

Europe External Programme with Africa

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

No. 374- 17 February, 2023

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 17 February)

- Citing a woman who was forced to leave a village west of Zalambessa on 15 February, Joanne Hodges, a documentary filmmaker based in Canada, said “Eritrean soldiers are actively evicting residents, digging trenches & arming explosive devices to act as barriers.”
- The Eritrean troops are reportedly controlling subdistricts (Kebeles) of Gulomakeda district, located in the eastern zone of Tigray.
- Eritrean forces fired today at humanitarian workers of CARE Ethiopia in the Eastern Zone of Tigray, according to former Mekelle University President Professor Kindeya who cited local sources.
- He said the Eritrean forces fired at a specific location called Agere Lekoma Engel and forced the humanitarian staff to return to Adigrat city.
- He added the humanitarian staff were going to the Irob Woreda with two aid trucks carrying food.
- Professor Kindeya also said “Eritrean forces are in many areas inside Tigray, manning checkpoints, blocking roads & obstructing humanitarian aid.”

Situation in Tigray (per 17 February)

- In a joint statement of 17 February, three Tigray opposition political parties, namely Tigray Independence Party, Salsay Weyane Tigray and National Congress for Greater Tigray called for higher inclusion in the recently announced interim government establishing committee.
 - Signatories write “we have had no session with anyone regarding the issue of forming an interim government in Tigray apart from the preliminary encounter of the chair-persons of our respective parties with the self-appointed so-called interim government establishing committee”.
 - They added “if there is a genuine endeavour aimed at soliciting contributions from Tigrayans to form an all-inclusive platform, we are ready to join in”.
 - Less than 1% of the people that need food assistance have reportedly received aid last week in the western zone of Tigray.
 - According to the weekly food distribution update of the Ethiopia Food Cluster, only 7,734 of the 1m people that need assistance received food aid last week.
 - A senior Tigray government official is reported to have said that the leadership of the region is aware of the “intention” of the Ethiopian Federal government to terminate the mandate of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE), according to the *East African Daily*.
 - The official, who reportedly preferred to remain anonymous, has been quoted to have said “Ethiopia does not have authority to terminate a probe mandated by a UN body”, adds the *East African Daily*.
 - In relation to the response of Tigray to the intention of the Ethiopian government to end the mission of ICHREE, the official said “we [the Tigray leadership] are in touch with many actors at the international level”.
-

Situation in Ethiopia (per 17 February)

- In his address to the 6th regular meeting of Ethiopia's Oromia regional council today (17 February), the region's president Shimeles Abdissa reportedly called on the Oromo Liberation Army to resolve the conflict in the region through reconciliation, according to *Addis Standard*.
- *Addis Standard* quoted the regional president as saying "In front of this respected Caffee [regional parliament] in the name of our people and with great respect I would like to call on armed groups operating in our region, "OLF-Shane" to come to reconciliation."
- The regional president also is reported to have said the government will continue taking "law enforcement measures" against "those that are unwilling to resolve the problem peacefully."
- The inflation of consumer price in Ethiopia is still 33.9% in January, which is almost the same as in December (33.8%), reports Patrick Heinisch, an African economic researcher, who cited the country's central Statistics Agency.
- He said food price inflation slightly increased from December (32.95%) to January 33.6%.
- Ethiopian water and energy minister Habtamu Etefa said his government has allocated 3.2 billion birr to reconstruct water infrastructure in conflict damaged areas of North Ethiopia.
- Ethiopia's regional state Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's (SNNP) warns against an alarming drought threatening many lives in the Konzo zone, calling for immediate action.

Regional Situation (per 17 February)

- Sudanese military leaders have agreed to establish a Russian Navy logistic base in Port Sudan and in turn Russia would provide weapons and equipment to the Sudan armed forces, according to *Sudan Tribune*.
- Eritrean president Isaias Afwerki visited Port Sudan yesterday (16 February), reports *Nova Agency*. However, no other news agency has reported on this visit.
- The World Food Program executive director David Beasley stated that only 25% of its 210 million acres of arable land of Sudan is used and proposes to help the country to double wheat production.

International Situation (per 17 February)

- Ethiopia's Finance Minister Ahmed Shide and the Chinese ambassador in Addis Ababa, Zhao Zhiyuan, signed a deal of US 23m to maintain the light rail transport in the city.

Links of interest

- [Twitter: Joanne Hodges on Eritrean soldiers' continued control of parts of Tigray](#)
- [Tigray Downplays Ethiopia's Fresh Moves to Terminate UN Rights Experts Mandate](#)
- [Twitter: Duke Burbridge on food distribution in Tigray](#)
- [Twitter: Professor Kindea Gebrehiwot on Eritrean forces firing at humanitarian staff in Tigray](#)
- [Twitter: Professor Kindeya on Eritrean forces blocking roads, manning check points](#)
- [Breaking: Oromia Region President calls for reconciliation with OLA](#)
- [Twitter: Patrick Heinisch on inflation in Ethiopia](#)
- [በሰሜን ኢትዮጵያ የተካሄዱ የውሃ መስረት ልማቶችን መልሶ ለማቋቋም 3 ነጥብ 2 ቢሊዮን ብር ያስፈልጋል ተባለ](#)
- [Officials in SNNP region warn prolonged drought in Konso zone at alarming level](#)
- [Russia would provide weapons to Sudan in return for Red Sea navy base](#)
- [Eritrea-Sudan: President Afwerki visits Port Sudan, focus on the Red Sea routes](#)
- [Twitter: WFP executive director David Beasley](#)
- [China hands a lifeline to Ethiopian capital's crumbling light rail](#)

Disclaimer: All information in this Situation Report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. Publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand potential impacts of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or impact thereof. All information reported originates from third parties and the content of all reported and linked information remains the sole responsibility of these third parties. Report to info@eepea.be any additional information and corrections.