

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

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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 25 September)

- A drone strike by the Rapid Support Forces on a mosque during dawn prayers in El Fasher, North Darfur, on Friday morning killed over 75 civilians, according to the El Fasher Resistance Committee.
- The strike hit the Masjid al-Safiya in the neighbourhood of Safiya on the western side of El Fasher. RSF has been pushing the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) for more control over the city.
- An air strike by the RSF on a civilian market in El Fasher on Tuesday has resulted in the deaths of at least 15 people, according to local witnesses.
- Over 5,000 cases of malaria, typhoid, and dengue fever have been reported over the past month in Khartoum, leading to numerous fatalities, as the ongoing rainy season fosters ideal conditions for mosquito-borne diseases.

Situation in South Sudan (per 25 September)

- The trial of former South Sudan's Vice President Riek Machar commenced in Juba this week, where he appeared alongside seven other co-defendants, facing serious charges including murder and crimes against humanity related to an attack on government troops earlier this year.
- The court proceedings have been adjourned as there have been several challenges to the court posed by both sides. The trial is set to resume on 29 September.
- The prosecution challenged the licensing of two defence lawyers, while Machar's legal team posed a challenge over the court's jurisdiction, arguing that the case should fall under a different monitoring body established by the 2018 peace agreement.
- The trial has sparked renewed fears regarding the country's peace and stability. "It's a context of power struggle among the political elites. but also this particular power struggle has taken an ethnic dimension", said Edmund Yakani, head of the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 25 September)

- The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is seeking popular support for forcefully taking back western Tigray, which is currently occupied by Amhara forces. However, people appear to largely support diplomatic solutions and are resistant to the call for war.
- The TPLF has reportedly been preparing for forced mobilisations.
- Young people in Tigray do not have a perspective on a stable income nor good educational opportunities, which is leading to an increase in crime, experts warn.
- Eritrean human rights activists and organisations have launched a petition addressed to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed protesting the harassment, indiscriminate arrest and delays of asylum processes of Eritreans in Ethiopia.
- The petition highlights that Eritreans in Ethiopia are at risk of human trafficking for ransom, arbitrary arrest and extortion, refoulement, and targeting by militias.

- Fano militia are accused of perpetrating violence against civilians in Oromia. 32 people were reportedly killed on 23 August as Fano militia attacked the Hoomaa Gaaleessaa village in Abee Dongoro district, according to eye witnesses.
- The militia are accused of employing tactics to terrorise the population, and are also looting goods.

Situation in Eritrea (per 25 September)

- A new country of origin information report details the mobilisation of Eritreans during and after the Tigray war. The war saw an increase in forced conscription in Eritrea, and people trying to avoid national service are being investigated and arrested.
- The report states that thousands of Eritrean soldiers likely died or were injured during the Tigray war, but the Eritrean government has not presented any numbers.
- The report also notes that people returned to Eritrea are subject to arbitrary and inconsistent treatment, just like the Eritrean population. People who conform to all demands by the government, such as paying 2% tax and signing a regret form, can only return temporarily before needing to join the national service.

Regional & International Situation (per 25 September)

- The Ethiopian Prosperity Party has reportedly been active to mobilize support for Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed in Oromia, the southern and western regional states, by meeting with former leaders of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) parties and affiliates.
- Ethiopian PM Abiy has reportedly been seeking support for a possible confrontation against Eritrea, which is said to have been promised by all regional states except Tigray.
- Germany has reduced its international development budget by 8%, resulting in a significant cut to emergency aid, which has raised alarms among aid organizations about serious implications for people in need.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 25 September)

- A militia affiliated with the Libyan government is reportedly involved in human trafficking and smuggling operations in the Mediterranean sea, according to a sea rescue NGO which has released video evidence.
- The footage, taken by a journalist accompanying the NGO Mediterranean Saving Humans, has been submitted to prosecutors in Sicily and the International Criminal Court, highlighting the militia's connection to the official military apparatus in Tripoli.
- The UN 1951 Refugee Convention is facing unprecedented threats particularly from governments in the global north, which are increasingly undermining the Convention by suspending asylum applications and seeking to outsource their responsibilities to third countries, warned UNHCR.
- On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the UN Refugee Convention, Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, the UNHCR assistant high commissioner for protection said: "I am not exaggerating when I say that the institution of the asylum worldwide is under more threat now than it has ever been".
- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has urged for enhanced global collaboration to support migrants and refugees during the United Nations General Assembly meeting on 22 September, emphasizing that no country can effectively manage migration independently.

Links of interest

[Worshippers massacred in RSF drone strike on Mosque in El Fasher](#)
[Drone strike on a market in Sudan kills 15, aid worker and local group say](#)
[Spread of diseases overwhelms Khartoum hospitals in war-ravaged Sudan](#)
[South Sudan: Vice president Machar's trial sparks fears over fragile peace deal](#)
[Court jurisdiction, lawyers' credentials delay Machar's trial](#)
[Stop Ongoing Arrests, Deportation of Eritrean Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Addis Ababa](#)
[Fano Amhara Militias Escalate Atrocities Against Oromo Civilians in Oromia](#)
[Mobilisation na de oorlog in Tigray](#)
[Germany slashes aid, development budget](#)
[Videos appear to show people smuggling by state-linked Libyan militia in Mediterranean](#)
[UNHCR official warns that the 1951 refugee convention is increasingly under threat](#)
[IOM chief Amy Pope calls for stronger cooperation on migration](#)

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