

Europe External Programme with Africa

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

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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 email, [click here](#). You can unsubscribe at any moment through the link at the bottom of each email.

Situation in Tigray (per 17 October)

- Unconfirmed report on Sunday 16 October that the defensive line of TDF in Shire was compromised. Confirmed from sources that there is heavy fighting in a 40-50km radius of Shire.
- The IDP camp in Shire was bombarded over the weekend, with one dead and four wounded as a result of an airstrike on Sunday reported on regional media.
- An aid worker from the International Rescue Committee (IRC) was among the 3 people killed during an air strike in Shire on 14 October. The IRC said that one of its employees died from injuries sustained during the aerial attack while delivering assistance to vulnerable women and children.
- Sources from the ground reports that ENDF forces fired heavy artillery to areas in Southern Tigray such as Waja, Timuga, Ayer Marefeya and Alamata. There are many reported killed and wounded.
- The regional government of Tigray has welcomed the AU call for an immediate ceasefire. It says that it is ready to abide, and urges the international community to bring about a ceasefire. Tigray also calls on the international community to demand the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from Tigray.
- It adds that until a ceasefire is agreed, Tigrayans will continue to fight for their survival.
- The Chief of World Health Organization (WHO), Dr Tedros Adhanom, says Eritrean and Ethiopian forces are carpet bombing Tigrayan cities and towns daily. He says that many people are dying due to lack of treatment and Tedros urges humanitarian aid to be allowed in.
- ENDF has launched an offensive towards Kobo, supposedly to divert forces towards the south, this offensive seems to have been stalled as well.
- The Tigray health Bureau is concerned by the increasing number of cases of malaria. They fear that the health infrastructure will not be able to provide the aid required to prevent numerous deaths.
- Leaflets warning Tigrayans to move out of the conflict zones and stay clear of military targets were dropped on Mekelle in the area of Aynalem, by the Ethiopian government.
- The leaflets urged civilians to leave Tigray and promised safety for people crossing into ENDF controlled territory. A source from Tigray reports that the leaflet shows a misunderstanding of the sentiment of people in Tigray, summarised as to fight, to die or to accept slavery.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 17 October)

- The Oromo Federalist Congress has announced a plan to redraw the administrative border between Addis Ababa city and the Oromia special zone.
 - It demands that Afaan Oromo be recognized as a working language along with Amharic in Finffine (Addis Abeba) city's administration.
 - It views the planned revision as a legalisation of the wrongly recognized city area, initially planned to be 43.000 acres but ultimately reaching 54.000 acres, legalising the displacement of an increased number of Oromo people for the expansion of the capital.
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- The Ethiopian government published a statement on 17 October reiterating that the conflict occurred as a consequence of Tigrayan aggression.
- The statement justifies the need to take direct control of “airports and other federal facilities” due to “the repeated attacks of the TPLF but also by its active collusion with [...] hostile foreign powers”.
- It states deep regret concerning civilian and humanitarian worker casualties as a result of bombings, warning people to stay clear of “military targets” to avoid further harm.

Regional Situation (per 17 October)

- In a statement issued on 15 October, the Chairperson of AU, Moussa Faki Mahamat, says that he is concerned by the reports of increased fighting in the Tigray region.
- The Commission has called for an immediate, unconditional ceasefire and the resumption of humanitarian services. The Tigray regional government welcomed the statement in an official communiqué. The Ethiopian government recommits to peace talks, it says.

International Situation (per 17 October)

- EU Foreign Affairs Council met on Monday. The situation in Ethiopia was on the agenda.
- Foundation Human Rights for Eritreans called for sanctions on Eritrean state actors, including PFDJ and Eritrean Defense Forces, in a letter to EU HR Josep Borrell.
- U.S. Senator Bob Menendez (D-N.J.), Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman, called for an immediate ceasefire and for human rights violations perpetrators to face trial. Menendez further urges the US administration to impose sanctions on individuals who commit atrocity crimes.
- Menendez states he intends on pushing for the passing of his resolution *Ethiopia Peace and Democracy Promotion Act of 2021* which would allow for sanctions to be placed on perpetrators.
- Von Batten-Montague-York, L.C, an advocacy firm based in Washington, D.C, claims that Ethiopia will not be AGOA eligible for 2023 due to their human rights record.
- The US Department of State issued a statement calling on all parties to end hostilities in Northern Ethiopia, particularly around Shire, and for Eritrea to withdraw its forces from the region.
- The US calls on Ethiopia to cease all operations in Tigray and on Tigray to cease other operations that might provoke further fighting. The US also reiterated its trust in the AU led peace process.
- Ethiopia's state finance minister Eyob Tekalign Tolina, believes war was a “key factor” in Ethiopia not obtaining debt relief from the International Monetary Fund.
- UN Relief chief Martin Griffiths expressed his fears over the safety of civilians and aid workers in Shire.

Links of interest

[IRC staff member killed delivering life saving aid in Ethiopia](#)

[Twitter: Tigray Television](#)

[Twitter: Government of Tigray Statement on Cessation of Hostilities](#)

[Twitter: Dr Tedros Adhanom, Chief of WHO](#)

[OFC rejects Addis Ababa, Oromia Special Zone admin demarcation](#)

[Twitter: FDRE Government Communication Service Statement by Government Communication Service](#)

[Statement of the AU Commission Chairperson on Ethiopia](#)

[Twitter: Martin Griffiths: I am worried about the safety of civilians and humanitarian staff in Shire](#)

[Intensifying Military Operations in Northern Ethiopia](#)

[Exclusive: Ethiopia debt relief delay partly due to civil war, state finance minister says](#)

[Foundation Human Rights For Eritreans Calls For Sanctions Against The Following Organizations](#)

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