

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA & NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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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 7 March)

- A strategic review of the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement by Ethiopian federal government and Tigray Interim Regional Administration (IRA) is being organised under the auspices of the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa.
- The US Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Mike Hammer, will travel to Ethiopia to attend the strategic review meeting between 7-13 March. The panel of observers will be further joined by delegates from the UN, EU, IGAD and the US.
- A high power transmission line was attacked by "extremist groups" on Tuesday close to Nefas Mawcha town, South Gondar, resulting in a widespread power outage across much of the region, according to the Amhara Police Commission.
- The damaged transmission line which connects Bahir Dar, Debretabor, Nefas Mawcha, Gashena and Alamata, caused disruptions in several towns in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray regions, stated Ethiopian Electric Power.
- The Ethiopian Federal government aims to exercise control in the disputed areas of Western Tigray which are currently under Amhara administration in order to facilitate the repatriation process, stated Abraham Belay, the Minister of Defense.
- This control will allow for carrying out preparations for the referendum which should resolve the territorial disputes. The IRA previously refused the referendum as a viable solution to the problem.
- 285 labourers from Gardula and Ale Zones in Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Region were reportedly kidnapped by armed groups in Amhara region while travelling by buses to work on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, confirmed the Gardula Zone Council, while condemning the incident.

Situation in Sudan (per 7 March)

- Several border crossings, including Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan, as well as some supply routes. will be reopened for delivery of humanitarian aid, the Sudanese government informed the United Nations.
 - This will include the Tina crossing from Chad to El Fasher in North Darfur, the route from Egypt to Port Sudan via Red Sea, as well as routes from Port Sudan to El Fasher through Atbara.
 - Fighting between Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) has been reportedly escalating in Al-Jazira State, close to Sennar State, along the Al-Fau road, and Managil.
 - SAF is reportedly involving the 4th Infantry Division in its operations in Al-Jazira State as part of the strategy to regain control over the regional capital Wad Madani.
 - Continuation of Sudan's conflict risks creating the world's largest hunger crisis, warned the UN World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director Cindy McCain. WFP is not able to deliver sufficient food assistance to affected communities on the ground.
 - "Over 25 million people across Sudan, South Sudan, and Chad are trapped in a spiral of deteriorating food security," said McCain.
 - Many of the human rights violations in Sudan may amount to war crimes, said Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights during his report to the UN Human Rights Council.
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- Critics stated that Türk's report is "modest" and does not reflect the full gravity of the situation.
- A Sudanese journalist, Khalid Balal, was killed by armed soldiers in his home in El Fasher, North Darfur, on 1 March. The Committee to Protect Journalists called on Sudanese to investigate the killing and ensure the protection of the media and press in the country.

International Situation (per 7 March)

- A drafted resolution on Sudan to cease fighting ahead of Ramadan is being currently negotiated within the UN Security Council. The vote on the draft resolution is reported to take place tomorrow, 8 March.
- Supplies of armament to Sudan must stop in order to prevent death and destruction, stated the US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield.
- The global internet cables under the Red Sea were reportedly cut by Yemen's Houthis who have been targeting the Red Sea over the past weeks. Four out of fifteen submarine cables are reported to be critically damaged.
- It is reported that 25% of traffic passing through the Red Sea on lines carrying data to Africa, Asia and the Middle East is affected.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 7 March)

- The Libyan coast guard has been accused of interfering with and threatening the German rescue ship Humanity 1 while carrying out a rescue mission of migrants and refugees in the Mediterranean Sea on Saturday, 2 March. The operation rescued 77 persons from several boats in distress.
- The Libyan coast guard repeatedly called on Humanity 1 to leave the area despite being informed about the rescue operation. This was followed by threats from the coast guards holding guns as well as forcing some of the rescuees on board of the coast guard vessel.
- One shot was fired into the sea which caused panic among refugees and migrants who started to jump into the sea causing at least one death.
- As a reaction to the incident, Hans Leijtens, head of Frontex border agency, stated that it is a duty of Frontex to inform relevant authorities about the boats in distress, including the Libyan coast guard.
- 97 refugees were evacuated by plane from Tripoli, Libya, to Rome, Italy, on 5 March. The refugees of Sudanese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Palestinian as well as Syrian origin were previously held in Libyan detention centres and exposed to torture and inhumane treatment.
- Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, is supporting a controversial migration deal involving deportation of asylum seekers to third countries that is being prepared in Germany ahead of the EU elections scheduled in June.
- The deal, similar to the one between the UK and Rwanda, is supported by all parties under the European People's Party group.
- Ethiopia introduced a new national digital ID system for refugees which aims to enhance refugees' access to basic services. The pilot programme has been introduced in Addis Ababa with a goal to expand to all areas across the country.

Links of interest

[X: Getachew K Reda](#)
[Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Mike Hammer Travels to Ethiopia, the United Kingdom, and Italy](#)
[News: Amhara Police says high power transmission line "struck by extremist groups", causing widespread outage](#)
[News: Gardula zone in Southern Ethiopia region condemns kidnapping of 285 laborers in Amhara region, urge their safe return](#)
[Sudan army and RSF clash near Sennar and Al-Fau](#)
[Sudan's war risks creating the world's largest hunger crisis, warns WFP Chief](#)
[CPI condemns killing of Sudanese journalist Khalid Balal in Darfur](#)
[High Commissioner outlines 'insidious disregard for human life' in Sudan](#)
[Critics: UN report on human rights in Sudan 'does not correspond with scale of violations'](#)
[3 Red Sea Data Cables Cut as Yemen's Houthis Launch More Attacks in the Vital Waterway](#)
[Remarks by Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield at the UN Security Council Stakeout on the UN Panel of Experts' Report on Sudan](#)
[Libyan coast guard accused of threatening crew of rescue ship in Mediterranean](#)
[The EU's border agency has a duty to inform Libya's coast guard about migrant boats, official says](#)
[Nearly 100 refugees transferred from Libyan detention centers to Rome](#)
[Von der Leyen's EU group plans Rwanda-style asylum schemes](#)

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