

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA & NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

No. 544 - 16 May 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 16 May)

- The US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control imposed sanctions on two commanders of Rapid Support Forces (RSF), namely Ali Yagoub Gibril, the RSF Central Darfur commander, and Osman Mohamed Hamid Mohamed, a major general in the RSF and the group's head of operations.
- The sanctions include a blockade of all property, interests in property, as well as any entities that are owned, individually or in the aggregate.
- A volunteer of the Sudanese Red Crescent Society, Fadul Daw El-Bait Abdallah, was shot on 11 May and died the next day as a result of the shooting, confirmed The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. A second volunteer was beaten.
- The victim was carrying out a data collection in south-eastern Sudan when their team was attacked.
- Fighting over control of El Fasher, North Darfur, has continued between the RSF and Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) since the weekend. RSF reportedly launched an artillery attack in densely populated areas, according to witnesses.
- Minni Minawi, Governor of Darfur and a head of the Sudan Liberation Movement, announced a general mobilisation to protect El Fasher and citizens.

Situation in Tigray (per 16 May)

- Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and Ethiopia's ruling coalition party Prosperity Party (PP) met for the third round of party-to-party dialogue yesterday in Mekelle.
- Parties agreed to work on lasting peace and emphasised the need for communication as an inherent part of peacebuilding initiatives, as well as promoting a safe political environment for successful implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement.
- Former Ethiopian peacekeepers of Tigrayan origin who have sought asylum in Sudan are currently facing security concerns, following recent statements by the RSF alleging the involvement of "TPLF forces" in the Sudan conflict.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 16 May)

- Drone attacks in the Kawot and Molale districts in the Amhara region reportedly resulted in civilian casualties last Sunday. The attack hit an elementary school which was at that time hosting a meeting between a parents' association and teachers.
- 1,554 civil society organisations have been stripped of their legal status after failing to re-submit their registration according to a new legislation, according to the Ethiopian Federal Authority for Civil Society Organizations.

International Situation (per 16 May)

- Canada announced a \$14 million package to Ethiopia to support initiatives for disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants in Ethiopia.

- The announcement came during the visit of Canadian Minister of International Development, Ahmed Hussein, to Ethiopia where he met with Tigray Interim President, Getachew Reda, and Ethiopian Minister For Foreign Affairs, Taye Atske-Selassie.
- US Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Mike Hammer, travelled to Ethiopia where he met with the Ethiopian State Minister, Ambassador Mesganu Arga, discussing the DDR process and implementation of the CoH agreement.
- Hammer met also with Oromo opposition representatives including the head of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Dawud Ibsa and leader of Oromo Federalist Congress, Merera Gudina, discussing political stability in Ethiopia.
- United States Ambassador to Ethiopia Ervin J. Massinga called on parties involved in conflict in Ethiopia to pursue a "temporary nationwide ceasefire" in a public address.
- The UN Secretary General, António Guterres, appointed a new special representative for Somalia and head of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), James Christopher Swan.
- Brigadier General Mohammed Ali Al Hajri, Qatar's Military Attaché to Ethiopia, met with Ethiopian Brigadier General Kebede Regasa discussing military cooperation between two countries in the area of military technology and exploring collaboration between military educational institutions.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 16 May)

- The Council of the European Union gave the final approval of the Asylum and Migration Pact, adopting 10 legislative acts that bring stricter rules of migration management, including border controls and sharing responsibility among the EU Member States.
- Despite the opposition from Hungary and Poland, the majority of the ministers representing the EU Member States passed the legislation on Tuesday. The EU Member States will have a two year period to implement the EU legislation into their national jurisdictions.
- Austria failed to establish procedures for treatment of asylum seekers that are survivors of torture, gender-based violence or trafficking, or have mental health issues, states a new report by the UN Committee against Torture.
- The Committee observed that in several instances asylum seekers with mental health problems are being detained in detention deportation facilities in inadequate conditions.
- The opening of Italian centres to process asylum applications in Albania is postponed as setting up of the facilities in Shengjin and Gjader, Albania, is not yet finished. The original date was set for 20 May.
- Northern Ireland's High Court ruled that the Rwanda deportation bill cannot apply in Northern Ireland as it undermines human rights and goes against the European convention on human rights.
- "Not only will asylum seekers be welcome in Northern Ireland, but they will also be legally protected", said Sinéad Marmion, the solicitor in the legal case. The UK's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, however, stated that this decision does not stop the deportation bill from being implemented.

Links of interest

[Treasury Sanctions Sudanese Rapid Support Forces Commanders Expanding War](#)
[Statement: IFRC condemns the killing of a Sudanese Red Crescent volunteer](#)
[Army, RSF clash for 4th day over El Fasher control](#)
[News: Prosperity Party, TPLF convened for the third round of peace talks in Mekelle, Tigray](#)
[Ex-Ethiopian peacekeepers of Tigrayan descent previously stationed in Abyei region face danger amid Sudan's escalating conflict](#)
[News: US Special Envoy Mike Hammer meets with Oromo opposition leaders, discusses political challenges](#)
[US envoy urges ceasefire, dialogue in Ethiopia conflict](#)
[Ethiopian authority revokes legal status of 1,554 civil society organizations for non-compliance](#)
[Ethiopia, press sources: drone attacks in the Amhara region kill dozens of civilians](#)
[Ethiopia, Qatar senior commanders discuss cooperation in military technology](#)
[Canada announces a \\$14 million donation to support DDR in Ethiopia](#)
[US Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa Mike Hammer meets Oromo politicians](#)
[UN Chief Guterres appoints James Swan as acting special representative to Somalia](#)
[The Council adopts the EU's pact on migration and asylum](#)
[UN Committee against Torture publishes findings on Austria, Azerbaijan, Finland, Honduras, Liechtenstein, and North Macedonia](#)
[Migrant centres in Albania 20 May opening postponed](#)
[Rwanda deportation law should not apply in Northern Ireland, court rules](#)

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@eepea.be any additional information and corrections.