

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

No. 533 - 8 April 2024

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 Sudan (per 8 April)

- An attack by Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the village of Um Adam in Al Jazira state, south of Khartoum, killed at least 28 civilians and wounded 240 on Saturday, according to the Sudan Doctors Committee.
- Local staff from a nearby hospital stated that they had received over 200 wounded, some of whom arrived too late to be saved.
- The Sudanese Air Force launched raids against RSF positions in Al Jazira state. Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) captured the town of Al-Qalaa Al-Bayda, east of the state capital of Wad Madani.
- SAF reportedly took control of the Um Faksha and Hafira areas in Al Jazira last week. Clashes between SAF and RSF are taking place in various locations in the state.
- The UN has distributed aid in western Darfur for the first time in months. The delivery is meant to reach around 250,000 people and last for one month.
- As the lean season starts in a few weeks, the World Food Programme envoy to Sudan fears that the nation will see “unprecedented levels of starvation and malnutrition”.
- Sudanese security forces have launched an arrest campaign targeting members of political parties, resistance committees and humanitarian actors in Sinja, the capital of Sennar State. Civilian actors have been documenting alleged human rights violations and pressing for a peaceful end to the conflict.
- Living conditions for about 190,000 displaced persons in Kassala are dire, states Médecins Sans Frontières, with overcrowded shelters, limited access to food and clean water, and inadequate healthcare services.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 8 April)

- At least 34 people were injured in a grenade explosion at a market in Finote Selam, Amhara region, on Saturday. A grenade also exploded near a school on Thursday last week, injuring 25 students. The Amhara regional government accused the Fano militia of committing the attacks.
- The Ethiopian federal government and Amhara regional government have created an Amhara anti-riot force against Fano. The first two batches of recruits have reportedly been deployed last week.
- It is reported that most of the recruits are new, and will reportedly fight on the front lines.
- The forces are reportedly replacing part of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) in Amhara, leaving the ENDF to focus on strategic positions in some towns and main roads.
- The Ethiopian federal government announced that the ENDF will assume responsibility for peace and stability in the regions bordering the Amhara and Tigray region, until a referendum can be held.
- The government specified that it is important that the internally displaced people can return as soon as possible to their homes. A joint committee of representatives from the federal government and regional administrations of Tigray and Amhara will oversee the process.

Situation in Tigray (per 8 April)

- A team from the AU Monitoring, Verification, and Compliance Mission (AU-MVCM) which oversees the implementation of the Pretoria Cessation of Hostilities Agreement visited the Gulemekeda district and Zalambessa town in eastern Tigray on 4 April.

- Both locations are predominantly under Eritrean control. The mayor of Zalambessa reported that 75% is under control by Eritrean troops, leaving civilians in those areas cut off from aid.

Situation in Eritrea (per 8 April)

- A Russian delegation led by Vice Admiral Vladimir Kasatano and met with President Isaias Afewerki in relation to bilateral ties. Isaias and Kasatano toured a Russian frigate together.
- The delegation also met with Eritrean Defense Forces Chief of Staff General Filipos Woldeyohannes and senior army commanders visiting key locations along the Red Sea coast.
- Over 17,000 Eritrean youth are reported to have started the 36th round of military training.
- Irob Anina Civil Society raises the alarm over the reports of the Eritrean government forcing the Eritrean identity on the Irob indigenous minority and obliging Irob youth to join the Eritrean national service.
- Eritrea is reportedly threatening to continue withholding humanitarian aid from the Irob people and/or face forceful eviction from the lands if the Irob people do not change their loyalty. Irob Anina Civil Society asks for protection of the Irob people and demands the Eritreans to leave their lands.
- Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi appointed Mohamed Hatem el-Atawy as Ambassador to Eritrea.

Situation in South Sudan (per 8 April)

- Inflation and rising food prices are pushing civilians into critical situations of economic hardship. This is caused by the war in Sudan, which has led to an influx of refugees and the shutdown of key oil exports.
- The National Cabinet of Sudan has passed the UN Convention against Transnational Crimes and three protocols related to human trafficking, people smuggling, and the manufacturing and transport of illicit firearms. South Sudan currently has no comprehensive law to combat human trafficking.
- Officials in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) are investigating a recent attack in Ajwara village in Pochalla County in which 12 people were killed and 10 others injured last week Sunday.
- Four youth died protecting cattle in the Warrap State last week.

Regional Situation (per 8 April)

- The sesame industry plays a central role in the conflict economy in Ethiopia and Somalia, Chatham House researchers state.
- Government armed forces, local elites, and militias and rebel groups in border regions are competing for control of sesame farmlands, production and trade, perpetuating violence and instability.

International Situation (per 8 April)

- Eritreans describe how a system of pullbacks by the Libyan coast guard is keeping them in a cycle of human trafficking, prisons and violence in Libya, spending thousands of dollars.
- Refugees rely on family and friends to pay ransoms, bail and smugglers to cross; often needing many attempts to successfully escape.

Links of interest

- [Report: Paramilitary attack on Sudan village kills 28](#)
- [Sudanese army advances in Al-Jazirah, RSF vows response](#)
- [First UN food supplies arrive in Sudan's Darfur after months but millions face acute hunger](#)
- [Sudanese security forces launch new arrest campaign in Sinja](#)
- [Sudan: The plight of the internally displaced in Kassala](#)
- [Blast from grenade wounds 34 in Ethiopia's Amhara](#)
- [ENDF will assume the responsibility of safeguarding the peace and security of the areas adjacent to the Amhara and Tigray territories: Gov't Communication Services](#)
- [AU monitoring team conducts second visit in predominantly Eritrea-controlled Gulemekeda district, Zalambessa town](#)
- [Yemane G. Meskel on X](#)
- [Irob Anina Civil Society \(IACS\) on X](#)
- [Sisi Issues Presidential Decree Appointing Egyptian Ambassador Plenipotentiary To Eritrea](#)
- [South Sudan's severe economic crisis pushes citizens towards starvation](#)
- [Cabinet passes UN Convention against human trafficking](#)
- [Greater Pibor authorities probe attack on Pochalla village](#)
- [4 killed, 1 injured in separate attacks in Tonj North County](#)
- [The 'conflict economy' of sesame in Ethiopia and Sudan](#)
- [Prison, punishment and pushbacks: From Eritrea to Libya to Italy](#)

Disclaimer: All information in this Situation Report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. Publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand potential impacts of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or impact thereof. All information reported originates from third parties and the content of all reported and linked information remains the sole responsibility of these third parties. Report to info@eeпа.be any additional information and corrections.