

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

No. 436 - 23 May 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.

Situation in Sudan (per 23 May)

- Witnesses in Khartoum reported air raids and clashes throughout the first night of the ceasefire, which started yesterday at 21:45 CAT. Sporadic gunfire and explosions are reported on Tuesday.
- The ceasefire is monitored through a remote monitoring mechanism, said US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who emphasised the importance the US attaches to the negotiated ceasefire.
- The 12-member monitoring committee consists of three representatives from the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), three from the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), three from the US, and three from Saudi Arabia.
- Blinken emphasised in the statement that the US supports the citizens of Sudan, that the citizens should be represented and that the government should be representing the citizens. The role of the army should be to defend the country against external threats, said Blinken in a video statement.
- The Missing Project in Sudan has recorded 229 cases of missing people, most between 15 and 35 years old.
- Export business of gum arabic is impacted by the war. Damaged infrastructure and lack of capacities prevent gum Arabic to be exported. This ingredient counts for 70% of global exporters.

Refugee Situation (per 23 May)

- Sudanese refugees are flowing into Chad in such great numbers that it will be impossible for humanitarian organisations to relocate them, before the rainy season starts in June, warns the Red Cross.
- The areas where the 60.000 to 90.000 refugees that have crossed into Chad are staying will be cut off from supplies once the rainy season starts, risking another major humanitarian disaster.

Situation in Tigray (per 23 May)

- Internally displaced people (IDPs) held demonstrations calling for withdrawal of Eritrean and Amhara forces from Tigray so they could peacefully return to their homes. The rallies have been simultaneously organised in Mekelle, Shire, Adwa, Adigrat and Abyi Adi.
- Thousands of IDPs called on the federal government, interim regional government of Tigray as well as international community to facilitate the humanitarian aid within Tigray and take actions to implement all conditions agreed upon in the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement.
- Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) Chairperson Debretsion Gebremichael states that the TPLF will not re-apply as a political party, as required by the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE).
- Debretsion pointed out that the TPLF is the signatory to the Pretoria Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, and therefore it is the TPLF that safeguards the implementation of the agreement.
- Current and past office holders in the federal government must be held accountable for decisions taken during the Tigray war, stated Debretsion.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 22 May)

- The Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) is increasing its activities to crack down on FANO and other Amhara Militia, including through drone strikes.
- Heavy fighting took place between the ENDF and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) on Saturday and Sunday in the western part of the Guji zone.
- A group of Ethiopian opposition parties condemned a recent study carried out by the government-funded Policy Studies Institute stating the need for constitutional reforms in Ethiopia. The research was politically motivated and had technical academic errors, observers found.
- The Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen, will visit China this week.
- A request for the remains of an Ethiopian prince buried in Windsor to be returned to Ethiopia has been denied by Buckingham Palace.

Regional Situation (per 23 May)

- The US Military, in collaboration with the Somali federal government, conducted airstrikes against al-Shabaab on Saturday in the city of Jilib in southern Somalia.
- A roadside explosion killed four Somali soldiers in Mogadishu on Monday. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility.

International Situation (per 23 May)

- The EU Foreign Affairs Council held a discussion on the EU approach in the Horn of Africa. It welcomed the ceasefire that went into force in Sudan yesterday. The Council said it “will support a robust African-led framework while engaging with partners to identify mediators”.
- The Council recognised Djibouti for the key role it played in evacuation of EU citizens from Sudan.
- The Council states it will support the reconciliation process in Ethiopia, making no mention of justice processes.
- The US pledges support Sudan and its neighbouring countries with humanitarian assistance of \$245 m.
- Ethiopia denounced the resolution on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) adopted during the summit of the Arab League in Jeddah, accusing Egypt of hostile rhetoric and monopolising the Nile River.
- A high-level pledging event to support the humanitarian response in the Horn of Africa will take place in New York on 24 May.
- The effects of climate injustice, particularly extreme droughts and flash floods, should be addressed by the international community in the pledging event, NGOs urge in a joint statement.

Links of interest

[Air raids, clashes at start of one-week truce in Sudan](#)

[Sudan ceasefire in danger as residents report fighting, warplanes](#)

[Blinken warns rival Sudanese generals to respect latest truce or face possible sanctions](#)

[Gum arabic threatened by the war in Sudan](#)

[Red Cross warns of possible humanitarian disaster on Sudan-Chad border](#)

[IDPs from Western Tigray say they want “to farm and live”](#)

[Foreign Affairs Council, 22 May 2023](#)

[News: Caucus of Opposition Parties say gov't funded paper on constitutional reform 'highly disturbing', leads country into 'more chaos'](#)

[The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia: Press Release on the Resolution of the League of Arab States on the GERD](#)

[Ethiopia foreign minister to visit China May 24-28 - Chinese foreign ministry](#)

[Ethiopia's Prince Alemayehu: Buckingham Palace rejects calls to return royal's body](#)

[US Military Confirms Airstrike Against Al-Shabab in Somalia](#)

[al-Shabaab's explosion kills four soldiers in Somalia](#)

[The Horn of Africa Conference 2023: High-level pledging event for the humanitarian response in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia](#)

[NGOs call out climate injustice and urge global donors to fully fund the humanitarian response in the HoA now](#)

[The United States Announces \\$245 Million in Humanitarian Assistance to Sudan and Neighboring Countries](#)

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.