

# 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 25 April)**

- The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has denied rumours about merger talks with Ethiopia's ruling Prosperity Party (PP), asserting that the claims are false. TPLF emphasised that the two parties have fundamentally different ideologies and goals.
- The rumours emerged following a recent meeting between senior representatives from both parties in Addis Ababa. This meeting was organised in a spirit of continuing party-to-party dialogue that started earlier this month in Mekelle.
- The National Security Council (NSC), chaired by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, is committed to eradicating emerging extremist ideologies, organised crime, and theft, which are disturbing public peace in both urban and rural areas of Ethiopia, according to a NSC statement.
- NSC efforts include strengthening law enforcement institutions and enhancing coordination with local communities to address issues like abduction for ransom and robbery, with plans to train residents in rural areas to uphold local peace.
- The National Dialogue Commission (NDC) of Ethiopia held a dialogue with community representatives in Shashemene city, Oromia, to address the rising tension within the region. The NDC also called upon armed groups from different parts of Ethiopia to use the dialogue platform that NDC provides.
- "We humbly request those involved in armed movements to join the negotiations promptly," said Prof. Mesfin Araya, the NDC Commissioner.
- 50,000 people have been displaced from neighbourhoods of Alamata since the clashes between Tigray and Amhara forces broke out in the area on 13 April, reports UN OCHA.
- Majority of the displaced people are women, children and elderly people mostly seeking refuge in the host communities while another large group settled in an open area of Gara Lencha industrial site.
- Alamata, Woldiya, and Kobo towns are reported to be calm following the intervention of federal forces. Banking, transportation and other public services have restarted. Humanitarian agencies try to assess the security situation and mobilise response assistance.
- Tigray opposition party Salsay Weyane Tigray urged international actors to use accurate narrative when it comes to occupied territories and the need for withdrawal of occupying forces from Tigray region.
- The party's statement comes after foreign embassies in Addis Ababa urged for de-escalation in the "contested areas of Northern Ethiopia" which according to Salsay Weyane Tigray can be seen as evasion of the fact that 'disputed areas' are constitutionally recognized as Tigray territories.

### **Situation in Sudan (per 25 April)**

- The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) reportedly shot down drones that attempted to attack SAF's headquarters in Shendi city, River Nile state, on Tuesday. Three drones were reportedly neutralised with anti-aircraft missiles while one redirected its trajectory.
- Musa Hilal, a prominent leader of the Rizeigat Arab tribe in Darfur, declared his support for Sudan's political institutions and the SAF while urging for a ceasefire. In a speech, Hilal indirectly criticised the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), labelling them as a "militia" and warning against their influence.

- "This is our position: We stand with the state's political and sovereign institutions, the economic institutions we mentioned, and the security institutions we mentioned, led by the Sudanese Armed Forces", stated Hilal.
- 40,615 people have been displaced from El Fasher, North Darfur, due to the ongoing clashes between RSF and SAF between 1 and 16 April, states IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix.
- 42% of the total population in Sudan faced high levels of acute food insecurity in 2023, according to a new report by the Food Security Information Network (FSIN) and Global Network Against Food Crises.
- Sudanese journalist Samar Sulaiman has been threatened and accused of being an agent of RSF for providing humanitarian support to communities in Kassala State. The Sudanese Journalists Union strongly condemned the intimidation of the journalist.

### International Situation (per 25 April)

- Due to the security concern, the city of Rijswijk has prohibited an Eritrean festival by pro-government Eritreans announced for 25 May. "Unfortunately, we know from experience that the safety risk is enormous," said Huri Sahin, Mayor of Rijswijk.
- The US urged all armed forces in Sudan to halt attacks in El Fasher, North Darfur, expressing concern over indications of an offensive by the RSF and condemned indiscriminate bombardment by SAF.

### Regional Situation (per 25 April)

- South Sudan President Salva Kiir Mayardit has reportedly reached an agreement with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition leader, Riek Machar Teny, to postpone the elections that were scheduled for December 2024, states Sudan Post citing an anonymous opposition party source.
- South Sudanese authorities have been delaying UN fuel tankers over a tax dispute, risking the delivery of critical aid, despite earlier assurances that the tax wouldn't apply to UN operations. Trucks were held up at the Ugandan border, following a trade ministry order imposing a \$300 charge on goods trucks.
- Somaliland appeals to international donors to be granted donations directly to its institutions without passing the donor funding through the Somali federal government.

### Refugee and Migration Situation (per 25 April)

- The UK Parliament passed the controversial migration bill which outsources asylum process to Rwanda.
- Michael O'Flaherty, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, condemned the passing of the bill stating it brings "major issues about the human rights of asylum seekers and the rule of law".
- An Italian court in Trapani, Sicily, has dismissed charges against 10 NGO staff accused of facilitating illegal migration and cooperating the search and rescue missions with human traffickers in Libya.
- Defendants stated that the legal action was politically motivated in order to prevent continuation of search and rescue operations and curbing the migration flows in the Mediterranean Sea.
- 19 bodies of refugees and migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea were recovered off the Tunisian coast on Tuesday.

### Links of interest

- [TPLF says allegations of merger talks with Prosperity Party "completely untrue"](#)
- [Security Council vows to resolve 'extremist political views, organized crime and robbery emerging in some areas' in Ethiopia](#)
- [የኢትዮጵያ ሀገራዊ የምክር ቤቅ ስሜት ጥረት](#)
- [Ethiopia: Flash Update #2: Displacement in North Wello and Wag Hamra Zones, Amhara Region \(As of 22 April 2024\)](#)
- [Opposition Salsay Weyane #Tigray Urges Embassies to Adopt Precise Language on the Situation in Tigray](#)
- [Sudanese army thwarts drone attack on military base in Shendi](#)
- [Tribal leader Musa Hilal backs Sudan army and calls for ceasefire](#)
- [Sudanese Journalists Union condemns threats against member](#)
- [Reports: '40k+ displaced by North Darfur clashes', nine communities 'razed by arson'](#)
- [The Global Report on Food Crises \(GRFC\)](#)
- [Rijswijk verbiedt Eritrees bevrijdingsfeest na ongeregeldeheden: 'Levensgroot risico'](#)
- [Kiir, Machar agree 'in principle' to postpone elections: official](#)
- [Fuel tax blocks aid to hunger-ravaged South Sudan, UN says](#)
- [Somaliland goes for direct donor aid, to bypass Somalia](#)
- [Council of Europe human rights watchdog condemns UK's Rwanda bill](#)
- [Italian court drops trafficking charges against crew members of migrant rescue ships](#)
- [Tunisia recovers the bodies of 19 migrants who attempted to cross the Mediterranean to Europe](#)

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