

Europe External Programme with Africa

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

No. 343- 02 January, 2023

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.

Peace negotiations (per 02 January)

- The AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mechanism (MVCM) was officially launched in Mekelle, Tigray, on Thursday 29 December, led by Kenyan Maj. Gen. Stephen Radina, together with Colonel Rufai Umar Mairiga of Nigeria and Colonel Teffo Sekole of South Africa.
 - According to the office of former President Uhuru Kenyatta and mediator of the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement, "the three-member mission formed by the African Union is tasked with the responsibility of monitoring, verifying, and enforcing the November peace agreement."
 - Kenyatta said the work should be completed by 7 January, on Orthodox Christmas.
 - The MVCM is composed of ten military experts from different African countries.
 - Radina said the MVCM progressed: "I visited a mechanization garrison at Agula, where I saw an assortment of heavy weapons and the willingness to hand over and continue with the peace process."
 - The chief negotiator on the CoH Agreement for the Tigray state, Getachew Reda, confirmed that a battalion of ENDF had arrived in Mekelle "to take over the weapons", as per the agreement.
 - The *Ethiopian reporter* says that when the disarmament is fully implemented, Eritrean and Amhara forces will withdraw from the Tigray region, according to federal government officials.
 - *Ethio360* says that PM Abiy stated in a meeting with the Prosperity Party: "We are going into a clear conflict with Eritrea. This is because of problems from Eritrea."
 - Abiy said that Ethiopia was to use the Eritrean port of Assab. A Middle East country was to rebuild the port but Isayas is not honouring this agreement. Ethiopia was to supply electric power to Eritrea, but Isayas declined. Abiy said Eritrea is training Amhara, Afar and OLF militia, which undermines the Ethiopian government.
 - Addressing 50 opposition parties in Addis Ababa at the African Leadership Excellence Academy on 28 Dec, Amb Redwan, chief negotiator of the CoH for Ethiopia spoke to the issue of Western Tigray.
 - Western Tigray, or Wolkait, is controlled by Eritrean troops and Amhara militia.
 - Redwan stated that the issue of Wolkait would be addressed through a mechanism put forward by the Federation Council, understood to mean that the issue will be decided through a referendum.
 - Redwan stressed that the federal government did not have an intention to rearrange the borders.
 - Redwan said that, "unlike some forces", the Federal Government had no intention to destroy the TPLF.
 - Redwan clarified that an interim government will be formed in Tigray, comprising the TPLF, the federal government, and opposition parties in Tigray.
 - Former Eritrean diplomat and current journalist Fathi Osman states in *RFI* that Eritrea is unlikely to withdraw from Tigray, stating Eritrea is training military in Gondar, the capital of the regional state of Amhara and has political influence in Ethiopia which it will not want to give up.
 - The Federal Ethiopian Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage announced that it has established a task force to investigate the impact of the war on heritage in Tigray and Ethiopia.
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- Following the CoH Agreement, the task force is investigating how heritage is impacted in Tigray, Amhara and Afar regions, including the UNESCO world heritage site of Aksum, Rock-Hewn churches and one of the earliest mosques in Africa (Al-Nejashi Mosque), in Tigray, all affected by the war.
 - The statement says that the task force also looks at “less-visible cultural treasures, including manuscripts, paintings, oral traditions and artefacts held by churches and monasteries scattered throughout rural areas of Tigray despite their undocumented nature”.

Situation in Tigray (per 02 January)

- There are multiple reports from various sources identifying that there is still a significant presence of Eritrean troops in Aksum, Shire, Adwa and in neighbouring villages, while others show troops leaving.
- Ethiopian Airlines resumed its regular flights today January 02, from Addis Ababa to Shire as part of the implementation of the CoH Agreement, says Tigray Communication Affairs Bureau.
- Haftom Gebregziabher, the Director of Wegagen Bank Mekelle Branch told Tigray Television that the bank will resume its services in the city on January 02 after 18 months.

Situation in Eritrea (per 02 January)

- In his New Year statement President Isayas Afeworki said that though Covid outbreaks were relatively low in 2022, there was a “security and economic crisis” caused by the futile threats of “the rule of the jungle of the ” lords” who are revitalising their unipolar camp in the outgoing year.
- He stated that in the region, the ‘lords’ are promoting their agenda, and creating a crisis through their conspiratorial interventions. They are reinvigorating their “hysteria” of a hostile conflict against Eritrea.
- Isaias said that despite all these international and regional situations, the people of Eritrea, domestic and abroad, have consciously, tenaciously, unitedly, resisted, which they should be proud of.
- Isaias stated that the Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF) conducted historical counter offensives and thwarted the attempts of forces that threatened Eritrea. He added he was proud of the achievement of EDF, “beyond words”.
- Isayas said that it looks as if “the dominant powers and their messengers and their conspiratorial actions” will not stop in 2023 and Eritreans have to make robust preparations for resistance.
- He emphasised the need for enhancing Eritrean development efforts in the new year. He said Eritrea will come out victoriously, because it is making just and independent choices.
- It was announced that Present Isaias will be giving an interview this week to local media.

International Situation (per 02 January)

- A resolution to defund the UN International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia, established to investigate human rights violations in Ethiopia has not been adopted.

Links of interest

- <https://www.thereporterethiopia.com/29281/>
- <https://allafrica.com/stories/202212310025.html>
- <https://www.ethiopianreporter.com/114349/>
- <https://youtu.be/6usaf8eVSMI>
- <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20221229-%C3%A9thiopie-pourquoi-l-arm%C3%A9e-%C3%A9rythr%C3%A9enne-ne-se-retire-pas-du-tigr%C3%A9>
- [Ethiopian airlines resumes flights from Addis Ababa to Shire](#)
- [Wegagen Bank to resume its services in Mekelle on Jan 02](#)
- <https://shabait.com/2022/12/31/>

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