

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 202 - 19 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 18 August)

- Reported that TDF controls the town of Debre Tabor, capital of South Gondar Zone.
- A report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) says Ethiopian authorities have arbitrarily detained, forcibly disappeared, and committed other abuses against ethnic Tigrayans in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa since late June 2021.
- "Ethiopian security forces in recent weeks have carried out rampant arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances of Tigrayans in Addis Ababa," said Laetitia Bader, Horn of Africa director at HRW.
- Bader said: "The government should immediately stop its ethnic profiling, which has cast unjustified suspicion on Tigrayans, produce information on everyone being held, and provide redress to victims."
- In July and August, HRW interviewed by phone 8 current and former Tigrayan detainees, 4 Tigrayan business owners, and 25 relatives of detainees, witnesses to abuses, and lawyers. It also reviewed court and police documents and relevant photos.
- HRW said although the Ethiopian attorney general told the media that ordinary citizens would not be affected, its research shows most, if not all, appeared to have been targeted on the basis of ethnicity.
- Witnesses told HRW that security forces stopped and arrested Tigrayans on the streets and in cafes and other public places, and in their homes and workplaces, often during warrantless searches.
- In many cases, security forces checked people's identification cards to confirm their identity before taking them to a police station or other detention facility.
- A Tigrayan political activist and a Tigrayan aid worker, both based in Addis Ababa, were among those arrested in July, as were at least a dozen journalists and media workers who have reported on abuses against Tigrayans.
- On June 29, police and intelligence agents arrested a hotel owner and shut the hotel, but released his colleague, who is ethnic Amhara.
- The Tigrayan owner's brother said that within two days, security forces moved the hotel owner to an undisclosed location, and his whereabouts remain unknown.
- Security forces have also intimidated and threatened people, including detainees and their relatives.
- "Many of the police officers who were in the compound [of the detention center] were insulting me," a woman detained in July said. "They were using abusive words that are directly attached with identity. They said I was a venomous snake."
- HRW said Ethiopian authorities should immediately account for Tigrayans' forcibly disappeared, release those being held without credible evidence of a crime, and end all discriminatory treatment.
- HRW further said Ethiopian authorities should comply with international legal prohibitions against arbitrary deprivation of liberty and enforced disappearances.
- "The Ethiopian government's ethnic profiling, arrest, detention, and enforced disappearances of Tigrayans is unlawful and unjust," said Bader. "Donor countries should raise their concerns with the government to immediately end and investigate these discriminatory practices that threaten to worsen ethnic tensions in the country."

- The Associated Press (AP) says small children are among those held amid a new wave of detentions of ethnic Tigrayans suspected of supporting Tigray forces.
- In an interview with AP, one of those detained described the grim conditions in which more than 700 Tigrayan ENDF members, their families and retirees are held at a camp in Ethiopia's Oromia region.
- The ethnic Tigrayan member of the ENDF said two detainees died after beatings and another died from lack of medication for a pre-existing condition.
- Recently, Hailu Kebede, an official with the Salsay Woyane Tigray opposition party who has briefed diplomats and others on the war, was detained.
- His lawyer, Kirubel Gebregziabher, confirmed that he is accused of participating in the war and "misinforming" people about a deadly airstrike by the Ethiopian military on a crowded market in Tigray in June.
- "His next court appearance was delayed until Thursday in what supporters called an attempt to block any meeting with the U.S. envoy," said Kirubel.
- In a press release, Tigray Independence Party (TIP), an opposition party, has called the international community to take any meaningful action to end the genocidal war on Tigray.
- TIP says as long as Eritrean and Ethiopian forces are present in Tigray and until the people of Tigray get the chance to determine their future by exercising their right to self-determination, we don't see any reason to stop our resistance to the genocide.
- "We call upon the international community to take a principled stand that helps the people of Tigray realize their quest for self-determination through a referendum," said TIP.
- TIP added that any negotiation between Tigray and the rest of Ethiopia should not be handled by a single political force from Tigray.
- "As we see it today there are attempts to settle the Tigrayan war by engaging with a single political actor from Tigray. We are not only unhappy to see this but strongly believe that this way of trying to settle matters is completely unacceptable and counterproductive to its intentions," said TIP.

The situation in Ethiopia (per 18 August)

- Representatives of Eritrean refugees in Addis Abeba held a high-level meeting on 17th August with the Agency for Refugees and Returnees Administration and the UN High Commission for Refugees.
- In the meeting UNHCR promised the representatives of the Eritrean Refugees that the staff of the UNHCR will do their best to relocate Eritrean refugees from the conflict area.
- UNHCR said it would only relocate refugees who wanted to be relocated; there are refugees who want to stay in Tigray and who do not want to move to the Amhara region.
- In the meeting ARRA said that it was not in a position to carry out relocations to the new Dabarkh camp in Amhara region.
- Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) now controls the Finfinee-Moyale. It is reportedly controlling vehicles crossing the Ethiopian-Kenyan border. They also captured the towns of Bulbul and Saransar.
- Reported that fierce fighting between OLA and Ethiopian forces is happening in the outskirts of Addis Ababa and in particular in the town of Saluta which is only about 20 KM to Addis Ababa.
- Residents told BBC Tigrigna that OLA has controlled various villages and held public meetings with communities in the Guji Zone of the Oromia region.
- The Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his delegation arrived in Turkey on 18 August. On the same day, Turkey's president also received a delegation from the UAE.
- Mr. Agegnehu Teshager, the President of Amhara Regional State, said that the Amhara regional government passed a decision that grants the people of the Amhara region the right to privately utilize weapons seized during the war against Tigray Defense Forces.

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Link of Interest

[New wave of Ethiopian detentions of Tigrayans includes kids \(apnews.com\)](#)

[Ethiopia: Ethnic Tigrayans Forcibly Disappeared | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#)