

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 Sudan (per 16 May)

- 280 people were killed in el Geneina, West Darfur, on Saturday and Sunday alone, reports the Sudan Doctors' Union.
- The fighting occurred between the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and armed civilian groups.
- The Sudan Doctors' Union says that a total of 822 civilians across Sudan have been recorded as killed since the conflict started, and over 3000 injured.
- Airstrikes are reported to be intensifying in Khartoum.
- Rapes are committed as part of the violence against civilians in Sudan. The real numbers are unknown as many cases go unreported, stated Suliema Ishaq, the director of the combating violence against women unit at the Ministry of Social Affairs in Sudan.
- Sudanese journalists are facing death threats and intimidation for reports that do not explicitly support the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF).
- Some journalists have implicated the National Congress Party (NCP), which is tied to former Sudanese dictator Omar al-Bashir and the Islamist movement, in the threats.
- RSF has also been implicated in targeting journalists, through threats but also by storming a media office last week and by shooting at a journalist filming on the streets.
- A decentralised humanitarian response which empowers local actors to deliver assistance should be supported by international actors to reach Sudanese people in need, often located thousands of kilometres from the new aid base of Port Sudan, argues Bashàir Ahmed, CEO of a research organisation.

Refugee Situation (per 16 May)

- Refugees from Tigray have been kidnapped and taken to Libya where they have been tortured for ransom, witnesses told The Guardian.
 - Refugees from the refugee camp Tunaydbah were abducted while being transported to their place of work. They were taken to armed traffickers, who transported them to Libya.
 - Others were kidnapped and sold by Sudanese police when they exited the camps without permission.
 - In Libya, the refugees were trafficked to the Libyan border and sold to other traffickers, who imprisoned them together with Eritrean and Somali refugees. They were tortured through beatings with plastic pipes and cables, burning and through electric shocks.
 - One witness said the traffickers were Eritrean and Libyan. An Eritrean trafficker told The Guardian that there has been a large increase of Tigrayans trapped in the trafficking networks.
 - One refugee was forced to pay 6000 USD but was then sold on two more times (paying 2000 USD more) before he managed to escape.
 - Two women and one man recounted they were raped in both Sudan and Libya.
 - The UN did not take additional measures for protection after having been alerted to the protection risk for Tigray refugees, a humanitarian worker said.
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- More than 15,500 Somali refugees currently residing in Ethiopia are being relocated to the new refugee camp in the Somali region in Bokh area.

Situation in Tigray (per 16 May)

- The interim administration of Tigray met with World Bank representative Osman Dione and State Minister of Finance Semereta Sewasew to discuss development and rehabilitation plans in Tigray.
- An EU delegation led by the EU ambassador to Ethiopia will visit Mekelle, Shire, Adigrat, and other areas in Tigray starting from tomorrow, states Tigray Television.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 16 May)

- Unusual floods have caused widespread displacement in the Somali, Oromia, Southern Nations Nationalities & Peoples', South West Ethiopia Peoples' and Afar regions of Ethiopia.
- In the Somali region, 35,000 households were displaced, 45 people died, over 23,000 livestock died, and more than 99,000 hectares of farmland was destroyed.
- The flooding increases the risk of Cholera, an outbreak of which has been ongoing since August 2022.

Regional Situation (per 16 May)

- The border between Kenya and Somalia will see a phased reopening after having been closed in 2011. The first crossing is set to reopen within 30 days.
- Kenya's interior minister announced the reopening following a high-level joint ministerial meeting in Nairobi.
- The UN estimates that 460,000 people have been affected by flooding which has left a "trail of destruction" across Somalia, states UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric.
- The UN warns that 1.6 million people in Somalia and Ethiopia could be impacted if heavy rain continues.
- South Sudan President Salva Kiir continues to engage with the SAF and RSF, and has sent an envoy with a letter to Egypt's President Abdel Fatah Al Sisi. He also sent an envoy to his IGAD counterparts.
- Kiir has directed the relevant agencies to "expeditiously implement" the final phase of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS).
- A two-day conference on the Transitional Justice Mechanism is being held in Juba from 15-17 May as part of the key provisions under the R-ARCSS.

International Situation (per 16 May)

- Chinese President Xi Jinping said that China opposes external interference in Eritrean affairs, and opposes unilateral sanctions on Eritrea. Xi and Eritrean president Isaias Afwerki met yesterday.
- Xi stated that strong Eritrea-China relations are key for peacekeeping in the Horn of Africa.
- Xi indicated China will support Eritrea in development-related matters and investments, particularly in infrastructure construction, telecommunications, agriculture, mining and fisheries.

Links of interest

[Silencing dissent: Journalists in Sudan face threats, raids](#)

[Sudan: 280 killed as fighting rages in West Darfur](#)

[Sudan: Reports of women being raped in Khartoum by armed men](#)

[As aid efforts ramp up in Sudan, local groups must take centre stage](#)

['I saw many bodies': having escaped one conflict, Tigray refugees face new terrors](#)

[RRS Relocates Over 15,500 Asylum Seekers To Mirqaan Refugees Site In Somali Region's Bokh Area](#)

[Twitter: Tigray Television](#)

[Ethiopia: Floods Flash Update, As of 12 May 2023](#)

[Kenya and Somalia agree to phased border reopening](#)

[UN reports extensive flooding damage in central Somalia](#)

[Xi holds talks with Eritrean president](#)

[Xi: Strong China-Eritrea ties part of keeping peace in Horn of Africa](#)

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