

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 15 - 03 December

[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. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#). **Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)**

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- From the 43 divisions of Eritrea, 41 are fighting in Tigray. Reports received that soldiers are forced to fight, including refugees who have been abducted from refugee camps under international protection in Shire (Tigray), with nearly 100.000 Eritrean refugees.
- Meskerem (Eritrean opposition) reports that Eritrean authorities have detained 500 Eritrean soldiers that refused to take part in the fight against Tigray. The Eritrean army has taken significant casualties and devastation and casualties on both sides are significant.
- Eritreans in Germany received a video of an Eritrean speaking to family members from Eritrea who had been involved in fighting in Tigray; the persons involved in the fighting stated that their units were told to kill any wounded persons who could not easily be returned to Eritrea. (*Unconfirmed*)
- PM Abiy acknowledges the role of Eritrea in the war in Tigray.

International dimension (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- European Commissioner for Crisis Management has met with the Minister for Peace of Ethiopia. During the meeting he called for a peaceful solution of the Tigray Crisis and immediate, full and unimpeded access of aid workers to conflict-affected areas.
- The German ambassador to Ethiopia has met with the Ethiopian House of Representatives and urged for a solution through political dialogue.
- The US Assistant Secretary of State states that the active military operations are now over and the implementation of unfettered humanitarian access is critical.
- Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) have called for the release of all journalists detained in Ethiopia. Half a dozen journalists have been arrested since the start of the conflict. While Ethiopia has made some major reforms in freedom of the press since 2018, there are fears of a relapse.
- UNHCR Chief Filippo Grandi expresses concern over the number of separated children and family members, calling it 'exceptional'.
- French Ambassador to Ethiopia Rémi Maréchaux met with the Ethiopian House of Peoples' Representatives to discuss France/Ethiopia bilateral relations.
- Calls for access to Tigray to investigate possible war crimes during a debate in the British Parliament.

- Ethiopia Foreign minister, Demeke Mekonnen, participated in the 21st Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union to discuss the launch of the Africa Free Trade Area and the 2020 theme of the AU: “Silencing the Guns”.
- Rally for peace organised in Washington DC for Saturday 5 December.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- A humanitarian and diplomatic source told Reuters that four Ethiopian aid workers (possibly a fifth) were killed in one of the Eritrean refugee camps in Tigray.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- PM Ahmed Abiy announces that he has held discussions with political parties and civil society organisations on elections mid-2021.
- PM Ahmed Abiy states that he has been in negotiation with Dr. Mulu Nega on Tigray; Dr. Mulu is the chief executive of the Transitional Government of Tigray, appointed by Abiy. The Transitional Government is not recognised by the elected regional government of Tigray.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- Sudan: Hundreds of children are arriving in Sudan separated from their parents. They are especially at risk of exploitation, says Save the Children.
- Tigray: The situation for the 96.000 refugees in Tigray remains dire. Reports suggest that food and other necessities have run out.
- The United Nations and Ethiopia have agreed an aid corridor according to a UN spokesman, Saviano Abreu. The UN says it will receive unimpeded access to deliver aid to government held areas. The United Nations has previously pre-deployed personnel to prepare such an eventuality.
- Refugees from Tigray continue to report horrific details of killings and bodies remaining unburied.
- IOM states that the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) estimates that 1.98 million people could be affected by displacement in Northern Ethiopia in a worst case scenario.
- United Arab Emirates sponsored the transport of 100 tons of emergency aid which arrived in Sudan for refugees from Ethiopia.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- 69 people have died in violent clashes in Konso, Oromo in southern Ethiopia.
- Ethiopia Telecom announces responsibility for the blackout of communications of over three weeks in Tigray.
- Telecommunications have been partially restored to the Tigray region in areas such as Dansha, Turkan, Humera, Shiraro, Maytsebri and Maykadra, and fully restored in Alamata, Ethio Telecom has said.
 - Disclaimer: All information in this situation report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. Publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand potential impacts of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or impact thereof. All information reported originates from third parties and the content of all reported and linked information remains the sole responsibility of these third parties. Report to info@eepe.be any additional information and corrections.

Links of interest

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w172x2z2d5pgk2k>
<https://www.awashpost.com/2020/11/30/the-war-in-tigray-is-a-result-of-ethiopias-mismanaged-transition/>
<https://rsf.org/fr/node/46650>
<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-ethiopia-conflict-aidworkers-idUKKBN28C2MV>
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/dec/02/tigray-war-refugees-ethiopia-sudan>