

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 60 - 19 January 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 18 January)

- Reported from Somalia “that 1000 (young) soldiers are missing (presumed dead). Parents are now planning to organize protests.” A report circulating from a Somali MP speaks of 3,000 Somali troops participating in Ethiopia's Tigray war. The troops were sent to Asmara in Eritrea to receive training. According to one report only 180 of them survived. It is reported that one of them contacted his family from Mekelle, saying that he was injured in the war.
- Former head of intelligence in Somalia, Abdisalem Guled, states in the Garowe Online that young men were taken from Mogadishu, Somalia, last year and flown to Asmara, Eritrea, where they received training and these soldiers were used to front the war in Tigray.
- Abdisalem Guled reports that 370 of the Somali soldiers, who were involuntarily conscripted in the front engaging in the war in Tigray, died.
- Video distributed of mothers in Somalia who are in shock to find that youth who disappeared were found in the war in Tigray. Desperate mothers protest in Galkayo Town, Somalia, demanding answers to the whereabouts of their missing children, unknown to them, taken to Eritrea for military training and then deployed and killed in the Tigray War. Some of the children are as young as 14 years. (independently confirmed).
- Federal Ethiopian military movements from Gonder areas towards the Tekeze area. Between yesterday and today around 67 trucks full of military personnel were reported to be passing through.
- Increasing concerns expressed at high political levels in the region that Ethiopia is falling apart and on the brink of a civil war.
- Beginning of confrontation in Kilil, Somalia, this morning in Gabri Dahar, the stronghold of the Ogaden National Liberation Front, ONLF, between the troops of the president of the Kilil and the ONLF, reporting several deaths and injuries on both sides. The president of Kilil has the total support of the Amharas (Ethiopia).
- General Birhanu Jula Gelalcha, the chief of general staff of Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) and the president of Oromia state Shimelis Abdisa held a closed-door meeting with President Farmaajo of Somalia on 15/1.
- Reported that ENDF allied forces were destroyed by Tigray regional forces at Sero, Eastern zone while heading to Adigrat from Adwa via Enticho. 10 orals destroyed; 4 small military cars, one ZU-23, many machine guns were taken and an unknown number of soldiers were captured.
- The Prime Minister of Sudan, Hamdok, says that the lives of 20 million Sudanese is threatened by the GERD Dam as their lives depend on the Blue Nile.
- Sudanese media reports that Ethiopian militias have killed 2 Sudanese shepherds in Gallabat, Gedaref State. A local mayor claims the militias stole around 250 sheep.

- Sudanese media reports Eritrean troops armed with heavy weapons have entered ENDF controlled areas of Wadi al Ghurab and Birkat Noreen inside the disputed Al-Fashaga Triangle. It is said they entered Ethiopia from Humera and crossed into Sudan via Abdurafi.
- Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) handed over eight soldiers to Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) who were captured during border clashes last December. The handover took place in the border area near Gallabat.
- Reported that an Eritrean gunship helicopter has been shot down by Tigray regional forces at Rama front near Enda Semere area.
- Videos circulating of ENDF troops arrested by Tigray regional forces in Edaga Arbi.
- Pictures circulating of ENDF and Eritrean troops. Eritrean troops are recognisable by the typical Eritrean plastic or rubber sandals, 'congos', or 'shida', desert sand colored uniform or olive colored guerilla styled camouflage uniform, no insignias, no identification as Eritrean. Ethiopian soldiers are wearing boots, country flag, rank and insignias on their uniforms and place for identification and have a different camouflage shading.
- The United Nations and other agencies are rushing to relocate thousands of refugees camped out along the disputed Sudan-Ethiopia border to safer areas further away.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 18 January)

- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is monitoring the situation in Tigray and carried out two field visits.
- The EHRC found that in Humera 92 people died, including civilians. Residents of Humera report "widespread looting of houses and businesses, by a youth group calling itself "Fano", some members of the Amhara Liyu Hayl (Amhara Special Force) and Amhara Militia, a few members of the Ethiopian Defense Force, and some Eritrean soldiers. Looters have also emptied food and grain storages."
- EHRC concludes that "In all four visited areas of Humera, Dansha, Bissober and Ullaga, residents consistently regret the continued lack of security. People of Tigray ethnic origin residing in Dansha and Humera faced harassment. The fact that justice sector bodies have not resumed their regular operations only adds to residents' sense of insecurity and escalates the risk of human rights abuses."
- The EHRC finds that "It is therefore imperative for the government to restore security in these areas and take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of the community."
- The EHRC concludes that "The crimes allegedly committed by some members of security forces in the areas included in this report need to be investigated and perpetrators held to account."

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 18 January)

- Africa Minister say UK Government is "gravely concerned over allegations of atrocities and violations" in Tigray but it's "the UK's longstanding position that determining whether a situation amounts to genocide is an issue for competent national and international courts, not governments"

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Links of interest

<https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/ex-spy-chief-claims-hundreds-of-somali-soldiers-killed-in-tigray-region>
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X9iK4jPtdgREXCfS1UJ1MhrkuvWhwNjl/view>
<https://www.davidalton.net/2021/01/18/january-18th-africa-minister-say-uk-government-is-gravely-concerned-over-allegations-of-atrocities-and-violations-in-tigray-but-its-the-uks-longstanding-position-that-determining/>
<https://www.voanews.com/africa/un-rushing-relocate-ethiopian-refugees-away-sudanese-border>
<https://sudantribune.com/spip.php?article70346>