

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 201 - 17 August 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 16 August)

- Reported that TDF controls the town of Sekota in Wag Hemra zone of the Amhara regional state.
- Spokesman of Tigray Military Central Command, Getachew Reda says in Afar and Amhara areas where TDF is engaged, all administrative structures below the zone should continue their normal activities.
- Getachew said except for those directly involved in the crime, all others may continue in their work and this was also requested by the local public.
- According to reports, Afar militias have joined the TDF to remove Prime Minister Abiy from power. We were however not able to confirm this. If true, it would be another region siding against the central government after the TDF and the OLF came to an agreement.
- The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) has started relocating some 23,000 Eritrean refugees who had been stranded at camps in the conflict-ravaged Tigray region in Ethiopia.
- UNHCR spokesperson Neven Crvenkovic said as of August 6, at least 126 Eritrean refugees had been moved to Dabat, a new site in the neighbouring Amhara region.
- "While providing immediate support, UNHCR's priority remains to facilitate the relocation of refugees to a new camp in Dabat, in the Amhara region," said Crvenkovic.
- The relocation comes weeks after the UN agency and its implementing partner, Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) were given a piece of land by the Ethiopian government for a new camp for the Eritrean refugees.
- Crvenkovic also said: "On 26 June, land that had been identified nearby in the Amhara region was officially designated and handed over to ARRA and UNHCR for the construction of a permanent camp."
- According to UNHCR, the new site will accommodate some 25,000 Eritrean refugees who had long been sheltered at Mai Aini and Adi Harush camps in the Tigray region.
- Refugees who have been moved to the new emergency accommodation sites in Dabat have received basic relief items like jerry cans, mattresses, buckets, soap, blankets and food.
- According to the UNHCR spokesperson, after Ethiopian forces withdrew from Tigray in June, there is a relative calm in camps hosting Eritrean refugees in the Tigray region.
- "There is a relative calm in camps hosting Eritrean refugees in the Tigray region, however, refugees remain in dire need of water and healthcare," he added.
- As of August 5, UNHCR and partners have distributed food to 23,000 refugees in Mai Aini and Adi Harush camps. The delivery of aid resumed on August 5.
- However, the UN refugee agency says access remains limited due to a complex and fluid security situation in the region. Basic services such as healthcare remain unavailable as well as clean water.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 16 August)

- Reported that Ethiopian Ambassador to the United States, Ewnetu Blata, is seeking asylum in the U.S.
- Reported that Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) threatens to block a major highway that links Ethiopia to Kenya, in what could directly affect trade with Nairobi.
- If taken over, it will be the first time the conflict in Ethiopia would directly affect Kenya, Ethiopia's neighbour to the south.
- OLA news sources claim that its fighters are rapidly advancing on the western and southern fronts of the Oromia region.
- In the southern front where the Ethiopia-Kenya highway passes, OLA claimed to have controlled the entire Gujji zone and parts of the Borena zone bordering Kenya.
- The OLA fighters were also pushing deeper to take full control of the Borena zone.
- OLA is also using blockage of key roads, including those leading to the Amhara region, as its military strategy.
- Reported that journalists of Ethio-Forum and Awlo Media has been released on bail.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (per 16 August)

- The Prime Minister of Sudan, Abdalla Hamdok says he will keep pushing for peace in Ethiopia.
- He said Sudan had reached out to all sides as part of a push to end the conflict.
- "We will continue to exert all efforts for Ethiopia to become stable, unified and secure," said Hamdok in a press conference in Khartoum.

International Situation (per 16 August)

- A statement by the UN says UN Ethiopia is very concerned about recent statements appearing on social and mainstream media claiming that UN agencies and humanitarian partners are operating in Ethiopia in support of partisan political agendas.
- "Humanitarian assistance provided by the UN and its partners is guided by the four humanitarian principles: humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence," reads the UN statement.
- The statement also said adhering to these principles and in close coordination with the Government of Ethiopia, the UN and partners are providing critical assistance to populations in need in all of Ethiopia's regions and city administrations in an objective, impartial, neutral and independent manner, putting affected populations at the centre of its operations.

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Link of Interest

[Sudan's premier says will keep pushing for peace in Ethiopia - RFI](#)

[UN statement on impartial engagement in support of Ethiopia | United Nations in Ethiopia](#)

[UNHCR begins relocation of 20,000 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia | Nation](#)

[Oromo Liberation Army threatens to block road linking Ethiopia to Kenya | Nation](#)