

## Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 47 - 6 January 2021

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### Military situation (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) claims that it has killed 100 ENDF soldiers near Abraha Atsbeha, North of Mekelle. It also claims to have destroyed 2 tanks.
- A source reports that heavy fighting is taking place between TPLF and Eritrean combatants near Endabaguna and Kisdagaba. Reportedly TPLF forces launched an attack on looting Eritrean soldiers. Endabaguna is the location of the reception center for refugees from Eritrea in Central Tigray.
- Tigray Media House reported that a senior ENDF officer died of his wounds in Hospital. Colonel Dejene was ambushed by TPLF while traveling from Maychew to Korem two weeks ago.
- Additional ENDF forces moving to Tigray reportedly consist of 8 tanks and troops in vehicles.
- Pictures have appeared online, identified as Eritrean soldiers in Idaga Hamus (allegedly).

### Regional situation (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- The Prosperity Party Chair of Tigray, the ruling party of Ethiopia, has become the second official to confirm that there are Eritrean troops in Tigray. In a statement on Tigray Television, the regional broadcast, Nebeye Sehul said that Eritrean soldiers fighting in Tigray were probably deserters seeking better lives in Ethiopia. Nebeye says that the government is investigating.
- Reported that on the 38th Extraordinary Assembly by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) there was an expectation that Ethiopian PM Abiy would invite the AU Commission Chair Moussa Faki Mahamat to visit Tigray. The trip, however, had to be erased from the final communique. Ethiopia rejects "any foreign intervention" in a crisis that it says is purely domestic.
- The Communique of the IGAD 38th Assembly welcomed the agreement by Ethiopia of 29th November 2020 allowing "unimpeded, sustained and secure access" for humanitarian support. Such "unimpeded access" has not yet been realised, despite UN and humanitarian organisations urging they need access.
- The United Nations says that access to Tigray has improved slightly, but it remains critically challenged. Insecurity and bureaucracy are constraining the aid that can be provided. It has been able to access the main cities, but cannot access rural areas and Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps.
- The UN reports that in East Sudan the first refugees have been transferred from the Village 8 reception centre to the new camp in Tunaydbah, Sudan. Um Rakuba camp has approached full capacity.
- UNHCR spokesperson, Andrej Mahedic, states that more than 30% of the refugees arriving from Ethiopia are minors, younger than 18, whilst 5% are elderly, older than 60.
- The head of Egypt's intelligence service has met with the Sudanese Prime Minister Hamdok as well as the Head of Sudan's Sovereign Council, General Al-Burhan. They discussed regional developments and

the GERD dam negotiations. President Al-Sisi of Egypt and Al-Burhan also spoke on the phone on Monday.

- Eritrean Minister of Information, Yemane Meskel, informs that Minister of Foreign Affairs, Osman Saleh and Presidential Adviser, Yemane Ghebreab, met Sudan's Head of the Sovereign Council, General Al-Burhan, delivering a message of President Afewerki.
- In a press conference Ethiopian Foreign Affairs Minister and Vice President Demeke has said that Ethiopia wants to resolve the conflict with Sudan peacefully. According to him, the clashes in November and December have not changed the strong relationship between both countries.
- The status of the GERD dam negotiations remains unclear. Sudan has not yet returned to the negotiation table.

#### Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- Ethiopian police have released the Reuters cameraman that was arrested a couple weeks ago. No charges have been filed against him.
- VP Demeke said that the government is currently taking measures to provide food and other supplies to Tigray. He also said that reconstruction efforts are on the way and that telecommunication lines are being restored to the whole region. Telecom, electricity, and full banking access will soon start again.
- VP Demeke has also said that planning for a 6th general election is on the way in Tigray. The federally appointed interim government has been tasked with organizing it. Opposition parties have been invited to participate.
- The Ethiopian National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) has arrested 21 individuals for issuing travel documents illegally. Most of them worked at the Bole Airport.

#### Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- A witness has told federal broadcaster ETV that Amanuel Church was shelled. Civilians were seeking shelter inside and were killed as a result of the attack. Amanuel is near the UNESCO site Negash Mosque, Africa's oldest mosque, which was severely damaged in December as a result of shelling.
- A list has been published on-line, claiming to contain the names of civilian victims of the war in Tigray. The list has 440 entries and has been assembled using information from different sources. Many of the deaths have not been (officially) confirmed.

#### International Situation (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- The US Secretary of the Treasury Mnuchin is due to visit Khartoum on 6 January. The aim of the visit is to review the economic situation, as well as the US assistance to Sudan. Mnuchin will also visit other countries in the region such as Egypt, Qatar and Israel.
- The UN estimates that more than 322 thousand people are Internally Displaced (IDP). The provisional Tigrayan government reported yesterday that it believed there were 2.2 million IDPs.
- The UN says health facilities outside cities are not operational, while those in cities are in critical need of supplies.
- The UNHCR has stated that it needs 156 million US\$ to meet immediate needs of refugees in Ethiopia, but only US\$ 40 million has been pledged.

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#### **Links of interest**

<https://www.tghat.com/victim-list/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MEAEthiopia/posts/4313919665301910>

<https://www.unocha.org/story/daily-noon-briefing-highlights-ethiopia-niger-yemen>

<https://dailynewsegypt.com/2021/01/04/egypts-intelligence-chief-abbas-kamel-met-with-hamdok-al-burhan-hamidati-in-khartoum/>