

# 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 18 June)**

- The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been mobilising large numbers of fighters from Darfur and West Kordofan around El Obeid in North Kordofan State since 15 June.
- The RSF has further established positions in cities around El Obeid, including En Nahud, Al-Khuwei, Um Samima, Abu Ga'oud, Kazgail, Al-Rayash, Bara and Jurayjikh.
- The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have responded to the mobilisation by increasing their aerial operations targeting mobilisation efforts around El Obeid.
- The security committee of Red Sea State deployed security forces to Al-Rataj, Halaib locality, on 17 June to defuse tension that had been building up between the Bishariyn and Rashaida groups.
- Sudan has been ranked as the 4th most affected country by climate change, according to a report by the University of Notre Dame. The climate impacts include degradation of agricultural land and desertification, increasing food insecurity, and more frequent floods, facilitating the spread of diseases.
- Port Sudan resumed transshipment operations on 16 June after a prolonged suspension.
- Over 24,000 people were displaced by fires during the fire season, between January and May 2026. This number has increased four times compared to the fire season of 2025.

### **Situation in Ethiopia (per 18 June)**

- The Ethiopian National Election Board (ENEB) announced the results of the 75 election regions, with the Prosperity Party candidates for President and Vice President of the federal House of Representatives, who contested in the Oromia and Amhara regions, receiving the highest number of votes.
- Journalist Salsawit Baynesagn Yimer was arrested in Addis Ababa and has been held for over ten days without a court appearance. The federal police have not disclosed the reason for her arrest.

### **International and regional situation (per 18 June)**

- Eritrean diplomats spoke in Geneva, opposing the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur, stating it has lost its credibility and that reports are methodologically flawed and biased.
- China sided with Eritrea in criticising Country-Specific Mandates, advocating instead for protection of human rights through dialogue and cooperation.
- During the 62nd United Nations Human Rights Council session, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, condemned the sharp rise in drone strikes in Sudan's war and documented widespread attacks on hospitals, markets, infrastructure and civilian vehicles.
- European Union (EU) Heads of Mission had their first joint visit to Sudan since the outbreak of the war. The aim of the visit was to express solidarity and assess the situation on the ground and included meetings with senior Sudanese officials.
- The envoy expressed concern over the violations of international humanitarian law and the regional spillover from the conflict, called for de-escalation and expressed their support towards Sudan's unity and territorial integrity while criticising the continued external military support to the warring parties.

- US President Donald Trump has stated that he will revisit the dispute between Egypt and Ethiopia on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), during bilateral talks with Egyptian president Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.
- The newly elected President of Somalia's Southwest State, Sheikh Adan Mohamed Nur Madobe, held talks with senior commanders of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF), to pledge continued cooperation under the African Union Mission.
- Israel has been cooperating with Somaliland for years, according to Israel's defence minister, Israel Katz.
- Somali National Army Commander, Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Mohamed Mahmoud, met with Egypt's defence attaché to Somalia on 14 June to discuss strengthening collaboration in military training, the AU Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia, and broader defense relations between both countries.

### Refugee and migration situation (per 18 June)

- At least 15 bodies of migrants washed ashore in a coastal Libyan city, east of Tripoli.
- The number of fatalities in the Central Mediterranean between January and June has increased by 81% compared to 2025.
- The EU Pact on Migration and Asylum went into force on 12 June. Many member states, especially Hungary and several Mediterranean countries, remain politically or administratively unprepared to implement key protections and monitoring at external borders.
- Gaps include under-resourced independent monitoring, uneven legal aid arrangements, delayed Eurodac rollout, and concerns the new return rules (including longer detention) could weaken rights and will only be fully tested if migration pressures rise.
- The Pact includes a law meant to improve cooperation on migration management, hold frontline states to stricter standards for minimising irregular entries, and speed up asylum procedures. However, most member states have found ways to circumvent it, risking a precedent of weak enforcement.
- 2.4 million refugees worldwide will require resettlement in 2027 as they remain at risk in the country where they currently reside and are unable to safely return home, according to UNHCR, while resettlement opportunities are shrinking steeply due to policy changes in destination countries.
- Low- and middle- income countries host 68% of all refugees, creating significant pressure on local systems.
- Rwanda has received 12 South Sudanese asylum seekers from Libya, this is the 23rd group of asylum seekers transferred from Libya under the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM), an initiative aimed at evacuating vulnerable refugees from detention centres and precarious conditions in Libya.

### Links of interest

- [Sudan: RSF buildup reported around El Obeid amid fears of major offensive](#)
- [Sudan deploys troops to Red Sea state mining hub to defuse tribal tensions](#)
- [Sudan 4th among 186 countries most affected by climate change](#)
- [Port Sudan resumes transshipment operations as international cargo ship docks](#)
- [IOM: 24k+ displaced by fires in Sudan in first five months of 2026](#)
- [Results of 75 Election Regions Announced](#)
- [Ethiopian Gov't Arrests Journalist Salsawit Baynesagn Yimer](#)
- [Eritrea Rejects UNHRC Report, Says Rights Mandate Has Lost Credibility](#)
- [China Reasserts Opposition to Country-Specific Mandates During UNHRC Dialogue on Eritrea](#)
- [UN Human Rights Council: 'Drones and sexual violence worsening Sudan conflict'](#)
- [EU envoys conclude first joint visit to Sudan since war began](#)
- [EU Heads of Mission conclude their visit to Khartoum and Port Sudan](#)
- [Trump signals fresh push to resolve GERD dispute in meeting with El-Sisi](#)
- [News: Newly elected Southwest State leader meets Ethiopian Sector 3 forces, pledges deeper security cooperation](#)
- [Israel cooperated "under the radar" with Somaliland for years, says Defence Minister Israel Katz](#)
- [Somali army chief, Egyptian defense attaché discuss military cooperation](#)
- [Libya: 15 bodies of migrants recovered east of capital Tripoli](#)
- [The migration pact is here. But the EU isn't ready](#)
- [How EU countries watered down 'solidarity' plans to relocate asylum seekers](#)
- [Resettlement remains out of reach for millions of refugees](#)
- [Rwanda receives dozen South Sudanese asylum seekers evacuated from Libya](#)

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