

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 Sudan (per 17 July)

- More than 450 civilians, including 35 children and two pregnant women, were killed in an attack around the Bara locality in North Kordofan State over the weekend. With many more people injured or still missing, UNICEF fears that the number of casualties will increase.
- The attacks have been attributed to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) which, according to the witnesses, shelled and burned houses of local residents.
- 5 children were reportedly killed as a result of renewed shelling by the RSF in El Fasher, North Darfur, on Wednesday. A day earlier, an additional 6 people were killed in the Nyvasha market after it was hit by rocket-propelled grenades.
- Sudan is facing a dramatic decline in vaccination rates, with only 48% of children receiving routine immunizations, dropping down from over 90% in 2022, reports the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Sudanese legal experts and human rights advocates have condemned last week's International Criminal Court report to the UN Security Council for being ineffective and lacking tangible results. They also call for broader investigations beyond Darfur.

Situation in South Sudan (per 17 July)

- Arbitrary arrests and detentions across South Sudan have been on the rise, particularly targeting political opponents, journalists, and activists, which human rights organizations warn is jeopardizing the fragile peace process.
- The UN Human Rights Division and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) have documented numerous cases of individuals being held without due process, often subjected to torture, abuse, and denied access to legal representation and family.
- South Sudan's parliament reconvened after a six-month break to tackle urgent issues, including delays in the 2018 peace agreement, budget approvals, and upcoming elections in December 2026.
- MPs emphasized the need to prioritize public interests, and opposition members called for addressing the house arrest of Riek Machar and absence of some other key opposition representatives.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 17 July)

- The 2021 killings of three Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) aid workers in Tigray were intentional and targeted, states a new report by MSF. Despite MSF's requests, Ethiopian authorities have not carried out a formal investigation.
- MSF staff members María Hernández Matas, Tedros Gebremariam Gebremichael, and Yohannes Halefom Reda were shot multiple times from a close distance in June 2021, with their bodies found 400 metres from their MSF labelled vehicle which was burned.
- The MSF's internal review states that an Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) convoy was present in the area where the attack took place, with witness accounts implicating the ENDF soldiers to be involved in the incident.

- There are reports of troop movements within Tigray and around the border areas with Eritrea, fanning growing fears of renewed conflict in the region amid rising tensions. Local people started to stockpile essential food items and withdraw hard currency from banks, according to DW.
- Tigray leadership is reportedly restructuring the military chain of command.
- 21 religious leaders arrived in Mekelle yesterday in order to facilitate peace discussions in an effort to de-escalate the current tensions. They are scheduled to meet with the Tigray Regional Interim Administration (TIRA), Tadesse Werede, the head of TIRA, and military commanders.
- 82 people linked to ISIS, who were reportedly trained in Puntland and deployed to conduct terrorist activities within Ethiopia, were arrested by Ethiopia's National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS).
- The arrest comes after NISS conducted an intelligence operation revealing the group's attempt to expand influence in Ethiopia.

Regional & International Situation (per 17 July)

- The US President Donald Trump announced that his administration is actively seeking to address the ongoing disputes between Egypt and Ethiopia regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which is set to be inaugurated in September despite concerns from Egypt and Sudan.
- An open letter expresses outrage towards Italian TV channel Rai3, which broadcast the documentary "La Grande Bugia – Eritrea andata e ritorno" ("The Big Lie – Eritrea and Back,") as it reportedly promotes a misleading narrative about Eritrea and its diaspora while supporting the Eritrean regime's propaganda.
- Authors of the letter, Eritrea Democratica, are inviting the general public to co-sign this initiative.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 17 July)

- More than 100 migrants and refugees who were held captive by a human trafficking and smuggling gang in Ajdabiya, Libya, were released after the arrest of their captors. Traffickers were detaining their victims subjecting them to torture to force their relatives to pay ransom money.
- Five suspected human traffickers from Libya, Sudan, and Egypt have been arrested.
- Western nations are exacerbating instability by tightening borders while simultaneously cutting development aid without providing appropriate alternatives, stated IOM Director General Amy Pope.
- "If you want to manage irregular migration, then you need to make investments in stabilizing populations closer to where the migration begins," said Pope.
- EU member states are continuously pushing forward stricter rules on asylum and border regulations.
- The Czech Republic is trying to introduce a bill aiming to limit access to asylum and temporary protection. The bill passed the Czech lower house of parliament and is awaiting approval of the upper house.
- Denmark wants to strengthen the EU's external borders in an attempt to lower the migration number, stated PM Mette Frederiksen as Denmark has taken over the six-month presidency of the EU Council.

Links of interest

[Sudan: UNICEF condemns weekend attacks that killed 35 children](#)
[RSF rampages through North Kordofan villages, killing hundreds](#)
[Five children killed as shelling, clashes hit Sudan's El Fasher](#)
[Sudan's children face growing threat of deadly infectious diseases as vaccination rates halve](#)
[Sudanese lawyers slam ICC prosecutor's report](#)
[In South Sudan, scourge of arbitrary detentions undermines fragile peace](#)
[South Sudan MPs set priorities as parliament resumes sittings](#)
[Ethiopia: MSF releases findings of internal review into 2021 Tigray killing of three staff members](#)
[A look at Eritrea's role as new Tigray war looms in Ethiopia](#)
[Tigray readies its military leadership for war](#)
[Tigray : 21 Religious Leaders And Elders In Mekelle For Peace Effort](#)
[82 ISIS Operatives Arrested in Nationwide Counter-Terrorism Operation, NISS Confirms](#)
[Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: US President Trump announces efforts to resolve disputes](#)
[Invito alla firma della lettera alla RAI su "La Grande Bugia – Eritrea andata e ritorno"](#)
[Libya: More than 100 released after being held captive by gang members](#)
[Tighter borders and aid cuts could risk greater instability, UN migration chief warns](#)
[Sudanese refugee killed in Uganda camp attack amid aid tensions](#)
[Denmark to prioritize stricter migration rules for Europe, Frederiksen tells MEPs](#)
[Czechia to tighten asylum and migration rules](#)

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