Eritrean soldiers killed people by going house-to-house. A priest at Maryam TSION Church told my friend when he visited him that they buried 243 people that day alone. The bodies were ordered not to be picked up and, again, people were shot for trying to collect them.”
- Disturbing footage published of an execution of young men on 5-6 January [published by Tghat](#) in western Tigray, in an area called Debre Abay, named after the famous Debre Abay monastery.
- According to the sources: “the Ethiopian and Eritrean military first started shelling a small town, called Mai Hrmaz, from far. Houses were destroyed and children killed. When they arrived at the small town, a fight with Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) started which lasted for two days.”
- According to sources: “around 500 Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers were killed in the fight. A reinforcement was then asked and sent to the location, but the fight was already over and Tigray Defence Forces were not in the area. Then the angry reinforcement force took its revenge on the town’s civilian population by massacring 100 of them, looting shops and houses.”
- Norwegian Refugee Service (NRC) states that buildings in Tigray, for refugees, were destroyed. A school and a health clinic were damaged and burned in the Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps recently.
- Satellite images show that between 5 and 8 January 2021, NRC’s compound in the Hitsats refugee camp was burned down and that the roofs of the buildings were seriously damaged.
- Aid workers can not enter most rural areas in Tigray and the two refugee camps and surrounding areas.
- OCHA official Jens Laerke states that it was “less of a problem” to deliver food aid which is being warehoused in Mekelle. “The problem is...access both to get into Tigray in the first place and also getting from Mekelle into, into the countryside where most of the people in need are.”
- The Ethiopian officially dissolved the boards of Tigray Development Association (TDA), Tigray Veterans Association (TVA) and Relief Society of Tigray (REST) and formally decided to govern these institutions by 'a caretaker administrative board', undermining their independent status.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 08 February)

- The EU joins the United States’ call “for the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from Ethiopia, which are fuelling the conflict in Tigray, reportedly committing atrocities, and exacerbating ethnic violence.”
- Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs and EU Envoy, Mr. Haavisto, visited Um Rakuba Camp in Sudan. He met with refugees who fled the Tigray Region, heard their stories and concerns.
- The EU expresses concern over the lack of progress in humanitarian access. Central and Western Tigray remain largely out of reach and two Eritrean refugee camps remain completely inaccessible.
- The statement added that humanitarian access needs to be guaranteed and humanitarian assistance allowed in line with humanitarian principles of impartiality, humanity, neutrality and independence.
- The EU is also increasingly concerned for the protection of civilians and refugees: “Access of international media to Tigray must be authorised and local journalists must be protected.”

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 08 February)

- Lidetu Ayalew, an Ethiopian politician, said that he was warned by an Ethiopian government official that Eritrean Pres Isaias would kill him if he continued to criticize Eritrea for intervening in Ethiopia.

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Links of interest

https://twitter.com/JMjalel_H/status/1358861181843345412?s=08

<https://www.ethiopia-insight.com/2021/02/08/the-sadism-is-very-disturbing-two-months-on-the-run-in-tigray/>

<https://www.tghat.com/2021/02/08/a-graphic-footage-of-the-debre-abay-massacre-what-do-we-know-about-it/>