

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 27 March)

- Hitsats, a refugee camp in the northwestern zone of Tigray in which Eritrean refugees used to be housed, is now hosting internally displaced Ethiopians.
- The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said: "The Hitsats site in Tigray hosts over 15,500 displaced Ethiopians. The infrastructure was seriously damaged during the conflict and requires urgent rehabilitation to improve living conditions."
- The Holy Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC) issued a statement on 24 March denouncing the "Menbere Selama Tigray Prime Church" for appointing bishops and dioceses abroad to serve the Tigray diaspora.
- It states that the structure "deliberately violated the canonical and administrative procedures of the Church" because the appointments can only be decided by the Holy Synod and require the signature of the Holy Patriarch.
- The EOTC called a meeting on 30 March to deliberate on internal structural problems. Bishops from Tigray are called by the EOTC to attend.

## Situation in Ethiopia (per 27 March)

- The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) said it aims to commence the National Dialogue in June this year, reports *Ethiopian Press Agency*.
- The chief commissioner said: "the ultimate goal of the dialogue is to build national consensus and bolster a culture of trust as stated in the legislation. We are also aimed to ease the difference and misunderstanding between various sectors of society and will begin the deliberation in June 2023."
- He reassured that the Commission is independent of the government and any interest groups.
- The ENDC noted it was not yet able to start preparations in seven zones of the Oromia region due to conflict. The Commission called on armed groups to join the dialogue.
- She said, "The peace agreement reached between the federal government and the TPLF will enable us to move to the areas affected by the conflict and carry out activities that will help the speedy rehabilitation of the war-impacted areas."

## Regional Situation (per 27 March)

- A petition was launched against harassment, indiscriminate arrests and extortion of Eritreans by police in Sudan. The petition warns those arrested include Eritreans with valid UNHCR registration cards and holders of foreign passports.
  - Those detained are reportedly forced to pay the equivalent of USD 1,200 for their release, and this process can repeat itself multiple times. Eritrean organisations note they have received reports of sexual violence affecting both women and men while in detention.
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- Eritreans are also not able to renew their papers due to the process of forming a transitional government.
- President Hassan Sheikh prepares to launch the second phase of operation aiming to eradicate al-Shabaab, reports *Garowe Online* citing an anonymous source.
- The main aim of the second phase is to liberate areas mainly in central and southern Somalia.
- An Ethiopian military delegation led by Major General Tesfaye Ayalew, head of the Ethiopian National Defense Force Deployment, visited Beledweyne City in central Somalia in preparation for the participation of ENDF troops in an offensive in the Hiran region of Somalia.
- Sudan is conducting a vaccination campaign to prevent an outbreak of polio in the country.
- According to WHO "16 522 vaccinators go door to door to protect 8.9 million children, in the first round of Sudan's 2023 national polio vaccination campaign".
- General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, leader of the Sudanese army, said that the national army will be accountable to the civilian-led government as part of the transition to civilian rule, reports *Al Jazeera*.
- al-Burhan said "During our history, the armed forces have supported dictatorial governments, and we want to put an end to that", in a speech he gave to soldiers on 26 March.

### International Situation (per 27 March)

- The UN Security Council is holding a closed meeting on the situation in Somalia today. It is expected the meeting will cover the transition of security responsibilities from the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) to Somali security forces.
- Victoria Kwakwa, the World Bank Vice President for Eastern and Southern Africa, expressed the bank's commitment for supporting the rehabilitation of communities and infrastructure affected by the war in Ethiopia, reports *Ethiopian Press Agency*.
- In the statement, The Global Society of Tigrayan Scholars and Professionals (GSTS) called for the new Tigray interim government to facilitate the complete resumption of basic services.
- The GSTS also calls for "strengthening peace and stability, consolidating law enforcement and the judiciary and restoring territorial integrity" of Ethiopia's Tigray region.
- It also called for "ensuring dignified return, restitution, and rehabilitation of the millions of internally displaced people, meaningfully supporting and reintegrating war veterans, returnees, and those injured during the war."

### Links of interest

[A statement from the Global Society of Tigray Scholars supporting the interim administration in Tigray](#)

[Twitter: UNHCR on Ethiopian IDP's in Northwestern Tigray](#)

[Press statement from the permanent synod of Ethiopian Orthodox Church](#)

[Commission to commence Nat'l Dialogue June 2023](#)

[Conflict in Oromia impedes national dialogue preparations](#)

[WB to back Ethiopia's holistic dev't](#)

[A call for Urgent Action from the Government of Sudan to stop Abusing Eritreans](#)

[Exclusive: Somalia to launch 2nd phase of an offensive against Al-Shabaab](#)

[Sudan's response to the 2023 polio outbreak showcases coordination](#)

[Sudan's military leader Burhan backs democratic transition](#)

[Somalia: Private Meeting](#)

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