

## Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 139 - 03 May 2021

**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](#).

### Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 02 May)

- Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International reported that more than 2,500 Ethiopian and Eritrean troops were killed and wounded by Tigray defense forces on 28-29 April 2021.
- On 28 April 2021, Tigray defense forces ambushed Eritrean troops in Rahya, Adwa Woreda, and killed over 313 Eritrean soldiers and 488 soldiers were wounded.
- On 29 April 2021, Tigray defense forces took an offensive against ENDF soldiers in Werkamba near Tembien. As a result, over 420 ENDF soldiers were killed and 621 wounded. In this battle, Ethiopia's 31st Division's of 1st, 2nd, and 4th Brigades were participating. A 107mm rocket and ZU-23 were destroyed and various ammunition was also captured.
- In another incident, on 29-30 April 2021, Tigray defense forces successfully repelled an ENDF's offensive in Suluh near Hawzien, Eastern Tigray. In the battle, 290 ENDF soldiers including deputy brigade commander Major Engida were killed, over 385 wounded, and 3 soldiers were captured along with various weapons and ammunition.
- Reportedly Eritrean forces have killed 20 civilians, most of them farmers, in Edaga Hibret, Asgede Woreda on 29 April 2021. They denied normal burial service and left them in the streets.
- Eritrean forces and ENDF soldiers carried out a civilian massacre including deacons, priests, and visually impaired in the district of Tanqua Abergele, Yechilay, in a village called Jijiqe on 27 April 2021. All the civilian victims were killed inside their homes.
- ENDF forces have continued house to house searching in the Shire city around the 70 Kare area and taking valuable assets of civilians including the jewelry of Tigrayan women.
- Adigrat to Adwa road accessible to car owners who possess a permission paper from the Eritrean military command around Adigrat town, Eastern Tigray.
- CNN reported that the USAID is warning the Tigray region could face famine if aid organizations are not granted unfettered access to the millions in urgent need of assistance.
- Emily Dakin, a top official of USAID told CNN that it is estimated that "somewhere between 950,000 to 1.25 million people are inaccessible to humanitarians."
- Dakin said that the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team she leads has been able to travel to parts of Tigray, particularly around the regional capital of Mekelle, and has seen a significant amount of humanitarian need.
- "There's a pretty critical tipping point where famine is possible and could occur in parts of Tigray without the immediate cessation of hostilities and a rapid increase in humanitarian access and scale-up of life-saving humanitarian assistance," she said.
- The head of the Tigray defense forces, General Abraha Tesfay (Abraha Dinkul) appeared on TMH TV, a network in Australia. This surprised many as ENDF chief of staff General Birhanu Julahad declared a month ago that General Abraha had been killed and buried in a church in the Southern Tigray.
- An Ethiopian soldier of Tigrayan origin working as a UN Peacekeeper, Selamawit Gebremichael Tafere, has been imprisoned by the Ethiopians at the Al-Fashar UNAMID camp, Darfur on 02 May 2021. Selamawit is one of the peacekeepers who decided not to return to Ethiopia because of the ongoing war and asked Sudan for asylum.

- The Council of Ministers of Ethiopia recommended a proposal to designate TPLF and Shene as terrorist organizations. The decision of the council of ministers creates anger among the Tigrayan and Oromo communities living in Ethiopia and abroad.

#### Situation in Ethiopia (as per 02 May)

- At least 21 civilians were killed in two separate attacks in Bure, Amhara. Fifteen passengers were killed by gunmen in a bus traveling from Bure to Nekemte city in Oromia.
- Similarly, six civilians were killed, some being burned alive, in Danchu Kebelle in SNNPRS.
- Both incidents took place on 30 April 2021, a Good Friday holiday for Ethiopian Christians.

#### Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 02 May)

- Sudan has implied it could in the future take control of a controversial Nile dam built by Ethiopia as the two countries continue to trade threats and criticism over the issue. It claims to be able to do so by withdrawing from a 1902 agreement transferring territory to Ethiopia.
- The Sudanese foreign ministry said Khartoum could reconsider Addis Ababa's sovereignty over the Benshangul-Gumuz region where the GERD was built.
- "If Ethiopia continues to reject Sudan and Egypt's reference to the agreements during negotiations over the dam, Addis Ababa will compromise its sovereignty over the region," said the ministry.
- Sudanese foreign ministry said this week that: "The Ethiopian claim that the relevant agreements are an insignificant colonial legacy is an explicit fallacy of historical facts, indicating that Ethiopia was an independent, sovereign state and a member of the international community at the time of the conclusion of those agreements."
- "Such selective disavowal of international agreements for propaganda and domestic political reasons is a harmful and costly approach that does not help to reach a negotiated agreement acceptable to all parties," added the ministry.

#### Reported International situation (as per 02 May)

- U.S. Senators Christopher Coons and Chris Van Hollen will visit Sudan on Monday for talks on the border dispute with Ethiopia.
- US senators Booker, Cardin, Kaine, Rosen, and Markey wrote a letter to the newly appointed US envoy to the Horn. In the letter, they urge the Envoy to not only try and resolve the conflict but also to "advocate for peace and reconciliation" in Ethiopia. They further urge him to look at the various crises as a whole and take a "holistic" approach that reflects the complexity of the crisis.
- They also wrote that many trends in Ethiopia, including the conflict in Tigray, ethnic violence in Oromia, Amhara, and other parts of Tigray, and the vast amounts of people displaced in the country, are destabilizing the country. Other crises, such as the GERD dam negotiations and border disputes, further complicate the situation.
- They also mentioned that the planned election due to take place on June 5th does not currently comply with international standards of "freedom, fairness, and transparency".
- The senators worry that if the elections take place without necessary reform, there will be growing mistrust, ethnic violence, and political tension across the country.

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