

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 7 - 25 November

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](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 25 November)

- Three Ethiopians originating from Tigray stationed with the UN Mission in South Sudan have been repatriated by Ethiopia from Juba to Addis Ababa. UN not involved and raises concern.
- This follows an incident earlier this month in South Sudan where “Ethiopian soldiers disarmed a senior ethnic Ethiopian Tigrayan officer” and “escorted him to the capital of Juba, and forced him onto a Nov. 11 Ethiopian Airlines flight to Addis Ababa,” states Foreign Policy.
- UN fears Ethiopia Purging Ethnic Tigrayan Officers from its peacekeeping missions in Somalia. An internal United Nations document shows concern those troops could face torture or execution.
- Human Rights Concern Eritrea reports it has credible evidence that Eritrean troops, including conscripts from the national service, are fighting in Tigray.
- Asmara warns through neighbourhood wardens that citizens stay indoors and further restricts travel.

International dimension (as confirmed per 25 November)

- Deputy PM Demeke Mekonnen in Brussels and Italy. In Brussels, he met with EU External Action Service VP Joseph Borrell. ENA reports that Demeke met Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte.
- PM Abiy issues a statement on the adherence to non-intervention in internal affairs.
- EU EEAS issues a statement: “we call on all parties to put in place the conditions that will facilitate unimpeded access to people in need, the cessation of hostilities, the non-interference of any external party, and the freedom of the media. Engagement with the High-Level Envoys appointed by the Chair of the African Union should open the door for a dialogue that is the only way forward to avoid further destabilisation.”
- Sen. Chris Coons, member of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, spoke with MP Abiy (Nov. 23), discussing the AU mediation effort by AU Chairman and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.
- EU SR Alexander Rondos denounces what he calls the “give war a chance brigade”.
- The UN Security Council meeting on the situation in Tigray set for yesterday was first cancelled then reconfirmed. The closed-door meeting ended without a statement.

- Herman J. Cohen, former ass. Secretary of State calls on the leadership of PM Abiy and Tigray leader Debretsion, urging for reconciliation among all ethnic groups and “relentless” foreign pressure for peace.
- Following debate in House of Lords, Lord David Alton points to the danger of “genocide”.
- Belgium Mission to the UN calls for an “immediate ceasefire” and “inclusive national dialogue”.
- German Mission to the UN calls for “adherence to international law” and “welcomes and supports regional African efforts, esp AU, IGAD, and member states for de-escalation”.
- Norway issues a statement of “deep concern” of the situation in Tigray, Ethiopia and regional impact.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 25 November)

- Aljazeera: TDF state that Tigray forces have destroyed Ethiopia “mechanised division” 21 entirely.
- Mekelle gives 24-hour ultimatum to all soldiers of hostile troops to leave the region.

Damage from the war (as confirmed per 25 November)

- It was reported that Adi Harush, a refugee camp for Eritrean refugees in Tigray, was attacked. Camp residents stated that the guards fled after a short exchange of fire.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 25 November)

- UNHCR reports that 41.000 refugees have arrived in Sudan. Sudan pledges to keep its borders open for refugees.
- Sky News quotes military sources that Ethiopia government forces are “holding up large numbers of refugees and preventing them from fleeing.”
- Hundreds of refugees reported near the border of Sudan, waiting for family members and reporting of family members shot and/or lost due to the military actions by all sides.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 25 November)

- The Ethiopian Human Right Commission released a report on Mai Kadra based on interviews between 14-19 November in Mai Kadra, Abrahajira, Sanja, Gondar, Dansha and Humera. Its findings are contradicted by researcher @_Will_Brown. Information on responsibility for this incident is inconclusive.
- Communication from Tigray is blocked. The phone lines have been cut and the internet is switched off. The banks are closed and there is no electricity.
- Travel by media to Tigray is heavily restricted.
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Links of interest

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/40964>

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/89251/Ethiopia:%20Statement%20by%20High%20Representative/Vice-President%20Josep%20Borrell%20on%20his%20meeting%20with%20Deputy%20Prime%20Minister%20and%20Minister%20of%20Foreign%20Affairs%20of%20Ethiopia.%20Mr%20Demeke%20Mekonnen

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/24/tigray-forces-ethiopia-mechanised-division-completely-destroyed>

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/nov/24/as-ethiopias-army-declares-daily-victories-its-people-are-being-plunged-into-violence>

<https://www.ena.et/en/?p=18932>

<https://martinplaut.com/2020/11/24/former-prime-minister-of-belgium-among-leaders-calling-on-eu-to-urgently-intervene-in-horn-conflict/>

<https://www.indepthnews.net/index.php/the-world/africa/4007-eu-called-upon-to-urgently-engage-in-peace-efforts-for-the-horn-of-africa>

<http://er.usembassy.gov/security-alert-u-s-embassy-asmara-eritrea-november-23-2020/>