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**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](#).

### **Horn Highlights: Abiy says he will lead the army, Agreement reached in Sudan amidst protests, Advance on Addis continues**

In this week Horn highlights: Ethiopian PM says he will “join the frontlines” of the fighting; TDF/OLA advance continues amidst heavy resistance; Ethiopia threatens license revocation for four international news networks; US military readies forces in Djibouti to aid its embassy in Ethiopia; Further information that war was planned months before start of conflict; Agreement reached between with military in Sudan while opposition denounces agreement and protests continue.

#### **Greater Horn of Africa**

*Ethiopia: Prime Minister states he will join the fight at the front*

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has declared on social media that he will join the fight from the front line, leading the military campaign against the Tigrayan forces. The Prime Minister has called on everyone to “meet him at the front” and added that “there is no time left to criticize from afar”. The Ethiopian defence minister has said the Ethiopian military and special forces will start using “special tactics”. No further information was provided on those new tactics. A US official has told reporters that the US administration believes there is still a small window of opportunity to reach a ceasefire in the year-long conflict.

- [Ethiopia PM says he will lead army ‘from the battlefield’](#)
- [Breaking: Pm Abiy To Lead Army From Frontline As Of Tomorrow](#)

*Ethiopia: Advance on Addis Ababa continues*

Fighting has continued between Tigrayan Defence Forces (TDF)/Oromia Liberation Army (OLA) forces on the one side and the Ethiopian government forces on the other. TDF captured Shewa Robit and are moving towards Debre Birhan. The towns are about 200 km from Addis Ababa. Reportedly many airstrikes and drone strikes have been taking place in that area, as the Ethiopian government tries to slow down the advance. *NPR* interviewed a journalist in Addis Ababa who says that people are being trained openly in the streets in preparation for a fight. The training is limited to two days per person. According to the interviewee, during the day, life in Addis remains quite similar, although the state of emergency is very visible at night. Fighting has also been taking place on other fronts but the TDF/OLA forces have been encountering heavy resistance from Amhara forces. There have also been continued reports of Ethiopian government air- and drone strikes on Mekelle.

- [Ethiopia's PM Abiy Ahmed vows to lead army 'from the battlefield'](#)
- [Ethiopia's capital prepares for possible rebel attack](#)

*Ethiopia: International news agency threatened with license revocation*

The Ethiopian government has warned *CNN*, *Reuters*, *BBC* and *AP* that they will lose their license if they continue the “dissemination of unsubstantiated information.” The government media authority accused these four networks of “consistently disseminating news that sowed seeds of animosity and compromised the sovereignty of the country”. It further accused them of media misconduct by reporting “that the government is using famine and rape as a weapon of war in Tigray” and “undermining the government’s effort to address the humanitarian crisis in the Tigray region”. It threatens to revoke their licenses if they continue the reporting.

- [Twitter: Letter of Warning! Ethiopian Media Authority issued a LETTER OF WARNING for four foreign media. These Media being: CNN, BBC, Reuters and Associated Press.](#)
- [News: Media authority cautions private media to operate in manner suited to country's situation](#)

*Ethiopia: US positions military forces to support Embassy in Ethiopia*

The United States has positioned special forces in Djibouti to come to the aid of the US embassy in Ethiopia if so required. Army rangers from the 1/75 battalion were activated following the further deterioration of the situation in Ethiopia. According to *CNN* three amphibious warships, the USS Essex, the USS Portland, and the USS Pearl Harbor, have also been put on standby to provide support for evacuation if the need were to arise. One official described it as “prudent planning” while another reiterated that there are no plans for a Kabul-style evacuation of Addis Ababa and called on all Americans to leave Ethiopia. The US government has also issued a statement warning people of the risk of terrorist attacks in Addis Ababa. It urges people to stay vigilant and avoid areas frequented by foreigners.

- [US has positioned special ops near Ethiopia for potential US embassy assistance](#)
- [Security Alert – U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia](#)

*Ethiopia: Military action against Tigray reportedly planned in months before official start of conflict*

More information has come out this week regarding the planning of the conflict in Tigray ahead of the official start of the conflict. William Davidson, a senior analyst at the Crisis Group, said that he spoke to a diplomat who says that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was talking about military action against Tigray, before the region held its elections in September 2020. Reportedly Abiy said military action against Tigray would only last a few days. Videos have also been posted online, showing Ethiopian handover of military equipment to Eritrean forces around the start of the conflict on 5 November 2020.

- [Twitter: Spoke to diplo who attended MoFA Bishoftu retreat, 24 Aug-7 Sep, 2020.](#)
- [Twitter: This is original video material checked on provenance in multiple ways showing mechanized weapons transfer between ENDF Northern Command and Eritrea](#)

*Sudan: Transitional agreement reached*

The Sudanese military has reinstated the Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok after coming to an agreement on a transitional agreement. Hamdok said that the agreement envisions the establishment of an independent technocratic government, under the oversight of the military. The agreement allows for the government to act independently and appoint its own ministers, states Hamdok. Hamdok added that the goal of the next government is to rewrite the constitution and hold elections. The United Nations, US government, European Union, and other countries, have welcomed the agreement. The military stated that it is also going to release further political prisoners.

- [Sudan's reinstated premier says government to be independent](#)
- [Sudan military agrees to reinstate PM and release political detainees](#)

*Sudan: Protests continue after transitional agreement announced*

Several Sudanese opposition parties have expressed that they are opposed to the transitional agreement and have

said that no compromise with the military is possible. They have called the agreement a betrayal of democracy. Protests have continued to take place in Sudan, with the death toll rising to 41. According to the AP, on Monday the government awarded police an extra month of pay, saying that they are facing “great pressures”. Prime Minister Hamdok said that he had come to an agreement with the military to avoid bloodshed.

- [Sudan’s reinstated premier says government to be independent](#)
- [Sudan military reinstates prime minister, but protests continue](#)

\* If you have any comments, questions, or additions to the next news highlights, please let us know.

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