

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 58 - 17 January 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 16 January)

- Fires have been detected on the outskirts of Humera. The fires are within an active combat zone.
- Minutes have leaked of the Tigray Emergency Coordination Centre (TECC) meeting of 8 January 2021. The minutes identify that 4.5 million are in need of food.
- The TECC includes the UN and Humanitarian organisations present in Tigray (MSF, Red Cross, CRS, Norwegian Church Aid) and several administrators of the transitional governments participated in the meeting.
- The minutes identify that five assessment teams have been re-established but only two of them “managed to go to the field”, while three teams have no access and no vehicles to go to West, North-west and Central zones of Tigray.
- Impediments to humanitarian assistance is the lack of vehicles and salary issues as people outside have not received salaries pending payment issues.
- Delivery of water has been difficult as water trucks and missionaries are looted.
- A flow of IDPs is observed “coming into Mekelle and other major towns” showing “how much desperate” people are to get “humanitarian access”. Their produce and household materials are vandalised or burned.
- The humanitarian administrators can not go back to regional offices without food as “people are starving” and they will be in trouble “if they go with empty hands”.
- The Central Zone interim administrator states that “the situation on the ground is dire”. It is explained that “food and non-food items or other livelihoods are either looted or destroyed.”
- The Central Zone administrator warns that “hundreds of thousands” may “starve to death”, if urgent emergency assistance is not dispatched.
- The humanitarian organisations do not have an adequate number of trucks for transportation. During the war all trucks from the region were allegedly looted and driven to Addis Ababa. To transport the required food ratios to 4.5 million people more than 2000 trucks are now urgently required.
- Pictures have emerged on the internet of the bodies of the former Minister of Foreign affairs Seyoum Mesfin, the former minister of Federal affairs Abay Tsehaye, and former chief Whip of the government Asmelash Weldeselassie.
- The pictures of the bodies would indicate that the three have been executed together. The picture of Seyoum Mesfin shows that he was shot in the forehead. Asmelash is wearing socks. There is no indication of any fighting.
- The ENDF had said previously that the retired politicians had been killed in a firefight after they had resisted arrest. Asmelash Weldeselassie was blind.

- The pictures of the retired leaders were posted on facebook by the head of the transitional government in Tigray, Mulu Nega.
- The statement by the provisional administrator of Tigray, Mulu Nega, that Ethiopia did not have the power to get Eritrean troops out of Tigray has led to fierce comments.
- Tsedale Lemma of the Addis Standard states in response to the admission of Mulu Nega: “Any reflection on the status of Ethiopia as a state at this moment should begin by recognizing the somber fact that it's no longer a sovereign state. For a country that fiercely defended its sovereignty for generations, 76 days to lose it is like being hit with a brute force!”
- Increased presence of Eritrean military and intelligence reported in Addis Ababa.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 16 January)

- 20.000 health workers and other government civil servants are not receiving their salary for over two months with some exceptions.
- International partners are requested to fill in the gaps as government structures are not functioning.
- Many businesses in Mekelle remain unable to operate due to a shortage of Ethiopian Birr. A withdrawal limit is still in place, hindering economic transactions.
- The interim administration has said that the majority of businesses are still unable to conduct normal activities.
- The Interim government has also said that government offices have been looted, making public services hard to distribute.
- 24 Former TPLF officials appeared in court, including Sebhat Nega. Federal police have asked for 14 days to investigate the case. The court accepted the extension and adjourned the case until the 29th of January.

Reported regional situation (as confirmed per 16 January)

- Sudan has said that it would not allow Ethiopia to accomplish a fait accompli regarding the filling of the GERD dam. Ethiopia has said that it would proceed with the second filling of the dam in July, something which both Sudan and Egypt oppose.
- Ethiopia has denied that it violated Ethiopian airspace. The chief of the Ethiopian army staff said that Sudan was trying to mislead the Sudanese and Ethiopian people into an “unwanted situation”.
- Sudanese Prime minister Hamdok has welcomed the initiative by President Kiir to mediate the Ethiopian-Sudanese dispute.
- Kenya is in talks with China to rearrange its debt. This is important because the harbour of Mombassa serves as a collateral to these debts. This has been an additional factor in heightened tensions in the region.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 16 January)

- France will host the next Sudanese investment conference. Due to take place in Paris in May, the conference aims to encourage investment in the country.

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