

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 82 - 11 February 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. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 10 February)

- Eritrean soldiers have told Tigrayan locals that they are being paid by Ethiopia for six months according to Dedebit Media today broadcasted in New South Wales.
- Eritrea earlier sent mercenaries to Yemen. The Eritrean government holds a large part of its population under indefinite national service, which according to the UN constitutes Crimes against Humanity.
- The Ethiopian Red Cross has said that over 80% of Tigray is cut off from aid and is unreachable. It warns that tens of thousands can starve.
- The Ethiopian Red Cross also estimates that people in need is up to 3.8 million. The last estimate in January put the number at 2.3 million.
- European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operation estimated that 4.5 million people in Tigray require emergency food assistance on Wednesday.
- Ethiopia is closing two refugee camps for Eritrean refugees, Shemelba and Hitsats, because of their "proximity to the border with Eritrea" states the head of the refugee administration. The camps were razed by Eritrean soldiers and 20.000 refugees have disappeared.
- "Many, many severe cases of malnutrition" state Red Cross, "emaciated" people who managed to escape rural areas still inaccessible in the fourth month of fighting. Displaced civilians reaching camps near major towns have skin on their bones and appear very malnourished.
- Ethiopian Red Cross President states that once humanitarian workers reach Tigray's rural areas, "we will see a more devastating crisis. We have to get prepared for the worst, is what I'm saying."
- Francesco Rocca, the chief of the ICRC, is in Tigray and has said that he was shocked at the situation. In a statement Rocca has said that half a million of IDP are around Mekelle, and that there is a critical shortage of "everything". Rocca has said that operations need to be scaled up.
- Rocca expresses shock at the "systematic aggression to health facilities" due to looting and damage.
- ENDF and Eritrean officers are training new soldiers in Axum University and around Adi Gebru near Endebaguna. Some ENDF soldiers are now found to be students from Ethiopian universities. Those captured by Tigray regional forces had university student ID-cards in their pocket.
- The total Number of IDPs in Mekelle, estimated by the Social Affairs Bureau, is 68,089. This estimated number is inclusive of IDPs staying in the schools, and with families or in churches, or other in streets.
- The total number of IDPs according to African Services Committee within all school campuses in Mekelle is 10,600. Out of this 1612 are under the age of 5 (M=802, F=810); 2745 are aged 6 - 14 (M=1432, F=1313); 5518 are aged 15 - 49 (M=2712, F=2806); 590 are aged above 50 (M=343, F=247).
- IDPs in Mekelle come from the North West zone (Humera), Western (Sheraro), Eastern Zone (Adigrat, Zalambesa, Hawzene), Central zone (Axum, Adwa and Tembien) and South Eastern Zone (Wajerat).
- Reports of hundreds of civilians arrested and shot by Eritrean and Ethiopian forces in Adigrat, Wukro and Frewyni towns of Tigray. Reported that dozens might have been killed.
- Stay at home protests continued in Mekelle and to some extent in Wukro.
- Video footage of ENDF beating and intimidating civilians in Tigray circulates in social media.

- Journalist and activist Meseret Daba was arrested in Addis Ababa by police forces today (10/02/21)
- Reports of a fighter jet was shot down in the Southern Tigray.
- Electricity was cut-off in the entire Tigray region today (10/02/2021).
- NRC Country director for Sudan states that a second refugee emergency is starting in Sudan: "people flee from Ethiopia into Blue Nile state, in addition to refugees from Tigray into Gedaref state."
- The UN Sexual and Reproductive Health Agency says that pregnant women are having difficulties finding support in Tigray. Where to give birth and under what conditions are major concerns for many pregnant women.
- One woman described her experience "I had to leave everything behind—my belongings, my jewellery, and my livelihood that gave me some independence and strength: my cooking set."
- UNFPA will also establish a women's safe space and a child-friendly space where women and children can seek mental health and psychosocial support and receive important information.
- The health situation for patients with HIV/AIDS and Diabetics is alarming. Lack of medication and food aggravate their health conditions. It was observed that the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) were taking antiretroviral drugs from public hospitals by force for their soldiers. IDPs can not access ART medication. Medicines are unavailable. There is a high risk of cholera outbreak.
- EU Envoy and Finnish Foreign minister Haavistoo has visited a refugee camp of Tigray refugees in Sudan. Haavisto said that he had heard "concerning reports about human rights violations".
- Shemelba camp in Tigray sheltered ethnic Kunama people who were well settled without plans for onward migration. The closure of the camp, after it had been attacked by Eritrean soldiers, robs 15.000 refugees from their humble shelters and livelihoods, displacing them.
- New footage of Eritrean soldiers in Mekelle, including Eritrean soldiers dressed in Ethiopian uniforms.
- A Sudanese officer, a lieutenant, was killed by Ethiopian forces in Eastern Sudan while on patrol.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 10 February)

- Dep PM Demeke Mekonen accepted that Hitsats and Shimelba have been destroyed and looted. He said this in a briefing to diplomats in Addis today.
- Mekonnen did not respond to the EUs and U.S. demand that Eritrean troops leave Tigray immediately.
- The US committee for Refugees and Immigrants are calling for an independent UN investigation into the disappearances of refugees from camps in Tigray: "over 20,000 people are unaccounted for, and the UN believes they are dispersed in areas to which it does not have access. Credible accounts indicate that at least some of the missing are in critical danger, as refugees have reported that armed actors infiltrated the camps, killed, raped and abducted people, and Eritrean troops have forced some of the refugees back to Eritrea."
- A plenary debate is scheduled in the European Parliament on the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia on Thursday (11th February) CET 14:30 and 16:30 [webstreaming](#).

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@eeпа.be any additional information and corrections.

Links of interest

<https://addisstandard.com/news-ethiopia-deeply-concerned-by-eu-statement-on-tigray-stays-silent-on-accusations-of-eritreas-role-in-the-armed-conflict/?fbclid=IwAR1sOR6SH18ORC2O6Pwc8UxizkRDHZxns18HuoYG94mikozDua9V1ok5-7M>

<https://refugees.org/uscri-statement-calling-for-an-independent-united-nations-investigation-into-the-disappearance-of-refugees-from-the-tigray-region-of-ethiopia/>

https://ec.europa.eu/echo/field-blogs/photos/tigray-thousands-flee-search-safety-humanitarian-needs-rise_en?fbclid=IwAR2m-ZWBCY7FvpG9haOkX_xmFCc2flf7yTfs1I1mhwa4uBxISXD7X0ylAw

<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210210-ethiopian-red-cross-says-80-percent-of-tigray-cut-off-from-aid>

<https://www.ifrcnewsroom.org/story/en/316/after-visiting-tigray-ifrc-president-calls-for-increased-humanitarian-response/2466>

<https://www.unfpa.org/news/pregnant-women-struggle-find-support-stability-after-displacement-tigray-region-ethiopia>