

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 102 - 12 March 2021

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Reported war situation in Tigray (as per 11 March)

- According to sources, over 100 young men civilians were executed in Enkikumel town, between Shire and Endabaguna by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces.
- “Both ENDF and Eritrean forces did door to door searching and hostageing of family members, including children and women, then asking for militias to give up their guns,” said the sources.
- Once the militias came with their weapons, they killed more than 10 of them and shot the hostages.
- One civilian was shot in the Tigray town of Wukro. Public transport was interrupted again.
- According to a witness, Shiraro, a town near to Bademe on the Ethio-Eritrean border was shelled by Eritrean forces on November 10-11, 2020.
- “After the shelling, Eritrean forces controlled the town of Shiraro on Nov. 11, 2020. and there were three groups inside the Eritrean forces,” the witness added.
- The witness says the first group was engaged with looting and loading everything into big Eritrean trucks. The second group was providing security to the town of Shirara, “they were acting like a police” and the third group was fighting with Tigray forces.
- The witness states a few commanders and soldiers of ENDF’s 31 division which were stationed in Wela Nhbi, a place near to Bademe, defected to Eritrea on Nov. 5/2020. The ENDF soldiers took tanks, Zu-23 and some heavy artillery.
- Tigray regional forces were on the western outskirts of Wukro town and fighting has continued.
- AP report says skinny, hungry, fleeing threats of violence, thousands of people who have been hiding in rural areas of Ethiopia’s Tigray region have begun to arrive in the community Shire. 5000 have arrived between last Wednesday and Sunday.
- Holland Doctor Without Borders DG said the people arriving are “in very bad conditions... very exhausted, dehydrated, skinny,” and that “It’s becoming a disparate situation very quickly.”
- The report says people arriving bring an idea of the deprivation gnawing at the Tigray countryside. Aid workers say some describe surviving by eating leaves - or the seeds they had put aside for planting.
- “People are starving,” said Madiha Raza with the International Rescue Committee after visiting Shire. “There is a severe issues of access to food and one interviewee told me she survived on just leaves for a month while she hid in a forest.”
- The removed Tigrayan government has released a statement pleading the international community to take action, but stating that “the ultimate solution against occupation is in the hands of the people of Tigray, and its defence forces”.
- It is important to note that this is the first time the Tigray Government has released an official statement since the ENDF has taken over Mekelle. It shows they are still claiming to be the officially elected government of the state.
- In the statement they claimed that Eritrea is sending more troops to the region and that “Thousands of civilians have been massacred, hundreds of thousands forcibly displaced from their homes, civilian installations and Infrastructures systematically destroyed.”

- When 50 European and American Ambassadors visited Mekelle on Wednesday, citizens stayed at home in protest, leaving the city deserted. The Ambassadors were briefed by the interim administration on the situation. The administration claimed that they controlled 72% of the territory.

Reported international situation (as per 10 March)

- The White House calls for a full, independent investigation into human rights abuses in Tigray. Pres. Biden is “deeply concerned, highly engaged on the issues,” said the Press Secretary.
- U.S Sec. Blinken said that a special envoy will be named for Horn of Africa, saying “ We need a senior person who is going to be focused full-time on the challenges that we are seeing...in a sustained way,” especially Tigray, GERD, and Ethio-Sudan border tensions.
- Asked about the possibility of sending peacekeepers, Blinken answered that foreign forces need to first leave and be replaced “with a force that will not abuse the human rights of the people of Tigray”.
- The UK government envoy to the UN calls for “Sanction” on anyone blocking aid to Tigray.
- “The Security Council must speak out with one voice - against violations of international humanitarian law, including obstruction of humanitarian assistance or access and the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare,” said NorwayUNSC in its statement.
- The statement also says accountability must be ensured and the response to such violations could include imposing targeted sanctions, where relevant and appropriate.
- European Commissioner Janez Lenarčič has suggested that the Commission may sanction individuals who are committing Human Rights violations or obstructing the provisioning of Humanitarian aid.
- The Council of the EU had adopted a conclusion (6902/21) stating that Ethiopia is a strategic partner and reiterated the EUs concern about the situation in Tigray. It is especially concerned by the different testimonies of war crimes and urges all parties to end them immediately.
- German Embassy in Addis, Amb. Auer calls for the withdrawal of Eritrean forces, full humanitarian and media access as well as independent investigation of human rights violations and war crimes after visiting Mekelle, Tigray’s regional capital.
- IMF Director, Kristalina Georgieva says the humanitarian crisis in Tigray region is being closely monitored, asserting that “what is good for the people of Ethiopia is good for the rest of Africa.”
- She said they were concerned, were monitoring the evolution of the situation and stated the importance that “ the price of the crisis is not paid by the suffering of ordinary people,”.
- In a piece for the Frankfurter Rundschau Omid Nouripour, a green German member of Parliament, and Moritz Müller, a candidate for the upcoming elections, have urged the German government to become more actively involved in solving the conflict through dialogue.
- Müller and Nouripour say that the conflict is a conflict between different “bundeslander” (Federal States) with different visions for reform of the country. Failure to act could lead to the disintegration of Ethiopia and the destabilisation of the entire region.
- Ethiopia has rejected Sudan’s proposal (which was endorsed by Egypt recently) to involve the UN, US and EU in the GERD dam negotiations. The Foreign Ministry spokesperson said that Ethiopia believes the problem can be solved through African Union mediation.

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Links of interest

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/03/11/eu-ethiopia-relations-eu-council-conclusions-stress-the-strategic-partnership-and-eu-s-deep-concerns-about-the-situation-in-the-tigray-region/>
<https://www.fr.de/meinung/gastbeitraege/aethiopien-droht-zu-zerbrechen-90238132.html>
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