

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

## Situation in Ethiopia (per 24 January)

- The Orthodox church faces a split. Three bishops have announced that they will form a separate church, with its own decision-making body.
- All bishops of the Orthodox Church (in Ethiopia) are called to convene in Addis Ababa.
- The break-away church has appointed more than 20 new bishops.
- One of the breakaway bishops, Abune Sawiros, said "they made the move to save those followers of the church who were led by clergy that was not diverse or inclusive and who did not understand their language," according to the BBC.
- The aim of the break-away church is that the bishops would replace those currently appointed in the region of Oromia and parts of southern Ethiopia.
- The head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Abune Mathias, expressed his concern and he denounced the break-away as illegal. He called for all bishops of the church to convene.
- Other bishops called the split "a conspiracy to divide believers on the basis of ethnicity", according to the BBC.
- Patriarch Abune Mathias previously communicated his concerns on the suffering of the civilian population during the conflict in Tigray.
- Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed called on the Ethiopians to work to reaffirm its internal unity and pass on the state to their children, reports *Mereja.com*
- The comments were made during a speech that the PM made in a military parade in the weekend
- The PM said: "currently, the political commodity and political marketplace of racism and bigotry by religion and place of origin is focused on divisions. When you go one step lower from Ethiopianism, it is humiliation, disintegration and chaos."
- He also criticised that social media caused a divide in Ethiopia "by area, religion and ethnicity and also by small localities."
- According to *Military Africa*, Ethiopia has bought 32 Chinese SH-15 (PCL-181) artillery systems.
- The artillery is a self-propelled Howitzer reportedly used by the People's Liberation Army of China.
- *Military Africa* stated "the Ethiopian Army continues to reinforce its [sic] capabilities to be better prepared for the next conflict, likely with Egypt of [sic] Sudan."
- Ethiopia has repatriated 31.919 migrants from Saudi Arabia since the second half of November 2022, reports *Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC)*.

## Situation in Tigray (per 24 January)

- The Tigray regional government President Debretsion said Eritrean and Amhara forces are still occupying the territories of Tigray and "torturing people."

- He made the comments in a regional council meeting held in Mekelle yesterday (24 January). The statement was broadcast on Tigray Television.
- Dr Debrezion described the continued presence of Eritrean and Amhara forces as “a threat to the peace process”.
- While he acknowledged that the forces have started withdrawing, he called for their full and swift withdrawal.
- He also stated that the regional government is fulfilling its duty as per the peace agreement by carrying out the disarmament and disengagement of its forces.
- He also mentioned that, despite the peace agreement, no significant step has been taken to return internally displaced people to their homes.
- 54.000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Abiy Addi are suffering from a severe shortage of food and medicine supplies, local officials told *Addis Standard*.
- Due to the severe shortages, some IDPs have been forced to move to other areas.

### **Regional Situation (per 24 January)**

- A US airstrike killed 30 al-Shabaab militants and destroyed three vehicles, according to a press release from the US Africa command.
- The airstrike was reportedly conducted about 260 kilometres northeast of Mogadishu near Galcad, Somalia, as the Somali National Army was fighting against an "intense attack by more than 100 al-Shabaab fighters."
- The Sudanese region of South Kordofan declared a month-long state of emergency after at least four people were killed in an attack by armed men at a bus station in Kadugli.

### **International Situation (per 24 January)**

- The Ukrainian Infrastructure Ministry reported that a ship loaded with 30,000 tons of Ukrainian-produced wheat for Ethiopia has left the Odessa region's Chornomorsk Port.
- The Ukrainian grain will reportedly be delivered to the port of Djibouti after which it will be transported to Ethiopia “to support people suffering from hunger”, according to the statement.
- The EU Foreign Affairs Council announced that it exchanged views yesterday (23 January) on Ethiopia, but stated no further details of the outcomes.

### **Links of interest**

[Tigray State Council launches its Summit this morning discussing unfolding issues.](#)

[Ethiopia's Tigray rebels deny switch of leaders](#)

[Twitter: Tigray Human Rights Forum](#)

[News: IDP camp sheltering over 54.000 civilians in Abiy Addi, central Tigray, severely hit by food, medicine scarcity](#)

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[BBC Africa Live](#)

[PM Abiy says racism, bigotry risks disintegrating Ethiopia](#)

[Bulk carrier with 30,000 t of wheat for Ethiopia leaves Chornomorsk Port](#)

[US Airstrike Kills Around 30 al-Shabaab Militants in Somalia, Military Says](#)

[Ethiopia buys Chinese SH-15 \(PCL-181\) artillery as regional tension persists](#)

[Sudan Province in State of Emergency After 4 Killed](#)

[Foreign Affairs Council, 23 January 2023](#)

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