

Europe External Programme with Africa

# SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

No. 340- 28 December, 2022

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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.

## Peace negotiations (per 28 December)

- The African Union (AU) will send a delegation to verify and monitor the implementation process of the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement.
- The AU delegation will travel to Tigray's capital "before the end of the year" with the objective to oversee the progress of the peace agreement.
- The AU delegation follows a visit by 50 high-level delegates on 26 December, including government ministers of the federal government of Ethiopia to Mekelle, who were cordially received at the airport by church leaders and members of the public.
- Both visits come on the back of a second round of negotiations finished on the 22nd of December in Nairobi, the results of which were announced by former Kenyan President, who leads the mediating team efforts.
- Following the second round of negotiations, Kenyatta stated that the negotiators of Ethiopia and of Tigray had agreed to "give the monitoring and verification team of the African Union full access."
- Kenyatta said that the AU delegation would take a "full 360-degree viewpoint to ensure all the elements of the agreements are actually going to be implemented".
- It is understood that the visit of the AU mediating team will give them a full understanding of the situation on the ground, to help inform the steps necessary to advance the peace process.
- An outstanding concern is the presence of Eritrean troops in Tigray.
- Tigray officials state that the Eritrean government is still intervening on the ground in Tigray, and obstructing the peace process.
- The Tigray officials have asked that PM Abiy's government ensures compliance with the terms of the peace accord regarding the withdrawal of the foreign and non-federal forces, still present in Tigray.

## Situation in Tigray (per 28 December)

- The report by the Emergency Coordinating Committee states that the resumption of essential services (including banking, communication and other enablers) across Tigray is critical as well as the flow of commercial goods to ensure humanitarian assistance can be delivered.
  - The ECC reports that large numbers of new IDPs have arrived in Shire in BGI, Embadanso, Tsehaye, Midre-Genet, Fre-Seweat, Guna, Atsede and Preparatory IDP sites where immediate food assistance and other services are needed.
  - The new IDPs coming from Northwestern Tigray: Seyemti, Adiabo, Maekelay Adiabo, Tahtay Adiabo, Sheraro, Tselemti, Zana, Adi'mehmeday, Hitsats, Mai-hanse, Tselemti, Maitsebri, and Tahtay Koraro.
  - The ECC observes reports that the sites are accessed by military groups. IDPs are fearful of being taken by security forces.
  - Hitsats IDP site has reportedly a dire humanitarian situation, but can not yet be reached.
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- The report of the ECC states that armed groups - especially Eritrean forces, frequently enter IDP sites and threaten IDPs with kidnapping and detention.
- An example is a mother of 25 age of years old with her child who was taken by Eritrean forces and no one knows where she is now (reported in Adwa).
- The report states three buses of IDPs were loaded and kidnapped by Fano and military force, in Aksum. Tigrayan civilians in Aksum reportedly feel intimidated and threatened.

### **Situation in Ethiopia (per 28 December)**

- An Ethiopian military delegation led by Chief of staff Field Marshal Berhanu Jula made an official visit to Turkey yesterday, says FBC citing Ethiopian Embassy in the country.
- The Ethiopia chief of staff held a meeting with his Turkish counterpart and reportedly discussed bilateral military cooperation.
- The Catholic Bishops of Ethiopia have welcomed the recent deal for a “permanent cessation of hostilities” between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF).
- In a message issued at the closing of its Annual Ordinary Assembly on 22 December, the Ethiopian Bishops urged all stakeholders to continue working “diligently” for a viable and lasting peace in the country.
- Fana Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) reported that 682 Ethiopian migrants returned home yesterday from Saudi Arabia.
- Since the Ethiopian New Year (September 11), a total of 18,962 Ethiopians were repatriated from Saudi Arabia, according to the Ethiopian Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, adds FBC.
- Yesterday, a bomb explosion killed one and injured three people in the Ethiopian city of Adama specifically at Gudissa hotel of Bole sub city, according to the Oromia region communication office.
- Police are reportedly carrying out investigations on arrested suspects.

### **International Situation (per 28 December)**

- The International Monetary Fund states that the peace agreement between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF may improve Djibouti economic activities, reversing the decline in the port activity.
- Former US Horn Envoy Jeffrey Feltman writes that “Based on Isaias’s history of attempting to destabilize his neighbors, one can conclude that he also wants to prevent the reemergence of a stable Ethiopia that dominates the political and security environment of the Horn of Africa.”
- Feltman points out that the United Arab Emirates hosts the Red Sea Trading Corporation (RSTC) which is sanctioned by the US and EU as it is a conduit for illegal and criminal activity and support to the war. The RSTC is the largest offshore facility that Isaias relies on for imports and exports, including arms.

### **Links of interest**

- <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/rest-of-africa/ethiopia-tigray-discuss-withdrawal-of-eritrea-forces-4067260>
- [Ethiopian chief of staff visits Turkey on military cooperation](#)
- [Ethiopian Bishops applaud peace agreement for Tigray](#)
- [Explosion at Adama city in Ethiopia kills one and injures others](#)
- [Almost 19000 Ethiopian migrants return home from Saudi Arabia in less than four months](#)
- [Ethiopia’s truce agreement forecasted to spring Djibouti economic activities](#)
- <https://reader.foreignaffairs.com/2022/12/26/ethiopias-hard-road-to-peace/content.html>

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