

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 97 - 04 March 2021

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Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 03 March)

- Ethiopia's Foreign Minister has prepared a document which lays out the strategy the Ethiopian government is following in response to the increasing international pressure from the international community. The full document can be accessed [here](#)
- Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC) has decided to pull out of the upcoming Ethiopia election. OFC was repeatedly complaining about the arrest of its top leadership members and closure of offices.
- Yesterday, OFC urged for national dialogue and consensus before holding the elections.

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 03 March)

- Gender-based violence (GBV) in Adigrat is very critical. So far, more than 170 cases were reported.
- 40 self-reported victims of GBV visited Adigrat hospital in a single day and needed referral services.
- Tigray's interim administration said the whereabouts of 1 million people in Western Tigray is unknown.
- Tigray Media House reported more than 80 young men were murdered by Amhara forces in Humera town, Western Tigray following the U.S. call for their withdrawal from the Tigray region.
- Church leaders have condemned the attacks, destruction and looting of monasteries and churches in Tigray by UAE drones, Amhara, ENDF and Eritrean forces and massacres of the clergy and the faithful.
- The statement was issued by Employees of Mekelle Diocese, Abbots of 45 Monasteries and Employees of 2 Woreda Parishes within the Diocese of the Ethiopia Orthodox Tewahedo Church and has set out the following demands:
 - The withdrawal of the Eritrean army and Amhara forces from Tigray and stop destruction
 - Independent international investigation into the atrocities committed on the people of Tigray
 - The return of religious relics looted by the Eritrean army and Amhara forces
 - For UNESCO to exert efforts to protect religious and historical heritages from suffering destruction and seek return of looted ones to their original places
 - For international community to facilitate unrestricted access to humanitarian aid all over Tigray
 - Facilitating access of medical equipment and medicine to the people of Tigray
 - Call for international community to intervene to bring the war on Tigray to a stop
 - Call for international community to facilitate peace for education to resume in Tigray
 - Call for Tigrayan members of clergy as well as the diaspora to sustain efforts to expose the atrocities committed on Tigray people until it finds a solution
 - Call in the name of God for all parties involved in the conflict to cease hostility and to settle differences through dialogue
- Alex Dewaal says Eritrean and Ethiopian troops cut down the mango orchards at Adeba and Tseada on the Zamra river in south-central Tigray.
- "It's not a massacre, a mass rape or torture. But chopping down those fruit trees is evidence for the war aims of the leaders in Asmara and Addis Ababa," Alex Dewaal said.
- The report states destroying fruit trees is a specially egregious form of starvation crime and the wanton destruction of the orchards reveals the intent of the armies rampaging through Tigray.
- A joint press statement given by three Political Parties of Tigray (Salsay Weyane Tigray, National Congress of Great Tigray, and Tigray Independence Party) welcomed the U.S. stand with regard to the

deteriorating situation in Tigray and says the forces that are operating wantonly in Tigray are disregarding international law.

- “We don't believe the forces will comply with the demand of the international community: So, we call the international community to use all instruments to enforce the demands,” said the statement.
- The statement also says “We deeply regret the statement given by the foreign minister of Ethiopia and ethnic cleansing cannot be overlooked in the name of sovereignty”.
- “The Ethiopian government has taken full responsibility for the deployment of Amhara forces and crimes committed. It is ironic that the government that has invited a foreign force to invade part of its land and massacre its people is concerned about the issue of sovereignty,” added the statement.
- The statement calls for an immediate withdrawal of all forces from Tigray and a full and independent international investigation into all human rights violations, abuses, atrocities, and to make sure that the perpetrators do not go with impunity.
- The Ethiopian Prime minister office released a press release in which it announced it had started investigations into “TPLF” massacres in Western Tigray, notably Mai Kadra and Humera. As a result it said it had apprehended 21 individuals.
- The statement said that independent investigations had been launched into atrocities committed in other parts of Tigray.
- It is important to note that the vast majority of atrocities have been reportedly committed by Ethiopian government aligned forces. Numerous organisations and witnesses have reported that it were Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Amhara troops who indiscriminately shelled Humera and carried out executions of civilians. Still there are reports of deportations and executions of Tigrayans in the area.
- It also said that it would not hinder the mobility of the media wanting “to venture outside of ENDF stationed areas”. It would however happen at their own risk, and the Ethiopian government would not be responsible for risks taken by the media.
- The press release also emphasized twice that media personnel and humanitarian aid personnel given access to Tigray would be held accountable if they were to breach any federal laws.
- Recent pictures of Eritrean troops operating in Adigrat, Eastern Zone, Tigray.

Journalism in the conflict (as confirmed per 03 March)

- The journalist (Girmay Gebru) and three fixers detained over the weekend(Fistum Berhane, Alula Akalu and Tamirat Yemane) have been released today.

Reported in Horn region (as confirmed per 03 March)

- During a joint press conference with his Sudanese counterpart, the Egyptian Foreign minister said that negotiations had “arrived at crossroads.” He continued by saying that Egypt supported the efforts by Sudan to involve the EU, US, and UN in the GERD dam negotiations.
- The Sudanese Foreign minister said it would not give up “Its rights or its land”.
- They both called for a legally binding agreement regarding the Dam.
- “The tendency to invite various parties as mediators to the issue while AU-led negotiations has not been finalized is demeaning the efforts of the AU,” an Ethiopian official said in a press conference.
- The statement was in response to the call by Sudan and Egypt for engaging international mediation after the failure of previous talks under the AU.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 03 March)

- Sec. Blinken urged Kenyan leadership in working with the U.S. on the UN Security Council to address the crisis in Ethiopia’s Tigray region, particularly in light of recent reports of atrocities and a worsening humanitarian situation.

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