

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 52 - 11 January 2021

[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](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 10 January)

- Fierce fighting reported for the last two or three days on the Tekeze belt of Abi Adi of Tigray Central Zone, between Tigray forces and Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) and Eritrean forces.
- Intense fighting in the North Western zone of Tigray, Endebaguna area, specifically DebreAbay and Meili area between Tigray forces and ENDF together with Eritrean troops.
- The UN says it has no access to Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps in Tigray. Access to most parts of North, Western, Eastern and Central Tigray remains constrained as fighting continues in many areas.
- The Federal Ethiopian government has confirmed that Sebhat Nega, 86, the co-founder of the TPLF, was arrested and transported to Addis Ababa together with other TPLF affiliated officials. Sebhat Nega, also referred to as 'Aboy Sebhat' ('father Sebhat') is a retired political intellectual, former director of the Tigray Endowment Fund and director of a think tank, the Foreign Relations Strategic Study Institute in Addis Ababa until 2018.
- During the arrest of Sebhat Nega, a video broadcasted by the Ethiopian News Agency shows two soldiers in Eritrean uniforms, one sitting and one filming the arrest. The participation of Eritrean troops in the Tigray war has been confirmed by General Belay Seyoun of the North Command of ENDF.
- Reported that ENDF reinforcements of several buses loaded with soldiers and heavy trucks were seen in the Afar region and Tekeze areas. Their destinations are not yet known.
- A leaked recording of a zoom meeting shows a high ranking Ethiopian General explaining the plan to take measures on Tigrayan refugees in Sudan. "They are sheltered as refugees; we will keep on bringing them back and we will work on it", says the General. "We will also get inside Sudan and take measures after our mission in the North (Tigray) is completed".
- In the zoom recording the Ethiopian General also talked about the use of armed drones in the war in Tigray. "While the war was happening in front we were attacking/bombing them behind the frontlines with drones and we don't know who is dead and alive", said the General.
- Reported in social media that deputy commander of ENDF 33th division was killed while fighting Tigray regional forces on the Western front.
- Reported in social media that more than 160 civilians have been murdered by ENDF soldiers in Bora near Maychaw town in the Southern Tigray.
- According to a source in social media, 13 members of a family have been killed by Eritrean soldiers in a village named May Cado, near Hawzen, Eastern Tigray.

- The de facto division by the Amhara regional state of Western Tigray into two new administrative zones, entirely under Amhara administration, is carried out without legal procedure or without any official decision. The two zones are called Telemt and Humera-Welqayt-Tegede Zone. Tigrayans living in these areas are transported to Central Tigray and Amhara farmers are settled into the deserted places.
- With regards to control in Telemt or Tselemti in West Tigray, it is reported that Amhara regional forces control May Tsebri, and Tigray regional forces control most of the area to the East.
- On 9 and 10 January shooting was reported in Mekelle during evening and night.
- The UN fears “massive community transmission of COVID-19 in Tigray, increased by massive displacement and the collapse of health services.
- A new UN report said, “only five out of 40 hospitals in Tigray are physically accessible, with another four reachable by mobile networks”. It added; “ Apart from those in (the Tigray capital) Mekele, the remaining hospitals are looted and many reportedly destroyed.” AP reported that “many of the hospitals in Ethiopia’s conflict-hit Tigray region, outside its capital, have been struck by artillery during the two months of fighting”.
- The UNHCR says it has continued to register new refugee arrivals at the Sudanese-Ethiopian border.
- A global demonstration has taken place in different parts of the world, organized by Tigrayan and Eritrean members of the diaspora, demanding the war on Tigray must stop and Eritrean troops must leave Tigray immediately.
- A protest of 'body bags' on St Kilda beach in Australia forms a protest against 'genocide' in the Tigray region. Australian Ethiopians call for action on the crisis in the Tigray region.

Reported Regional situation (as confirmed per 10 January)

- After the withdrawal of UN and African Union peacekeepers from Darfur, Sudan security forces including the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) are tasked to keep the peace and protect Darfur’s citizens. Residents of the Kalma Camp protest against the end of the peacekeeping mission by the UN and AU.
- Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia failed to agree on the way forward for talks on the GERD dam, Egypt’s Foreign Ministry said. The matter is being referred back to the chairman of the African Union.
- Ethiopia blames Sudan for the breakdown of talks to resolve the GERD dam dispute. While Ethiopia and Egypt agreed to another round of talks, Sudan declined because it seeks a role for AU experts in the talks and it is angered by Ethiopia’s intent to fill the dam with or without an agreement.

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.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-01-10/talks-over-ethiopia-s-nile-dam-hit-another-deadlock-egypt-says>
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/8/un-fears-massive-covid-transmission-in-ethiopia-tigray>
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-01-09/australian-ethiopians-rally-in-support-of-people-of-tigray/13041980>
<https://www.africanews.com/2021/01/10/un-camp-in-sudan-registers-new-tigrayan-refugees/>
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-01-09/st-kilda-protest-against-tigray-ethiopia-alleged-genocide/13044776>
<https://apnews.com/article/abiy-ahmed-africa-ethiopia-united-nations-kenya-a2894a53c2b85cda6a86cdd2d6c64f11>