

## Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 176 - 29 June 2021

**Europe External Programme with Africa** is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the 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 organizations, 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 situation in Tigray (per 28 June)

- The Ethiopian government has declared a unilateral ceasefire in the Tigray region - 8 months after Prime Minister Abiy sent troops to oust its leadership.
- The Government of the National State of Tigray releases a Press Release from the Government of Tigray in the evening of 29 June 2021.
- The Government of Tigray states: "First and foremost, we would like to share the great news to the entire people and friends of Tigray that our beloved capital city, Mekelle, is now under the complete control of the Tigray Defense Forces and the legally elected Government of Tigray is back in its rightful place."
- The Government of Tigray states that: "This stunning victory was made possible as a result of the lightning operation named after the great African General Ras Alula Aba Nega."
- The Spokesperson of the Tigray government, Liya Kassa told Dimsti Weyane (DW) that the regional capital, Mekelle is under full control of the Tigray Defense Forces as part of operation Alula Abanega.
- "We would like to share the great news to the entire people and friends of Tigray that our beloved capital city, Mekelle, is now under the complete control of the Tigray Defense Forces and the legally elected Government of Tigray is back in its rightful place," she said.
- The ENDF troops have completely pulled out from Mekelle and major towns in Tigray.
- ENDF and Eritrean troops, which were fleeing Mekelle, has been told to surrender by the Tigray Defense Forces near Mekelle.
- Reported that the majority of ENDF troops who were surrounded at the outskirts of Mekelle while fleeing has been captured by Tigray defense forces.
- Reported that the capital of Tigray, Mekelle is fully controlled by the Tigray Defense Forces.
- The Tigray Defence Forces has also controlled Qwiha and Alula-AbaNega International Airport.
- Reported that FM Mekelle 104.4 radio has been controlled by Tigray Defense Forces.
- Residents of Mekelle are celebrating after Tigray Defense Forces controlled Mekelle, dancing and singing on the streets in the evening.
- People holding the flag of the Tigray regional state gathered on the main streets of the city.
- Fierce fighting between Eritrean and Ethiopian troops and Tigray defense forces was reported near Shire, Northwestern Tigray. Reported that Tigray Defense Forces control the town of Shire in Northwestern Tigray.
- The town of Alamata and Korem, Southern zone of Tigray is controlled by Tigray defense forces.
- Reported that Amhara forces fleeing the town of Humera in Western Tigray after the major towns of Tigray were controlled by Tigray defense forces.
- Tigray Media House (TMH) said ENDF soldiers burned the military training base found in Qwiha while escaping from the city of Mekelle.
- ENDF soldiers cut communication services and networks of WFP, UNICEF, and other UN organizations in Mekelle.

- The Executive Director of UNICEF, Henrietta Fore said: “Members of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces entered our office in Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia on 28 June and dismantled our VSAT equipment.”
- “This act violates UN privileges and immunities and the rules of International Humanitarian Law regarding respect for humanitarian relief objects. I condemn this in strongest terms,” said Fore.
- Fore added UNICEF’s priority in Tigray, and across Ethiopia, is to help the most vulnerable children, including the 140,000 children already facing famine-like conditions and we should never be a target.
- “I ask all parties to the conflict in Tigray to abide by the rules of war and to respect and protect humanitarian agencies,” added Fore.
- Fore also said parties to the conflict must not search, confiscate or interfere with humanitarian relief operations and must allow access to the populations in need as well as protect children at all times.
- Agence France-Presse (AFP) said the Interim government fled the Tigray capital after Tigray Defense Forces reportedly take control of the city.
- Reported that after Mekelle was controlled by the Tigray Defence Forces, the interim administration assigned by the federal government had asked for a ceasefire.
- The head of the Tigray interim administration, Mr. Abraham Belay, called for an end to the fighting and called for negotiations.
- The announcement came as witnesses reported Tigray forces in the streets of Tigray's capital, Mekelle.
- According to BBC, Getachew Reda, the spokesperson for the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), told news agency Reuters the city was now under their control.
- During the day, the residents have seen the Ethiopian military leaving the city and the city residents were tense.

#### Situation in Ethiopia (per 28 June)

- Reported that gunfire shooting was heard at Klaity prison in Addis Abeba where major opposition leaders such as Jawar Mohammed and Bekele Gereba are imprisoned.
- Following the fall of Mekelle to Tigray defense forces, a high number of federal forces has been deployed to the streets of Addis Abeba.

#### Reported situation in the Horn region (per 28 June)

- Sudan has rejected an Ethiopian proposal to manage the filling for a second time of a giant dam that it is building on the Blue Nile.
- A Sudanese official said the Ethiopian proposal for the second filing was “not real” and “a way to buy time”, adding any proposal should come under the auspices of AU mediators and involve all parties.
- “Ethiopia had put forward impossible conditions related to the division of the share of the water, which Sudan considers outside the scope of negotiations,” said the Sudanese official.

#### International situation (per 28 June)

- António Guterres, SG of the UN said recent events in the Tigray region of Ethiopia are extremely worrisome. They demonstrate once again that there is no military solution to the crisis.
- “I have just spoken to Prime Minister Abiy and I am hopeful that an effective cessation of hostilities will take place. It is essential that civilians are protected, humanitarian aid reach the people in need and a political solution is found,” said Guterres.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on “The involvement of Eritrea in the war in Tigray” on June 29th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: <https://bit.ly/3qfQ335>

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#### Links of interest

[https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-57645282?fbclid=IwAR2SFTrhbaolUMP2EPsvxp8xBtxB9kTs-VOFM6Jcz2qffhtHdZg7kZH\\_2QQ](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-57645282?fbclid=IwAR2SFTrhbaolUMP2EPsvxp8xBtxB9kTs-VOFM6Jcz2qffhtHdZg7kZH_2QQ)  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/28/world/asia/tigray-mekelle-ethiopia-retreat.html>  
<https://addisstandard.com/breaking-rebel-forces-take-over-tigrays-capital-fed-government-accepts-interim-admins-call-for-ceasefire/>  
<https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/416139/Egypt/Politics-/Sudan-rejects-Ethiopian-plan-to-fill-giant-dam-a-s.aspx>  
<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/06/28/world/ethiopian-forces-mekelle-intl-latam/index.html?fbclid=IwAR>