

Europe External Programme with Africa

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

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Situation in Eritrea (per 27 January)

- A senior Russian delegation paid a one-day official visit to Massawa, Eritrea, on 26 January. It was led by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Mikhail Bogdanov, Deputy Foreign Minister.
- The delegation met Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and Foreign Minister Osman Saleh Mohammed.
- “The discussions centered on the dynamics of the war in Ukraine & enhancement of bilateral ties on sectors of energy, mining, information technology, education & health,” stated the Eritrean Minister for Information on Thursday evening.
- During the delegation visit, Osman Saleh blamed the United States for the crisis in Ukraine, states *Reuters*.
- The visit comes just two weeks after the Eritrean Ambassador to Russia announced a Memorandum of Understanding between the Eritrean port city of Massawa and the Russian naval base Sevastopol. The ambassador also stated the countries sought closer ties.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 27 January)

- The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church revoked the title and authority of the three Archbishops who appointed 26 bishops without approval. The three were excommunicated. The decision was made in an emergency meeting of the Holy Synod on 26 January.
 - The revocation of title and authority extends to 25 of the 26 bishops appointed. One appointed bishop already apologised and voluntarily revoked his anointment.
 - The Archbishops and the bishops they appointed are mainly Oromo, but also include some from the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR).
 - The three Archbishops, Abune Sawiros, Abune Ewostatewos and Anune Zena Markos, were asked to apologise for the move which was perceived as a step towards creation of an Oromo patriarchate.
 - Observers note that the Archbishops did not speak with the Holy Synod before the decision to revoke their appointments was taken.
 - Sources state that the bishops issued a 10-point statement today (27 January). They announced that they will split off and form a Holy Synod, elect a patriarch and nominate further bishops and clergy.
 - They note that they do so in protest of the domination of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church by one ethnic group (Amhara).
 - Despite the removal of the bishops, they will reportedly start working in different cities in Oromia as of tomorrow, says *Oromia Media Network (OMN)*.
 - OMN added that Orthodox Christians are making preparations to receive the visiting bishops. Names of cities are not yet revealed.
 - Oromo Students Association issued a statement supporting the newly appointed bishops in Oromia, according to *OMN*.
 - The association reportedly called on the Holy Synod to accept the 26 bishops.
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- Experts noted last year that "Russia pressure is also growing within the Ethiopian Orthodoxy, where the Russian Orthodox Church is gaining influence. "
- Sources state that Amhara Special Forces have lost more than 100 troops in recent fights with Oromo Liberation Army.

Situation in Tigray (per 27 January)

- Amhara troops detained civilians in Alamata, southern zone of Tigray, according to *Dimtsi Woyane*, citing eye witnesses. The detained civilians reportedly include women and civil servants.

Regional Situation (per 27 January)

- The new UN expert on human rights in Sudan, Radhouane Nouicer, is set to arrive in Khartoum for his first official visit in his new role. He will arrive in Khartoum on 28 January and leave on 3 February.
- He is set to meet with officials, human rights organisations and humanitarian organisations.
- The US military says it has killed a senior ISIS leader, Bilal al-Sudani and 10 militants in an airstrike in Somalia on Wednesday.
- "Bilal al-Sudani is assessed to have supported ISIS' expansion and activities across Africa and beyond the continent," stated a senior Biden administration official to *CNN*.

International Situation (per 27 January)

- The Ethiopian Ministry of Finance announced that it signed two funding agreements with the World Bank for a total of USD 745 million.
- The first agreement of USD 445 million is signed for strengthening of primary health care services.
- The second agreement of USD 300 million will be used to implement a flood management project.
- Ethiopia is also looking for a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). IMF is open to looking for engagements towards a programme in Ethiopia, stated Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva during a visit to Kigali on 26 January.
- "Tigray's nascent peace is at its most fragile now because if it does not progress fast, it will wither," states Mukesh Kapila, Professor Emeritus of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs, University of Manchester.
- Kapila notes that the way to sustainable peace in Ethiopia is still long, but that every day of ceasefire is encouraging.

Links of interest

[Russia's Lavrov on surprise visit to Eritrea](#)

[Lavrov arrives in Eritrea on working visit](#)

[Visita a sorpresa del ministro degli Esteri russo in Eritrea. Abiy cerca alleanze in Sudan](#)

[Twitter: Yemane G. Meskel](#)

[Ethiopia and the World Bank signed Financing Agreements amounting to a total of 745 million US Dollars](#)

[Holy Synod revokes authorities of three Archbishops, 25 Episcopate involved in recent "illegal" anointment](#)

[Ethiopian Orthodox Church Excommunicated three subversive Archbishops](#)

[Twitter Oromia Media Network](#)

[Eritrea as an Informal Representative of the Pro-Russia Forces in Africa](#)

[Dimtsi Woyane Facebook](#)

[Sudan: New UN human rights expert to make first official visit](#)

[US military operation kills senior ISIS leader in Somalia](#)

[No short cuts to lasting peace in Tigray, but each day of silenced guns is a small victory for humanity](#)

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