

Europe External Programme with Africa

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

No. 212 - 30 May 2022

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The Situation Reports can be found [here](#). To receive the situation report in your e-mail, [click here](#). You can unsubscribe at any moment through the link at the bottom of each e-mail.

Situation in Eritrea (per 30 May)

- The Economist published an article about life inside Eritrea since the war with Tigray started. The country is notoriously difficult to access. A reporter for The Economist managed to get in.
- According to the article, "Cafés and bars once packed with young people are mostly empty. At the central market in Asmara piles of fruit are rotting in the stalls, while shelves in the shops are almost bare, save for what can be smuggled in from Sudan."
- All medical supplies, including basics such as painkillers, are running low.
- The article states that young Eritreans are afraid to leave their homes, as round-ups for the military have intensified and a new military training camp was opened. The youngsters are fleeing forced conscription.
- Hundreds of people continue to flee from Eritrea to Sudan every month, states The Economist.
- An Eritrean working for a foreign embassy in Asmara stated that: "Abiy wants the war to end, so Issaias is unhappy".
- In a separate article, The Economist argues that sanctions should be imposed on Eritrea.
- "Issaias rules by fear", states The Economist. The author recommends firm action to stop Eritrea's human rights abuses inside and outside of the country. The UN should follow this lead [of the US to impose sanctions] and reimpose an arms embargo on his regime. This would make it harder for him to threaten his neighbours directly, or to arm proxies."
- The BBC says at least 17 members of the evangelical church have been arrested in Eritrea. The church members were arrested by security forces while holding a "spiritual meeting".
- Sources told the BBC that the members were taken to the Mai Serwa Prison, outside the capital, Asmara. The prison has been where many members of the banned churches have been held.
- Eritrean authorities closed several evangelical churches in 2002, arresting most of the leaders without trial. As of now, there are church leaders who have been imprisoned without trial for nearly 20 years.

Situation in Tigray (per 30 May)

- The Ethiopian government is claiming that Tigray did not release 4.000 prisoners last week. They say that those released were ENDF family members captured last year.
- In response, the Tigrayans have released lists of names, which it says are the names of POWs.
- There are reports that the biggest convoy of aid since the truce was declared at the end of March has left Semara in Afar and is heading for Tigray. The convoy consists of 215 trucks.

- The Ethiopian government is saying that the Tigrayan leadership is preparing for another war. There has been a truce between both sides since the end of March, however Ethiopia says that there are “clear indications” that Tigray is preparing for a new offensive.
- The Addis Standard is reporting that 34.000 people are living in makeshift tents in North Wollo as a result of the fighting that devastated the area.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 30 May)

- More journalists have been arrested in Ethiopia. Temesgen Desalegn, Yayesew Shimeli, Sabontu Ahmed, Meaza Mohammed were arrested on Thursday. 18 Journalists are now under detention.
- Meaza has already been detained once, and was released again after a month without charges. Sabontu has since been released without charges.
- Following the arrests, Ethiopian Human Rights Commission Chief Daniel Bekele called for the release of the journalists and said that pretrial detentions for media offences are illegal.
- The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said 1,167 Ethiopian refugees have arrived in Sudan in recent days. 1,130 of them crossed to Sudan’s Blue Nile State from Benishangul Gumuz and 37 entered Sudan via border crossings in Sudan’s Gedaref State.

Regional Situation (per 30 May)

- The GERD Dam Project manager has said that the third filling of the dam is going to take place from August to September. He added that no delays are planned.
- Sudan and Egypt have concerns about the dam, and have been in negotiations with Ethiopia since 2012. Ethiopia has proceeded with the previous two fillings, despite both countries' protests.
- Sudan called the remarks made by Ethiopian officials “unresponsible”, and added that it endangered positive steps forward.

International Situation (per 30 May)

- A bi-partisan bill has been introduced in the US senate, condemning starvation as a weapon of war. It also aims to recognise the “effect of conflicts on global food security and famine.”
- The bill is aimed at Yemen, Syria, Ukraine, and Ethiopia and calls for the US to hold actors of the atrocities accountable.

Links of interest

- [EHRC: Over a dozen media personnel in unlawful detention](#)
- [Oromia police release journalist Sabontu without charges](#)
- [ፍጹህነት ሃይማኖት፣ ሰብዓዊነት, ኢርትራ ሰዓብተ ወንጌላውያን ኦብደተ-ክርስትያን አሰርጾ](#)
- [Ethiopia to start third filling of GERD in August with no delays: Dam project manager](#)
- [Ethiopian refugees flee to Sudan: UNHCR](#)
- [Sudan rejects Ethiopian remarks on planned unilateral GERD filling](#)
- [Govt Says ‘TPLF Planning For Another War’](#)
- [In Response to Ethiopia’s Denial, Tigray Releases a List of PoW Names.](#)
- [Ethiopian rights body seeks release of 16 detained journalists](#)
- [Risch, Merkley, Young, Booker, Thune, Menendez announce bipartisan Senate resolution condemning starvation as an act of war](#)
- [Containing Eritrea, the North Korea of Africa](#)
- [Inside Eritrea, Africa’s gulag state](#)

Disclaimer: All information in this Situation Report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. Publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand potential impacts of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or impact thereof. All information reported originates from third parties and the content of all reported and linked information remains the sole responsibility of these third parties. Report to info@eepea.be any additional information and corrections.