

# SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

## No. 748 - 27 July 2026

**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 27 July)

- Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and allied groups have reportedly retaken Bara and Umm Sayalla in North Kordofan as part of a larger offensive aimed at securing the key Al-Sadarat Highway linking Khartoum and El Obeid in North Kordofan.
- Securing the Highway would let the SAF move supplies more efficiently between Omdurman and El Obeid and could also restart a commercial route for transporting goods into Khartoum.
- The SAF chief, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, has ordered a nationwide offensive to dismantle the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and allied forces and push operations up to the Central African Republic border.
- The campaign is planned to secure Kordofan before moving into Darfur, with heavy fighting expected along the desert border where both sides are gathering reinforcements.
- A military court associated with Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), led by Abdel Aziz al-Hilu, sentenced women's rights and peacebuilding activist Najwa Musa Kaunda to one year in prison.
- Kaunda was reportedly arrested in early April and, according to an anonymous source, was not informed of charges or given evidence in the trial, which relied mainly on a social media post she allegedly made criticizing SPLM-N abuses against civilians.
- New patterns have emerged in violence against women and girls in El Obeid with daylight drone attacks disrupting water access and forcing people to wait until night, when they are then subjected to sexual violence, leaving them with no safe time to collect water, reports UN Women.
- 17 out of 61 gold mining companies in South Kordofan have moved into the gold production stage, according to the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company.
- Sudan's official gold export earnings have fallen dramatically, with revenue through legal channels reaching about \$909.6 million in 2025 as opposed to \$2.09 billion reached in 2021, while gold smuggling is reportedly accounting for about 90% of production.
- Sudan's Petroleum Ministry and a Bank of Sudan report links the decline to problems arising from gold purchase and export policies and warns export revenues could drop further this year.

### Situation in Ethiopia (per 27 July)

- Ongoing Ethiopia's National Dialogue in Addis Ababa has been considering governance reforms, including constitutional changes and possible shifts away from the current parliamentary model toward presidential or semi-presidential systems that would restructure how executive power is shared.
- The National Dialogue forum has also debated the administrative status of the capital city Addis Ababa with several competing models for how the capital should be governed to reduce longstanding political tensions.
- The Amhara Fano National Movement (AFNM) has rejected Ethiopia's National Dialogue through a statement, arguing it is an effort to legitimize the Prosperity Party rather than addressing the country's worsening conflicts, adding that the forum is not inclusive, neutral and lacks broad, legitimate backing.
- A new regional budget of 65 billion birr for the 2026–2027 fiscal year was approved by the newly reinstated Tigray Regional State Council after two day deliberations of its 6th and 7th regular sessions.

- In addition to budget approval, two new cabinet nominations received their approval with Dr. Redae Berhe was appointed as a Head of the Bureau of Trade and Market Development and Aite Teweldeberhan Tesfaalem as a Head of the Bureau of Peace and Security.
- Two nuns were killed and six priests injured in a reported drone strike on Arsema Monastery near Mekane Selam in Amhara region amid escalating clashes between federal forces and Fano groups. The attack damaged key monastery buildings and water and grain facilities.
- Local witnesses accused the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF), saying aerial surveillance preceded the strike, but the cause and responsibility have not been independently confirmed yet.
- Ethiopia's Orthodox Patriarch Abune Matthias I. has condemned deadly attacks on monasteries and churches, calling them completely unacceptable and urging immediate government action.
- The Patriarch demanded legal accountability, stronger protection for remaining religious sites, emergency help for victims, and urged Ethiopians to offer humanitarian support.
- Somali Region authorities have introduced stricter traffic rules after two deadly accidents this week in Jigjiga and Qabribeyah Woreda that left at least 19 dead and injured four others.
- The directives restrict certain vehicles from inter-city travel or late-night driving without permits, require use of seatbelts and helmets, mandate speed limiters, and ban modifications or overloading that reduce safety and visibility.

### International and regional situation (per 27 July)

- Somali State Minister at the Presidency, Abshir Bukhaari, was reportedly prevented from entering Kenya at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport where he was questioned by the Kenyan immigration officials due to issues surrounding the Kenyan passport he was using.
- Somalia is said to have summoned Kenya's ambassador and requested clarification, though neither of the governments had released an official statement yet.
- Ethiopia and Sudan should move toward a legally binding, coordinated framework for operating the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), as the ongoing lack of coordination endangers water shortages and causes damaging floods downstream, according to a water resources expert.
- The recent sharp drop in Blue Nile and Main Nile levels has been linked to reduced inflows from Ethiopia's GERD and below-average rainfall, affecting drinking water stations in Khartoum and irrigation of farms in northern Sudan.
- Millions of items of ammunition and explosive devices in South Sudan have been destroyed in a demining effort operation carried out by the United Nations Mine Action Service with financial support received from the Netherlands.
- The International Criminal Court removed its chief prosecutor, Karim Khan, after states parties voted to remove Khan for "serious misconduct and serious breach of duty," which is linked to allegations of Khan's sexual misconduct and attempts to block a complainant's case.

### Links of interest

[Army Offensive in Sudan Seeks to Reopen Major Highway](#)  
[Sudan army chief orders troops to clear country to Central African Republic border](#)  
[SPLM-N military court sentences prominent activist to one year in prison](#)  
[Drone attacks by day and sexual violence by night leave no safe window for women and girls to collect water](#)  
[Seventeen mining companies enter gold production in South Kordofan](#)  
["المحقق" يكشف حجم تهريب الذهب خلال العام الماضي \[The investigator reveals the size of gold smuggling during the past year\]](#)  
[Dual-Executive System on the Cards as National Dialogue Wraps First Week](#)  
[News: Fano rejects National Dialogue conference, urges boycott and intensified anti-government struggle](#)  
[Tigray Regional Council Approves 65 Billion Birr Budget and New Cabinet Appointments Amid Institutional Questions](#)  
[Drone strike kills eight churchmen in Ethiopia's Amhara](#)  
[Patriarch Abune Matthias Condemns Deadly Monastery Attacks in South Wollo, Hadiya-Silte](#)  
[News: Somali Region imposes new traffic restrictions after two fatal crashes kill 19](#)  
[Tigray IDP Sites Face Critical Aid Deficit amid Surge in New Arrivals](#)  
[Somali state minister denied entry to Kenya and deported to Mogadishu](#)  
[Somalia summons Kenya's ambassador after state minister Abshir Bukhaari reportedly deported from Nairobi | Somali Guardian](#)  
[Water expert urges binding GERD agreement after Nile levels fall in Sudan](#)  
[UNMAS destroys explosive remnants of war across South Sudan with support from the Netherlands](#)  
[ICC chief prosecutor removed from post over sexual misconduct allegations](#)

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