

Press – Note : War in Tigray: Summary of Main Events

Special Briefing No. 4, 10 March 2021

EEPA started the publication of the Situation Reports on 17 November 2020 amidst a communication blackout in Tigray. Today marks the 100th edition of the Situation Reports, which have been following the chain of events of the war in Tigray since the beginning of November 2020.

A perspective is emerging that the facts point to the following conclusion: the war is regional, has been so from the start and that it had been planned as such.

The evidence of the presence of Eritrean and other troops in the Tigray war is no longer in dispute. Eritrean troops have been identified by their clothing and license plates, and have been reported by foreign diplomats, UN security teams and media. Eritrea has played a key logistical and military role in the conflict. There is also an increasing amount of evidence of other regional actors involved in the war, including indications that the United Arab Emirates may have carried out drone strikes in Tigray from its base in Assab, Eritrea; drone strikes have stopped following the vacation of the base.

A picture is emerging that suggests that movement and positioning of troops, secured and strategized through agreements with Eritrea, Sudan and Amhara, started before the commencing of the Law and Order Operation. The perspective that the war was prepared in advanced is further supported by comments made by Amhara officials that they had been preparing to invade Tigray prior to November 4th. Eritrean troops invaded the regional state prior to the declaration of a Law and Order Operation. Sudan has confirmed it was involved in military planning prior to the 4th of November.

Human rights violations committed in the conflict may amount to crimes against humanity

Estimations of people, including civilians, killed in Tigray are hard to come by in light of the communications blackout. However, multiple massacres of civilians have been reported, while more in smaller villages attracted less attention. 600 people died in Mai Kadra. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch reported the massacre in Axum, where 800 people died, although numbers may be higher than this. The shelling of Axum by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops may amount to a war crime, while the killing of civilians and looting by Eritrean soldiers may amount to crimes against humanity, states Amnesty. Claims of ethnic cleansing have been reported in western Tigray. All parties have been accused of atrocities, which are still ongoing as fighting between the various forces continues.

A joint report by three opposition parties in Tigray states more than 52,000 people were killed

Meanwhile, the conflict has seen the disappearance of 20 thousand registered Eritrean refugees and the arrival of 62 thousand refugees in Sudan. An estimated 10 thousand women have become victims of rape and gender-based violence. The provisional interim administration of Tigray, which has replaced the Tigray regional government, estimates that there are over 2.2 million Internally Displaced Persons in Tigray, according to Tigray opposition parties, and an estimated 2.5 million people were displaced in total. It is estimated that 4.5 million people are in need of emergency food aid.

Continued escalation of the war will further jeopardise civilian lives.

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to 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](#).

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<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR2537302021ENGLISH.PDF>

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/africasource/the-unintended-consequence-of-ethiopias-civil-war-might-be-a-border-war-with-sudan/>

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