

# SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

## No. 481 - 21 September 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 21 September)**

- Fighting broke out between tribal militia, led by Sheba Darar, leader of a Beja tribe and Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) in Port Sudan on Monday.
- The militias reportedly stopped aid convoys at the checkpoint to carry out inspection of vehicles in order to be sure that they are not operated by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). It remains unclear what exactly sparked the open clashes.
- Observers warned that there is a need for peaceful resolution of increasing tensions between local tribes and army, otherwise the clashes may further endanger civilians as well as logistics from Port Sudan.
- "Ukrainian special services were likely" involved in a series of drone strikes against the RSF, which has been known to be backed by the Wagner mercenary group, reports CNN citing their anonymous sources.
- The report has not been independently verified and Ukrainian authorities have not claimed any responsibility for the operations.
- Thousands of newborn babies are feared likely to die by the end of this year in Sudan due to severe underfunding, and constant attacks on healthcare services and frontline workers, said UNICEF.
- Schools across Sudan remain closed leaving about 12 million children waiting for the schools to reopen. Many school buildings are currently used to shelter displaced people.
- Dengue fever infections are on the rise in El Gedaref, eastern Sudan. Apart from the local population, the infections are spreading in the centres for internally displaced persons (IDP).
- Spreading of the infection is exacerbated by the decreasing humanitarian and healthcare situation.
- A High-level Ministerial event on Sudan took place on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.
- The event was jointly organised by the UN, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, EU and AU, with the aim to raise awareness on the humanitarian crisis in Sudan and boost the funding, response plans and peace negotiation efforts.
- During the high-level meeting, the US announced an additional \$130 million of humanitarian aid for Sudan through USAID.
- Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, chief of the SAF, arrived in New York yesterday, where he is expected to deliver a speech at the 78th session of the UN General Assembly on Friday.

### **Refugee Situation (per 21 September)**

- Health situation among refugee populations, affected by the conflict in Sudan, is extremely worrisome across countries in the Horn of Africa, reports the UNHCR.
- 1,200 refugee children under the age of 5 died mostly due to a measles outbreak and undernutrition in White Nile state, Sudan, between 15 May and 14 September.
- An alarming situation has also been reported from South Sudan, where 142 deaths have been recorded out of 5,770 suspected cases of measles. Children under 5 years old account for 70% of all cases.

- A cholera outbreak was reported among Sudanese and Eritrean refugee populations arriving in Metema as well as Kumer refugee sites in Ethiopia.
- The humanitarian situation concerning refugees in the Gambella region, Ethiopia is of grave concern, said the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC).
- No food assistance has been received in Tierkidi and Kule refugee camps since June which has caused many hunger-related deaths and health problems.

### Situation in Tigray (per 21 September)

- The Tigray Interim Administration has requested a bilateral meeting with representatives of the Federal Government to discuss points of difference regarding the transitional justice policy which according to the interim administration does not conform to the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) agreement.

### Situation in Ethiopia (per 21 September)

- Severe droughts leave more than 200,000 people in urgent need of food assistance in the North Gondar Zone in Amhara region. Crops on 19,174 hectares of land are being affected by drought.

### Regional Situation (per 21 September)

- Widespread and systemic diversion and misuse of humanitarian aid has been found in Somalia. A UN investigation found that landowners, authorities, security forces and humanitarian workers were involved in the misuse of funds.
- Diversion was reported from all 55 IDP sites and led by “gate-keepers” who are typically associated with local powerful clans.
- The European Union temporarily suspended funding for the World Food Programme (WFP) to Somalia.
- South Sudan passed an election bill which gives the president the right to appoint five percent of members of parliament.
- Opposition groups boycotted the parliamentary voting session as they disagreed with the new bill claiming that the new rule gives the president arbitrary power that could be misused.
- 11 Somali soldiers were killed in the explosion targeting the army convoy in Gedo region, Somalia. The al-Shabab militant group claimed responsibility for the attacks.
- Ongoing attacks of al-Shabaab continue amid the second round of withdrawals of the African Union Transmission Mission (ATMIS) troops from Somalia.

### International Situation (per 21 September)

- Six members of the US Congress call for extension of the mandate of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE).
- For the investigation of all abuses that occurred in Ethiopia, it is “vital to maintain the only independent investigation mechanism”, said a letter addressed to the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, and US Ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield.

### Links of interest

- [Analysis: Port Sudan fighting reflects tribal-army tensions](#)
- [Ukraine's special services 'likely' behind strikes on Wagner-backed forces in Sudan, a Ukrainian military source says](#)
- [Tens of thousands of Sudanese children on the brink of death before the year ends.](#)
- [Dengue infection cases rise in Sudan](#)
- [The Cost of Inaction in Sudan - Working together in support of the Humanitarian Situation in Sudan](#)
- [Sudan's al-Burhan departs for New York to attend UN General Assembly](#)
- [UNHCR, WHO warn of deteriorating health conditions as 1,200 children die of suspected measles, malnutrition in Sudan](#)
- [Sudan Situation - UNHCR Health and Nutrition Update - September 2023](#)
- [Resumption of timely, adequate, and responsive provision of food aid critical](#)
- [የጎጂው ክልል ገዢዎች እስከ-ደር ከፊደራል መንግሥት ጋር የሁለት-ደብዳቤ ውይይት እንዲመቻቸልት ጠየቀ](#)
- [Twitter: Addis Standard](#)
- [South Sudan parliament passes elections bill despite SPLM-IO boycott](#)
- [11 Somali Soldiers Killed as AU Forces Start Second Round of Troop Drawdown](#)
- [EU temporarily holds back food aid in Somalia after UN finds widespread theft](#)
- [US lawmakers call for extension of UN experts' mandate on Ethiopia ahead of decisive vote](#)

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](mailto:info@eepea.be) any additional information and corrections.