

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

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Situation in Ethiopia (per 21 September)

- Seven Ethiopian armed groups have formed an alliance, the Ethiopian Peoples' Forces Alliance for Survival, with the aim of overthrowing the federal government of Ethiopia and establishing a transitional government.
- The Alliance for Survival includes the Amhara Fano National Movement, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), the Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front (Ugugumo), the Benishangul Peoples' Liberation Movement and the Gumuz Peoples' Democratic Movement.
- The Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) carried out a drone attack in Maychew, Southern Tigray, on 19 September. Civilians were injured and property was damaged, although the total number of casualties remains unclear.
- 300 members of the Tigray People's Liberation Party (TPLP) Defence Forces have surrendered to the federal authorities. According to the ENDF, they opposed TPLF's war tactics and the tendency of its leaders to enlist young Tigrayans and send them to war to avoid accountability.
- The ENDF carried out a drone attack on 20 September on a vehicle transporting grain aid intended for displaced people and civilians in northwestern Tigray. The attack caused significant damage to the cargo.
- The Adigrat Hagere Preket Catholic Church has condemned the drone attack on the vehicle, calling on all relevant parties to respect International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and refrain from targeting relief vehicles.
- A drone attack carried out by the ENDF on 17 September targeted civilians in Asgede Woreda, Tabia Dedebeit and Tselimoy Kebele, in the Tigray region. The attack reportedly affected civilians in the area.
- At least 12 people were killed and dozens injured following intercommunal fighting in the Gambella region of western Ethiopia, near the South Sudan border. Doctors Without Borders (MSF) reported that its health center in Kule received 88 casualties from the incident.

Situation in Sudan (per 21 September)

- Thousands of civilians fled Hamrat al-Sheikh, a town in Sudan's North Kordofan state as the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) advanced toward the Rapid Support Forces' (RSF) final strongholds in the region.
 - The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) repelled a substantial drone attack by the RSF on civilian and military infrastructure, including the headquarters of the 5th Infantry Division, the SAF's main base in the region, in the city of El Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan state.
 - Protests erupted in Gedaref, a city in eastern Sudan, on 20 September against deteriorating living conditions and soaring food prices, amid a continued decline in the value of the local currency.
 - A drone attack carried out by the SAF targeting a South Sudanese oil pipeline passing through Sudanese territory caused widespread fire, resulting in the death of seven people.
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- The collapse of the Awni gold mine in Sudan's Red Sea State has resulted in an unknown number of casualties, with local media reporting at least six deaths and dozens more injured.

International and regional situation (per 21 September)

- The US Treasury Department has officially lifted sanctions against Eritrea's ruling party, the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), its military and the state-owned Red Sea Trading Corporation.
- Clashes broke out in Abyei on 17 September between the local Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities. At least 26 people were killed and 82 injured during the fighting.
- A severe power struggle broke out between internal factions fighting over the leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO), while the current leader, Riek Macha, is under house arrest.
- The faction of the SPLM-IO led by Acting Chairman Nathaniel Oyet Pierino is attempting to silence senior party members whom they accuse of plotting to subvert his interim leadership.
- South Sudan's parliament is advancing an amendment to the National Elections Act that would allow president Salva Kiir to dissolve the transitional unity government and retain full executive powers ahead of the December elections.
- The US has agreed to grant the UN a 12-month extension to wind down its logistical support for the African Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia, delaying funding cuts.
- Afyare Elmi, professor at the City University of Mogadishu, expressed concern that the eventual withdrawal of these UN funds risks putting Somalia in an even worse state of fragmentation.
- Saudi Arabia and Eritrea have been holding talks to strengthen their bilateral relations, specifically around security cooperation in the Red Sea, while Eritrea seeks to expand trade and attract foreign investment.
- China's military has recently upgraded its base in Djibouti by installing new equipment to improve both internal communications and signals intelligence gathering capabilities.
- Israeli intelligence is reportedly supplying weapons and military equipment to the RSF. It was also reported that high-level RSF delegations made secret visits to Israel in May 2025 and February 2026.
- Somaliland's president Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi, is campaigning to secure US diplomatic recognition of the breakaway Somali territory. In exchange, he is offering the US access to the strategic Berbera Port on the Gulf of Aden, as well as the opportunity to establish a military base.
- Egypt has agreed to support South Sudan's Grand Fula hydroelectric plant project in the Eastern Equatoria region, after reviewing technical studies of the project, while continuing to oppose the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile River in Ethiopia.

Links of interest

[Ethiopian armed groups forge alliance against government](#)
[Ethiopia says about 300 Tigray rebel fighters have surrendered](#)
[Ethiopia: Reported Drone Strike in Maychew Area of Tigray](#)
[Violence in western Ethiopia leaves 12 dead, dozens wounded: MSF](#)
[Thousands flee North Kordofan town as Sudan army advances, RSF raids gold mine](#)
[Sudan army repels RSF drone strikes on El Obeid, says aircraft downed](#)
[Protests erupt in eastern Sudan over soaring prices, economic crisis](#)
[Establishment: Marches blow up South Sudan oil pipelines](#)
[Sudan reports casualties after gold mine collapse in Red Sea State](#)
[US lifts sanctions targeting Eritrea's ruling party and the military](#)
[At least 26 killed in clashes along Sudan-South Sudan border region](#)
[Exclusive / Somaliland's president puts everything on the table for Trump](#)
[Riek Machar's SPLM-IO party splinters ahead of elections](#)
[Kiir set to retain powers amid gov't dissolution ahead of elections](#)
[US gives UN more time to end support for Somalia peacekeepers](#)
[Saudi Crown Prince and Eritrean President Reinforce Bilateral Relations Through High-Level Message](#)
[China Upgrades Its Military Base in Djibouti](#)
[Among genocidians, they understand each other: Israel supplies weapons to Sudanese janjaweed](#)
[News: Egypt says it backs South Sudan's Fula dam after review, renews objections to Ethiopia's GERD](#)

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