

Europe External Programme with Africa

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 23 October)

- The international airport in Khartoum was attacked by Rapid Support Forces (RSF) drones over three days between Tuesday and Thursday. The airport, controlled by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), was due to reopen on Wednesday after being closed for over two years.
- Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, SAF leader, visited the airport to reassure control, after the shelling on Tuesday, while on the same day the RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti) pledged to target any airport used by SAF aircrafts and drones.
- The SAF, RSF, and allied militias have been found responsible for widespread human rights violations, including attacks on civilians, civilian infrastructure, and camps for internally displaced people, according to a fact-finding mission by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).
- Around 10,000 civilians have been displaced recently from Serief and Kernoï localities, North Darfur, due to increasing security risks according to field reports by the IOM.
- At least 350 families have fled from El Fasher, North Darfur, to nearby Tawila over Sunday and Monday. Dozens of men have gone missing while attempting to escape, raising security concerns along the route. Tawila now hosts over 600,000 internally displaced people and humanitarian conditions are dire.
- Four UN institutions, IOM, UNICEF, UNHCR, and World Food Programme, have called for "urgent international attention" to the crisis in Sudan in a joint statement to address the growing suffering and danger to the population.
- The Sudanese pound has lost nearly 40% of its value following the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) de facto trade embargo imposed in August 2025. The embargo has severely limited the country's exports of key resources including gold, with over 90% going to the UAE in the first half of 2025.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 23 October)

- 25 people, including women and children, died in an attack in the Nono district of West Shewa Zone, Oromia, on 19 October, with local residents attributing the attack to Fano militia.
- The attackers, reportedly armed with firearms and bladed weapons, targeted homes indiscriminately, causing significant casualties among civilians and prompting the federal security forces to respond.
- A fatal train accident in the Somali region caused at least 15 deaths and 29 injuries after the train collided with a parked lorry while travelling from Dewale to Dire Dawa. The exact cause of the incident remains under an investigation, though there are indications of a possible motor malfunction.
- The date for Ethiopia's 7th national general election has been proposed for 1 June 2026 by the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), following a consultative meeting with political party leaders.
- Many opposition leaders doubt the feasibility of conducting fair elections amid prevailing instability across the country.

Regional & International Situation (per 23 October)

- The European Union and Egypt held their first Summit in Brussels, Belgium, on 22 October. Egyptian president Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi met with Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission President, and António Costa, the European Council President.

- The EU announced an enhanced partnership with Egypt by increasing its financial aid, including a new €75 million package aimed at boosting socio-economic development and access to essential services.
- Human Rights Watch urged to prioritize talks on human rights issues, ahead of the Summit.
- “Europe should use its leverage to secure concrete, overdue reforms to ensure the Egyptian government is accountable to its people and committed to respect and fulfill their rights”, said Claudio Francavilla, EU Associate Director at HRW.
- The Sudanese government has strongly rejected Monday’s conclusion of the European Council in which it presented its four priorities for a peace process in Sudan, accusing the Council of attempting to grant legitimacy to the RSF while ignoring the violations they have committed against civilians.
- The Field Office of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) announced its closure due to funding cuts which impacts peace keeping operations. UNMISS will continue to provide support from its headquarters in Juba.
- The UAE President’s diplomatic advisor Anwar Gargash called for an immediate ceasefire in Sudan on Wednesday in Abu Dhabi, stressing the need for a transitional civilian government, and UAE’s readiness to expand their humanitarian role once allowed by the Sudanese government.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 23 October)

- Over 2.6 million Sudanese displaced people have returned to their areas of origin between November 2024 and September 2025, according to a new report by the IOM. More than 500,000 returned from countries bordering Sudan, and over 1 million from Khartoum.
- A boat carrying 35 migrants and refugees capsized in the central Mediterranean leaving at least one person dead and dozens missing last week. The rescue operation was carried out off the coast of Lampedusa, Italy, which saved 11 people, including 4 unaccompanied minors.
- Protests were organised in Rome, Italy, following the shipwreck, against the Italy-Libya migration deal. Protesters called for enhanced protection of migrants and refugees en route.
- 71 South Sudanese children were successfully reunited with their mothers after the women were deported from Sudan earlier in October. The reunification process was a result of collaborative efforts between authorities from both countries.
- A surge of migrant and refugee arrivals was reported from southern Italy last week with close to 400 people, including many unaccompanied minors, reaching the Italian shore in separate boats.

Links of interest

[Drone attacks target Sudanese capital, Khartoum airport](#)
[Khartoum airport reopening delayed after second day of drone attacks](#)
[Report Of The Virtual Joint Fact-Finding Mission On The Human Rights Situation In The Sudan](#)
[Today's top news: Occupied Palestinian Territory, Sudan, Ukraine](#)
[DTM Sudan Flash Alert: As Serief and Kernoï localities, North Darfur](#)
[IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP Urge Immediate Action to Address Escalating Humanitarian Crisis in Sudan](#)
[Sudan pound depreciates after UAE flight ban hits gold exports](#)
[Darfur governor says Sudan govt lacks vision to end war, slams UAE](#)
[UNMISS quits Eastern Equatoria as operations downsizing starts](#)
[News: Attack in West Shewa kills over 25, including children; residents blame Fano](#)
[Ethiopia : Fatal Train Collision kills At Least 15, Wounded 27 Others](#)
[Election board proposes 1 June for Ethiopia's 7th general election](#)
[EU to announce €75 million package in financial support for Egypt](#)
[EU/Egypt: First Summit Should Not Ignore Human Rights Violations](#)
[UAE calls for ceasefire and civilian transition in Sudan](#)
[Sudan accuses EU of legitimising RSF, ignoring its abuses](#)
[DTM Sudan Return Monitoring Snapshot \(08\)](#)
[Dozens feared dead in the latest Mediterranean shipwreck spark protests in Rome](#)
[South Sudanese children reunited with mothers after deportation from Sudan](#)
[EU presents new pact to reshape relations with Mediterranean countries](#)
[Italy: Unaccompanied minors among hundreds to have arrived recently](#)

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