

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA & NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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Situation in Sudan (per 4 April)

- The Sudanese Ministry of Culture and Information suspended the operations of three Arab satellite channels on Tuesday. These are Al Arabiya and Al Hadath owned by Saudi Arabia, and Sky News Arabia owned by the United Arab Emirates.
- The decision by the Ministry was based on the alleged lack of transparency, professionalism and failure to renew operational licences.
- The suspension has been condemned by the Sudanese Journalists Syndicate stating that it violates the freedom of expression and that it is “a continuation of the campaigns of restrictions” on Sudanese journalists.
- Abdalla Hamdok, head of the civilian coalition Tagadum, together with 15 other representatives of the coalition, have been accused by Sudan’s prosecution of incitement to war against the state, undermining the constitutional order, and crimes against humanity.
- The office of Sudan’s Public Prosecution filed criminal cases against the coalition members on Wednesday. Tagadum proposed a ceasefire deal in January which was signed by Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and refused by Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF).
- If convicted, the charges could carry the death penalty under the national jurisdiction.
- A drone attack was launched in Atbara, River Nile State, on Tuesday, hitting the Infinity Hall where people were gathered for Ramadan iftar - breaking of the fast, leaving at least 5 dead and others injured. It is not yet clear who carried out the attack.
- US Special Envoy for Sudan, Tom Perriello, strongly condemned attacks on civilians by warring parties, adding that blocking humanitarian aid to El Fasher by RSF only exacerbates the suffering of the civilian population.

Situation in Tigray (per 4 April)

- Residents of Irob district, Tigray region, which has been occupied by Eritrean forces, are forced to obey the rules set out by the Eritrean government, shows video footage circulated on social media.
- “If there is anyone who believes they are Ethiopian, the Eritrean government will not force anyone to remain here. But this territory belongs to Eritrea. And Eritreans reside on Eritrean territory. And Eritreans must abide by Eritrean rule like the other (Eritrean) people,” states the translation of the video footage by Irob Anina Civil Society.
- The National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) and the Ministry of Justice declined the appeal by the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) to reinstate the party’s licence.
- According to NEBE’s chair, Melatework Hailu, there is no legal basis for reinstatement of TPLF’s licence due to its involvement in violence during the Tigray war.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 4 April)

- Dozens of civilians were executed by Ethiopian federal forces in Merawi town, Amhara, on 29 January, reports Human Rights Watch (HRW). The incident started with Fano militia attacking Ethiopian soldiers, after which Fano withdrew from Merawi.

- Between noon and 6pm of 29 January, federal forces started killing civilians on the street and carried out house-to-house searches, killing mostly men but also women, said HRW. Soldiers obstructed survivors from burying dead bodies in the days following the incident.
- During the attacks civilian property, including houses and businesses, were looted and destroyed.
- Another attack on civilians followed on 24 February after Fano attempted to attack Ethiopian forces.
- HRW urged the UN and AU to suspend deployment of Ethiopian federal forces in the peace missions until the attack is properly investigated and perpetrators are held accountable.
- International creditors reportedly extended the deadline for Ethiopia to finalise their talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to the end of June, according to Reuters' sources. The announcement comes after the IMF staff concluded their visit to Addis Ababa without reaching any agreement.

Regional Situation (per 4 April)

- Ethiopian ambassador in Mogadishu, Mukhtar Mohamed, has been expelled by Somalia and ordered to leave the country within 72 hours. Two consulates have also been shut down namely in Hargeisa, Somaliland, and Garowe, Puntland.
- The expulsion comes as a reaction to the Memorandum of Understanding between Somaliland and Ethiopia signed in January. "Somalia stands firm on its sovereignty! [...] Our resolve in protecting our territory is steadfast," states Ali Omar, Somalia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, on X.
- A delegation from Puntland, led by Puntland Minister of Finance, Mohammed Farah Mohammed, held a meeting in Addis Ababa with the Ethiopian Foreign Minister Mesganu Arga, discussing mutual opportunities for trade, investment, energy cooperation, and joint infrastructure.
- South Sudan will regain control over its territorial airspace from neighbouring Sudan as the Air Traffic Management System (ATMS) has been finalised. Sudan has managed the air traffic of South Sudan since the mutual agreement signed in 2016.

International Situation (per 4 April)

- During the 55th session of the UN Human Rights Council, the European Union, on behalf of a group of 44 countries, called for "credible transitional justice and accountability processes" in Ethiopia to ensure peace, reconciliation and justice for victims.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 4 April)

- The Greek coast guard rescued a boat carrying 74 refugees and migrants in the Mediterranean Sea south of the Greek island of Gavdos. All rescuees were transported to Crete.
- Amid rising arrivals on Gavdos and Crete, the government of Greece pledged to provide financial support and more staff to address the situation.
- The new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum will bring a major setback for the coming years and will expose refugees and migrants to human rights violations, warns Amnesty International ahead of the final vote of the European Parliament on the new legislation.

Links of interest

- [Sudan suspends work of Al Arabiya, Al Hadath and Sky News Arabia channels, state news agency says](#)
- [Sudan charges former PM, anti-war leaders with serious crimes](#)
- [Sudan war: Deadly drone attack on River Nile state iftar](#)
- [U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan Tom Perriello](#)
- [X: Irob Anina Civil Society \(IACS\)](#)
- [X: Tigray Television](#)
- [ከወሩት ሰውቶናው አንዳንድ መለስላት ይቀረጠውን ጥያቄ በርዳና ናትኩ ማኅበራዊ ሚዲያ ላይ ለውጭ ዓለዎች አሉ](#)
- [Ethiopia: Military Executes Dozens in Amhara Region](#)
- [Ethiopia official creditors to extend deadline for IMF deal, source says](#)
- [Somalia expels Ethiopian ambassador amid Somaliland port deal dispute](#)
- [X: Ali Omar](#)
- [Ethiopia and Puntland Explore Opportunities for Enhanced Relations](#)
- [Juba to reclaim airspace control from Khartoum with completion of air traffic system](#)
- [HRC55 - Joint Statement on the importance of transitional justice and accountability in Ethiopia](#)
- [Greece pledges to help islands of Crete, Gavdos handle surge in migrant arrivals](#)
- [Greek coast guard rescues 74 migrants in boat on Mediterranean Sea](#)
- [EU: Migration and Asylum Pact reforms will put people at heightened risk of human rights violations](#)

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