

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

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International Situation (per 13 November)

- A preliminary hearing took place in Zwolle, The Netherlands, in the case of the Eritrean suspect Tewelde G., also known as Walid. He is accused of leading a criminal network that committed grave human rights violations in Libya and extorting refugees to pay large sums of ransom.
- A large number of Eritreans, including people stating to be victims of Walid, attended the hearing.
- Walid stated that he is a victim of mistaken identity. He stated that his name is not Amanuel, the name he was convicted under in Ethiopia, but he did not want to answer the question of what his name was.
- A definitive indictment was prepared by the prosecution. It is largely the same as the draft version, but it additionally includes an extortion fact, a whitewashing charge, a human smuggling case and a more extensive description of Walid's network.
- Witnesses will be questioned by the court in March and April 2024; Walid will not be present at this process and it will happen in a private setting, not in open court, to protect the witnesses.
- The prosecution emphasised that the witnesses have faced severe trauma and that they should be supported in the process of witnessing.
- Kidane, the Eritrean accused of working together with Walid, has not yet been extradited from the UAE to the Netherlands, but the prosecution hopes that their cases can be tried together, or that Kidane can at least be assigned a lawyer prior to the questioning of witnesses, to avoid double-questioning.
- Contrary to what he stated before, Walid said in court that he has a wife and two children.
- The European Union allocated €1 million under the EU's humanitarian programme in support of the cholera epidemic outbreak in Ethiopia. The allocated aid will assist humanitarian organisations in cholera treatment and prevention.
- Saudi Arabia hosted the Saudi-Africa Summit between 10-12 November in Riyadh, to enhance relations and cooperation with African countries. Leaders and officials from more than 50 countries were present at the summit including Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.
- Leaders adopted the Riyadh Declaration which will serve as a roadmap for Saudi-African cooperation.
- More than 50 deals were signed during the summit covering support in various matters including tourism, energy, finance, mining and logistics.
- A new security program supporting resilience-building mechanisms and fighting against violent extremism in the Ethiopia-Kenya-Somalia border regions was launched last week by the British Embassy in Addis Ababa in collaboration with Ethiopian ministries and the Somali regional government.

Situation in Sudan (per 13 November)

- The Shambat bridge connecting a strategic road between Omdurman and Khartoum has been destroyed after a massive explosion on Saturday.
 - Both warring parties confirmed the collapse of the bridge and accused each other of being responsible for the destruction.
 - A protest march was organised in El Gedaref calling for stopping forced evacuation of internally displaced persons from university dormitories as the universities are set to resume classes.
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- Displaced persons are reportedly transferred from dormitories to schools within the city, however, the capacity of the schools is not sufficient.
- Reopening of schools has been rejected by teachers in the River Nile state as the schools are currently hosting the internally displaced people and school material and supplies are not available, which makes the resumption of education not conducive for all children.
- The Teachers Committee from the River Nile state called on authorities to reconsider the strategy so as not to create “an elitist education that serves half of the students in the country” and insinuates further “fragmentation of Sudan”, said Musab Abdeljalil, member of the committee.
- Fighting was reported between Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) over the air military base in Jebel Aulia, south of Khartoum.
- Access and bureaucratic challenges cause loss of time and resources in delivering vital humanitarian aid in Sudan, said Clementine Nkweta-Salami, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Sudan.
- Human rights situation is of great concern as abuse and violence are “verging on pure evil”, added Nkweta-Salami.

Refugee Situation (per 13 November)

- 85,800 refugees fleeing Sudan’s conflict sought refuge in the neighbouring countries over the past month, according to a UN report.
- 3 million children have been forced to flee their homes due to the conflict in Sudan. Currently, it is the largest child displacement crisis globally.
- Ethiopia has become the third largest refugee hosting country in Africa, according to the UNHCR.
- In total 953,664 refugees have been seeking refuge in Ethiopia with 143,029 arrivals registered in 2023.
- The largest group is refugees from Somalia with 92,411 new arrivals in 2023, followed by Sudan with 25,820 arrivals this year.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 13 November)

- Two Ethiopian senior officials - Minister of Justice Gedion Timothewos and national security adviser to prime minister Redwan Hussein - joined peace negotiations between the Ethiopian government and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) that commenced in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, last week.
- Negotiating parties have reached “positive progress” so far and are to address “the substantive issues”, reports Addis Standard.

Regional Situation (per 13 November)

- 27 military officers have been arrested by South Sudanese authorities as they are suspected to plan a coup against South Sudanese President Salva Kiir. Among those arrested are 10 officers of Sudan People’s Defense Forces (SSPDF) and 17 officers from the National Security Service (NSS).
- The spokesperson of the SSPDF, Major General Lul Ruai Koang, said that rumours around the coup are unfounded allegations.
- Security forces have been deployed in and around Juba over the weekend. South Sudan police spokesman, Major General Daniel Justin, said that the security forces are part of standard patrols that are overseeing routine activities to maintain order in the city.

Links of interest

- [Ethiopia: The EU allocates €1 million to support humanitarian response to cholera outbreak](#)
- [News: UK. Ethiopia launch peace program to mitigate instability along Ethiopia-Kenya-Somalia borders](#)
- [Sudanese army accuses RSF of destroying strategic bridge in the capital](#)
- [Sudan war: priority conflict between sheltering displaced or studies](#)
- [RSF and Sudanese army clash over air base](#)
- [Press conference by Clementine Nkweta-Salami](#)
- [Sudan Humanitarian Update \(12 November 2023\)](#)
- [UNHCR | Ethiopia Refugee Statistics October 2023](#)
- [News: Senior gov’t officials join military leaders in Dar es Salaam as ongoing talks with OLA progress positively](#)
- [27 including son of ex-minister detained amid South Sudan coup rumors](#)
- [South Sudan denies coup attempt](#)

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