

Europe External Programme with Africa

# SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

## No. 455 - 20 June 2023

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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.

**ANNOUNCEMENT** - Until the end of August, the situation report will be published on Mondays and Thursdays, instead of every day.

### Situation in Sudan (per 20 June)

- The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) reportedly issued a three-day ultimatum to South Sudan, stating that the oil pipelines in the militia-controlled areas would be shut down, unless South Sudan shares oil revenues or stops the payment of transit fees to the Sudanese military-led government.
- RSF threatened to bomb the oil fields if this ultimatum is not accepted, according to observers.
- The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have detained hundreds of Islamist leaders and activists in an effort to frame Islamists as the main threat. These arrests already started shortly before the start of the war.
- A number of rebel groups are supporting the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), including SLA-MM, JEM, GSLF, SNA, SPLM-N, SLA (Tambour). However, there have been reports that some ethnic militias that were previously allied to the SAF have started looting civilians and clashing with the SAF south of Nyala.
- Sources state that NGOs, regional and religious institutions are being weaponized and monetised for the interest of warring sides.
- The Darfur Bar Association reported that the Masalit Sultan's family and other notables of El Geneina's civil society have been targeted with arbitrary killings.
- The leading member of the Socialist Arab Ba'ath Party, Professor Siddig Tawir, has called on all Sudanese civil society actors to unite against the ongoing war. He stressed the need for anti-war actions, rather than highlighting news on the tragedies of the war.
- Grassroots activists in Sudan are being detained by Military Intelligence and General Intelligence Service.
- Women's organisations are providing crucial services to victims of sexual violence, including providing shelter, food, water, healthcare, and psychological support. They have also been monitoring violations.
- The UK's foreign office has been accused of ignoring repeated warnings that the Foreign's Office Sudan team and its policies towards Sudan lacked a focus on the prevention of atrocities. Warnings against the overly-optimistic agenda of prioritising democracy in Sudan had already been issued in 2019.
- The majority of humanitarian NGOs have not been issued new Sudanese visas since the start of the conflict, impeding humanitarian access. Around 100 visa applications from more than 30 organisations are still pending. Meanwhile, non-humanitarian visas are still being issued.

### Refugee Situation (per 20 June)

- Eritreans in Ethiopia who want to exit still have to pay 3 USD for every day that they have 'overstayed' their visa (following the event last year where all the Eritreans had to register).
  - Sudanese and other refugees trying to continue their studies in Uganda are facing problems, because all the student and university records were either looted or destroyed leaving no evidence that students carried out their studies back in Sudan.
  - The IOM report of 2022 was issued. It reports that the most deaths of refugees on land routes occurred in Yemen, predominantly in Yemen's Sa'dah governorate at the northern border with Saudi Arabia.
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- The report also found that an increase in deadly incidents has been taking place on sea routes between Lebanon and Greece and Italy. At least 174 deaths were recorded, which is almost half of the total death toll on the Eastern Mediterranean route in 2022.

### **Situation in Ethiopia (per 20 June)**

- The World Food Programme hopes to resume food aid distribution in Ethiopia within a month, after establishing more control over how their beneficiaries are selected. Part of this is reducing the authority of local and regional governments in deciding who qualifies for food aid.
- A rerun referendum took place in the Wolaita zone of the Southern Nations, to decide whether the zone would join the recently established Southern Ethiopia Region. A referendum on this was also held in February, but the results were annulled due to complaints of voter fraud.

### **Situation in Tigray (per 20 June)**

- This week in Tigray, funerals with full ceremonies will be held for victims of the war whose bodies have not been recovered.

### **Regional Situation (per 20 June)**

- The regional IGAD-organisation must increase its relevance by engaging a broader range of actors in its leadership for peace-building in the region, says Edmund Yakani, director of the Community Empowerment For Progress Organisation CEPO, in a statement to IGAD.
- The war in Sudan is causing detrimental instability to the whole Horn of Africa and broader East Africa region, says Yakani in a separate statement today to civil society actors in the Horn.
- The IGAD mediation table is lacking independent representation from within academia and faith based and religious institutions, he said.
- Countries' narratives in relation to the situation in the Horn of Africa are centred around economic interests. In Ethiopia, this is the GERD dam, and for South Sudan it is the oil supply, says Yakani.
- Impartial mediators are finding it difficult to enter the mediation table talks, due to their potential connection to neighbouring countries, thus being accused of having interests.
- At this time there is no neutral mediator which can play an agentic role in the talks, and hence IGAD, being an intergovernmental forum, is at risk of representing one sided interests.
- Isaias Afwerki, the president of Eritrea, is one of the epicentres of regional instability and the main destabiliser in the Horn of Africa. The result of the destabilisation is a monetisation of anything, even including religious services, observers stated in a meeting discussing the regional situation.
- It has been reported that the UAE carried out an air strike against al-Shabaab in South-Central Somalia. This would be the first time that the UAE is directly involved in combat in Somalia.

### **International Situation (per 20 June)**

- In a conference held in Geneva which was organised by the US, Germany, Saudi-Arabia, Qatar and Egypt, countries donated USD 1,5 billion in total for humanitarian aid in Sudan.
- Observers say that the UN Security Council is expected to hold a session on Sudan this week or the coming one.

### **Links of interest**

[South Sudan silent on RSF's 3-day ultimatum to shut down oil pipeline](#)  
[Horrorful testimonies from West Darfur as another Masalit Sultan relative is killed](#)  
[Siddig Tawir calls for united front against Sudan war](#)  
[Military Intelligence continues to detain activists in Sudan](#)  
[In Sudan, women's organizations fight back against sexual violence in conflict](#)  
[Sudan paramilitary group boasts of detaining Islamists](#)  
[Foreign Office accused of ignoring Sudan atrocity warnings](#)  
[Deaths on Migration Routes in MENA Highest since 2017: IOM 2022 Data Reveals](#)  
[WFP hopes to resume some Ethiopia food aid distribution by July](#)  
[News: Voters casting ballots in rerun referendum to decide Wolaita zone's fate](#)  
[1,5 miljard dollar aan humanitaire steun toegezegd bij conferentie voor Sudan](#)

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