

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.

Peace negotiations (per 21 February)

- The Tigray interim government establishing committee is undertaking a consultation meeting today (21 February) with representatives of women, youth, and elders drawn from woredas (districts) of the region, reports *Dimtsi Woyane*.
- The committee had similar consultation meetings with opposition parties, civic society organisations, scholars, and other stakeholders in the region.
- The meetings are gathering ideas from stakeholders to establish an inclusive interim government based on the Pretoria Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement.
- Concerned Horn of Africa Experts From Civil Society Organisations and Academia issued a statement in which they call for structured benchmarks for the European Union (EU) and other western partners to re-engage on development cooperation with Ethiopia.
- It states “full resumption of relations including direct budget support by the EU can only be considered once the peace process is more advanced and progress has been confirmed by independent sources,”
- The experts recommend short, mid and long term benchmarks including the withdrawal of foreign military forces from Ethiopia, humanitarian access to all regions, unlimited access to telecommunication, electricity and banking services, and an independent investigation of war crimes.
- Each of the 13 benchmarks has corresponding verification sources and specific proposals for policy makers and development cooperation engagement.
- The statement calls for the EU to define a roadmap with precise milestones that should help the stakeholders, together with benchmarks, map progress.
- Proposed milestones include implementation of the CoH Agreement, peace negotiations for ending all conflicts in the country, protection of civilians, establishing processes for accountability and upholding the rule of law.

Situation in Tigray (per 21 February)

- Eritrean troops murdered 90 people including children and pregnant women in October 2022 in a specific location known as Mariam Shewito, reports *Dimtsi Woyane*.
- The location is about 15 km northeast of Adwa city, central zone of Tigray.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 21 February)

- Jawar Mohammed, deputy chair of the Oromo Federalist party, said in a Facebook message that international mediators have to be involved to resolve the conflict between the Federal Government and the Oromo Liberation army (OLA).
 - Safaricom, a Kenyan mobile network operator, has reportedly finalised preparations to start mobile money services in Ethiopia in April 2023, according to CEO Aanwar Soussa.
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- The CEO is quoted to have said “With a population of approximately 120 million people and financial inclusion at about 35%, 57% mobile penetration, and annual inward remittance of about \$4.2 billion, Ethiopia offers a great opportunity to grow the business to the Kenya level in 10 years.”

Situation in Eritrea (per 21 February)

- The Eritrean government continues collecting diaspora tax through its consular offices around the world, according to an opinion piece in *Al Jazeera*.
- The Eritrean government instructs its embassies to use “questionable tactics” to collect an income tax from the Eritrean diaspora.
- “Eritrean consulates demand proof of diaspora tax payment to provide even the most basic consular services. They refuse to issue ID cards or any other legal documents until the tax is paid.”
- It is also reported that the Eritrean diaspora cannot sell their own properties unless they pay the diaspora tax, and may face demands for paybacks of all diaspora tax if they need any services.
- The author calls on the international community to start investigations into the tax and to put pressure on the Eritrean government to stop collecting it through “blackmail”.

Regional Situation (per 21 February)

- Despite the prevalence of the “worst drought in decades” in Somalia, aid workers are reportedly expecting that humanitarian support to the country will decrease due to “donor fatigue” and “multiple crises”, according to *VOA*.
- Norwegian Refugee Council country director Mohamed Abdi said “the main reason why there's a donor fatigue is because, as you can imagine, Somalia has been receiving humanitarian assistance for over three decades now and the situation has not been changing.”
- Because of persistent insecurity, conflicts, harsh climate conditions, unemployment, political persecution, and economic crisis in the region, about 1.4 million people are expected to migrate to Yemen and other gulf countries, according to *the East African*.

International Situation (per 21 February)

- Ethiopian Minister of finance Ahmed Shide, accompanied by high government officials, was on an official visit to Beijing, China, yesterday 20 February, reported *Ethiopian Press Agency*.
- The delegation held “strategic meetings” with key government ministries as well as Chinese financial institutions and investment companies.
- At the conclusion of the AU Summit, the AU reaffirmed that countries suspended after coups took place, namely Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, and Sudan, will remain suspended from the AU.

Links of interest

[Gradual, step-by-step rapprochement with the Federal Government of Ethiopia](#)

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[Dimtsi Woyane on Eritreans killing people in central parts of Tigray](#)

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[Kenya's Safaricom on The Verge of Launching Mobile Money Services in Ethiopia](#)

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