

Europe External Programme with Africa

# SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

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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 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](#). To receive the situation report in your e-mail, [click here](#). You can unsubscribe at any moment through the link at the bottom of each e-mail.

### Situation in Tigray (per 31 May)

- The Central Command of Tigray says Eritrean forces launched an attack in North-western Tigray on 24 May (Eritrea's independence day) where Eritrea sustained heavy casualties in all aspects.
- The Central Command said: "On 24 May, 2 brigades of the 57<sup>th</sup> division and one battalion of the 21st division attacked Tigray forces in Geza Gille near Adi Awe'eala in North-western Tigray and Tigray forces scored a major military victory with hundreds of Eritrean forces killed and wounded."
- The Central Command adds 120 Eritrean soldiers including a brigade commander and three battalion commanders were killed, 195 wounded and 4 captured. A large number of weapons and ammunition including 1 DShK gun and 5 military radios were captured.
- In retaliation, Eritrean forces shelled the town of Sheraro for two days on 28 and 29 May in the presence of aid agencies, targeting residents and internally displaced people (IDPs) from Western Tigray who have been sheltered in schools and medical facilities.
- Reuters reports that UN internal documents confirm the shelling in Sheraro. The reports seen by Reuters noted that a 14-year old girl was killed, and 18 people were injured.
- UN documents recorded humanitarian organisations in Sheraro, who reported that at least 23 rounds were fired. Some of the shells hit a school which housed displaced persons.
- The Tigray Central Command said the shelling of Sheraro town has led to numerous civilian casualties, endangering lives of IDPs, residents and aid workers.
- The Central Command called on the international community to put pressure on Eritrea for a complete and verifiable withdrawal of its forces and warned Tigray will be obliged to defend and protect its people and territory if Eritrea does not stop committing atrocities on innocent civilians.
- Tigray TV interviewed two recently captured Eritrean Prisoners of War (PoWs) about their actions in Tigray, in which they appeared to confess to killing, looting and raping. Details of this interview will not be reported out of ethical considerations.
- A study by researchers from the Mekelle University and various US universities exploring the impact of war in Tigray on health facilities revealed that only 9.7% of health centres, 43.8% of general hospitals and 21.7% of primary hospitals are currently fully functional.
- The study added that none of the health facilities are operating at prewar levels even when classified as fully or partially functional due to lack of essential utilities and devices looted or destroyed, while they still continue operating.
- The study assessed the geographical distribution of the health crisis due to the war in Tigray and found only 3.3% in Western, 3.3% in South Eastern, 6.5 in North Western, 8% in Central, 14.6% in Southern, 16% in Eastern and 78.6% in Mekelle are fully functional.

- The study says the war had a direct devastating impact on healthcare delivery and recommends restoration of destroyed health facilities to be a top priority of the international community.
- According to Addis Standard (AS), the number of fistula cases in Tigray have increased due to the devastating war and humanitarian crisis.
- Dr Melaku Abreha, Medical Director at the Hamlin Fistula centre in Mekelle says the progress made to eliminate fistula in the years since the centre was opened in 2006 has been all but eroded.
- “Before women were poor, uneducated, or from rural areas. Now, cases are common in urban areas and among educated women. sexual violence and severe malnourishment among pregnant women also aggravate the severity of the cases,” said Dr Melaku
- Six Tigrayan agriculture experts in Mekelle call for international pressure on the Ethiopian government to allow unhindered aid and necessary agricultural inputs to Tigray.
- “We demand the delivery of 60,000 metric tons of fertilisers, 50,000 metric tons of seeds and 100,000 litres of pesticides and insecticides so that our farmers can use these inputs for the coming rainy season,” said the experts.
- Garowe Online reports that Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed held a secret meeting with TPLF representatives while in Abuja, Nigeria.

## Regional Situation (per 31 May)

- According to a report by SBS News, drought has left millions of people in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia at risk of famine. The report stated that over 16.7 million people in the three countries are facing starvation with the number expected to rise to 20 million by September.
- A statement by meteorologists and aid agencies says the unprecedented drought is “a climatic event not seen in at least 40 years.”. The statement adds the 2022 March-May rainy season was the driest on record and warned that the October-November monsoon “could also fail”.
- On Sunday, Sudan’s military leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan lifted Sudan’s state of emergency that had been in place since the military coup in October 2021. 125 political detainees were released.
- The state of emergency was lifted “to create a conducive environment for a fruitful and meaningful dialogue that achieves stability during the transitional period.”
- The Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) conducted a study on smugglers operating between Ethiopia and Sudan. 46% of Ethiopian refugees in Sudan had used a smuggler. 33% of those felt deceived by the smugglers, which could be an indication of recruiting by traffickers.

## Links of interest

- [Eritrean troops shell town in north Ethiopia - U.N.](#)
- [Geographical distribution of the health crisis of war in the Tigray region of Ethiopia](#)
- [“ልዩሉ 40 ንፁሃት ቆተሉ ልዕሊ 30 በይይዶ ዓመጥፀ” ሙሩኸ ስርዓት ሊሳይስ](#)
- [Hamlin Fistula Center in Tigray says Fistula cases soared as the result of war](#)
- [Ethiopia insight: Tigray’s once-thriving agriculture sector has been purposely destroyed](#)
- [Unprecedented drought leaves million at risk of famine: Kenay, Ethiopia and Somalia](#)
- [The use of smugglers among Ethiopian refugees and migrants in Sudan](#)
- [Eritrean troops shell town in north Ethiopia - U.N.](#)

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