

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 27 - 16 December

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Military situation (as confirmed per 16 December)

- AFP reports civilians inside Tigray have said that the military has violently enforced a curfew. Many people have been killed by soldiers during the enforcement. Eritrean soldiers are said to be among the patrolling soldiers, in line with many reports from social media.
- Other testimonies involve ENDF forces carrying out violence, including extrajudicial killings, against civilian populations in Tigray. Several farmers, including a 15 year old boy, were reportedly shot after being accused of being members of the TPLF.
- The Ethiopian government has denied any claim that the military was involved in killings.
- Hundreds of civilians died in bombardements of Wukro and Tembien. Heavy fighting took place, heavy shelling has been reported. Bombardements are partly carried out by drones.
- Reportedly Eritrean soldiers are also wearing Ethiopian army uniforms.
- Kidnapping of wealthy Tigrayan business from Tigray by Eritrean Troops near Adigrat reported.
- Voices increasing on social media that systematic starvation is used as a weapon of war in Tigray and that UN Security Council needs to step in.
- Over 200 people have reportedly been killed in Wukro and the town is now deserted.
- The Women's League of the Benishangul Gumuz Regional State Prosperity Party (PP) requests that the federal government implements the ongoing "law enforcement operations in Tigray." Benishangul Gumuz regional state, Metekel Zone.
- Observer states "it is only a matter of time before the Amhara region lays territorial claim to the Benishangul Gumuz region."
- Experts warn of a protracted situation of instability, increased ethnic tensions between different ethnic groups in Ethiopia and the Eritrean involvement aggravating the situation.

International dimension (as confirmed per 16 December)

- Somalia breaks ties with Kenya, citing violations of Somali sovereignty by Kenya. It has instructed Somali diplomats to return and Kenyan diplomats to leave.
- Somalia-Kenya tension comes after relations tightened between Kenya and the Somali breakaway region of Somaliland after the Kenyan president hosted the leader of Somaliland.
- Demonstrations in Mogadishu, Somalia, demanding a fair election process in the country.

- IGAD meeting on 20 December will discuss the crisis in the region as well as COVID-19.
- Eritrea president Isaias meets with Saudi Arabia establishing a joint committee of common vision.
- US Administration signalling Eritrea should move out of Tigray.
- The European Union has stopped budgetary financial support, worth 90 million euros, to Ethiopia. The move came after a series of serious human rights abuses in the Tigray region.
- Estonia, delegation to UN SC expresses concern of the humanitarian situation in Tigray and “Human Rights violation must stop”. Stating violations must be investigated and perpetrators brought to justice.
- UK Government concerned about ethnically motivated attacks in Tigray and in Ethiopia.
- Over 120 African women from 20 African countries, including the Minister of Gender from Liberia, call for a women peacekeeping mission to halt the fighting, protect civilians and refugees.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 16 December)

- CORRECTION - Journalist Woldegiyorgis Teklay, journalist in Awlo media, is prevented from flying out from Addis Ababa without explanation.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 16 December)

- UNHCR reports over 63,000 people displaced internally, who have fled to other regions in Ethiopia and Sudan. The reported numbers are expected to increase as access to Tigray increases.
- Norwegian Refugee Council, together with the UNHCR, starts works to increase shelter for refugees in Sudan.
- Aid has arrived at Adi Harush refugee camp in Tigray. Before the conflict 30,000 refugees were housed in the camp.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 16 December)

- BBC’s Will Ross reports that few civil servants have returned to work following the Tigray interim administration’s call to start work again.
- Food and water shortages in Mekelle. Banks are closed.
- The UN states that 2.3 million children have been cut from aid in Tigray.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 16 December)

- Ethiopian Civil Aviation authority reopened airspace above Northern Ethiopia.
- The Head of the Ethiopian Election board has said that they will deploy 254,000 election facilitators, including up to 50,000 from last election.

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<https://twitter.com/awolallo/status/1338910412419592193>

<https://ecfr.eu/article/how-europe-can-stop-ethiopias-slide-into-a-regional-war/>

<https://addisstandard.com/news-ruling-party-members-speak-of-need-to-repeat-tigray-military-operation-in-benishangul-gumuz-as-a-mhara-region-govt-nama-ramp-up-calls-for-actions/>

<https://www.indepthnews.net/index.php/the-world/horn-of-africa/4065-african-women-stress-the-need-for-a-horn-of-africa-peace-initiative>