

# SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

## No. 635 - 26 May 2025

**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 26 May)

- The Joint Forces group of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) announced the recapture of Al-Dabiabat in South Kordofan state, which is a strategic city linking South Kordofan, North Kordofan and East Darfur.
- Large-scale displacement is ongoing in South Kordofan due to clashes between SAF and Rapid Support Forces (RSF).
- RSF has turned the Zamzam displacement camp near El Fasher in North Darfur into a military barracks and artillery base. RSF uses the camp as a base from which to shell El Fasher.
- Cholera cases have exploded in Khartoum, with almost 500 cases reported on 21 May alone, and thousands of cases reported since mid-April in total. The latest cholera data by the Ministry of Health states a total of 60,993 cholera cases across Sudan, with 1,632 deaths.

### Situation in Ethiopia (per 26 May)

- A leaked report compiled by the Ethiopian authorities documents human trafficking cases and suspects in Tigray, allegedly involved in trafficking Eritrean refugees and Tigrayans. Suspects in human trafficking cases have allegedly been freed as a result of bribes and corruption.
- The Office of the President of the Tigray Interim Administration (TIA) accused former TIA President Getachew Reda of leaking the document. Getachew denied this, stating he had submitted the information to higher authorities.
- Getachew further accused Tigray military officials of involvement in the trafficking and other corruption.
- Dozens of healthcare workers have been detained in Ethiopia as healthcare workers have been striking since 12 May for better pay and working conditions. The healthcare workers also state that punitive measures have been taken against hospitals in response to the strikes.
- A meeting took place on Friday afternoon between the movement leaders and Minister of Health Dr. Mekdes Daba; State Ministers Frehiwot Abebe and Dr. Dereje Duguma; and Aschalew Alene, Technical Advisor to the Minister of Health.
- The talks were reportedly unsuccessful in establishing ground rules for talks between the two parties. Preconditions included the release of the detained healthcare workers.
- The Amhara Fano National Force (AFNF) responded to a call from the US ambassador to Ethiopia to come forward with peaceful objectives. AFNF named among others the withdrawal of government forces, the formation of a transitional government, and release of political prisoners.

### Situation in Eritrea (per 26 May)

- A film tribute to the work of Eritrean journalist Dawit Isaak was screened in the European Parliament last week. The follow-up panel addressed topics of press freedom, authoritarianism, and the role of the EU in advocating for worldwide freedom of expression.
- Swedish-Eritrean journalist Dawit Isaak has been imprisoned in Eritrea since 2001.
- A speech by Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki on independence day (24 May) suggests he does not regret the cooperation with the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) in the Tigray war.

- Isaias implies that the devastation and upheaval following the Ethiopia-Eritrea peace agreement of 2018 is mostly to blame on external forces.
- In his speech, Isaias emphasises the need for strong regional ties based on mutual respect and integration, highlighting challenges in neighboring Sudan and Ethiopia.

### **Situation in Somalia (per 26 May)**

- The National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) of Somalia is reportedly on the brink of an internal collapse after there was an attempt to quietly reinstate Mahad Salad, NISA's former director. This has led to a rift in NISA.
- Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud plans to meet with opposition leaders next month to discuss processes around the constitution and electoral process. It is unclear whether the opposition will attend, as it is distrustful of the administration.

### **Regional Situation (per 26 May)**

- Two rival factions appear to be emerging in the tensions between Eritrea, Ethiopia and Tigray, sources state.
- This includes on the one side Eritrea, the Tigray People's Liberation Front, Saudi Arabia and the Fano militia, and on the other side the Ethiopian federal government, the United Arab Emirates and the Tigray Peace Force (TPF).
- The TPF was reportedly formed as an armed group based in the Afar region, paid and armed by the federal government of Ethiopia.
- Kenya emphasised in a statement that it is committed to Somalia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence, and that although it maintains contact with Jubaland and Somaliland, it will do so in consultation with Somalia's Federal Government.

### **International Situation (per 26 May)**

- The United States will impose new sanctions on Sudan after determining that chemical weapons were used by the SAF in its fight against the RSF.
- The US does not provide further details, but unnamed officials told the New York Times in January that chlorine gas weapons were used in remote areas of Sudan. Sudan denies the allegations.
- At least seven Sudanese migrants died and five people are missing after their vehicle was stranded in the Libyan desert. 22 people were rescued after 11 days, with the survivors being extremely dehydrated.
- Amnesty International calls for information on the situation of Mohammed Adam, a Sudanese human rights activist who was abducted by agents of the Sudanese embassy in Tripoli last week. Amnesty calls on the Sudanese government to halt the forcible return of Mohammed which appears to be planned.
- The Eritrean ambassador to the EU and the Benelux countries, Negassi Kassa, participated at the 3rd Africa-EU Ministerial Conference held in Brussels from 21-22 May last week.

### **Links of interest**

[Sudanese army, allied forces seize strategic city in South Kordofan state](#)  
[Ongoing clashes cause mass displacement in South Kordofan](#)  
[RSF fighters turn Darfur camp into barracks, displacing thousands](#)  
[Sudan: Cholera is spreading widely in Khartoum](#)  
[Trapped, sold, silenced: Traffickers Exploit Tigrayans, People from Eritrea across the Horn](#)  
[Ethiopian health professionals set four preconditions before negotiations with Health Ministry; no agreement reached in preliminary talks](#)  
[Ethiopia: Authorities must engage in negotiations with striking healthcare professionals, unconditionally release detained medics](#)  
[Fano Forces Respond To A Call From The United States, Announce Precondition For Negotiation](#)  
[Chemical weapons allegedly used in Sudan](#)  
[Somalia's intelligence agency faces internal collapse amid political power struggle](#)  
[Somalia's President to meet opposition leaders amid political tensions](#)  
[The significance of President Isaias's Independence Day speech](#)  
[Kenya Reaffirms Support for Somalia but Won't Cut Links With Jubaland & Somaliland](#)  
[At least seven Sudanese migrants found dead after being stranded in Libyan desert](#)  
[Libya: Sudanese human rights defender disappeared and under imminent threat of forced return](#)

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