

# SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

## No. 508 - 11 January 2024

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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 11 January)**

- Members of Sudanese resistance committees are reportedly being targeted and arrested by Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) as political revenge for their past activities, according to the witnesses. Resistance committees played a role in bringing down the regime of former president Omar al-Bashir.
- SAF reportedly suspects the resistance committees of cooperation with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) which, according to members of committees, is a false pretence for political arrests.
- Resistance committees, Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) committees as well as administrative committees have been banned in River Nile state by the governor Mohamed El Badawi since Monday. Instead, they will be replaced with newly regulated steering committees.
- The ban of the current committees has been met with a wave of concerns amid the deteriorating human rights situation and the targeting of the civic space. In many places, committees are one of the few providers of services left in the conflict areas.
- Fierce fighting between the SAF and the RSF was reported from Khartoum and Omdurman since Monday. According to witnesses, the clashes are characterised as the most intense in a while.
- Almost 9000 suspected cases of cholera have been reported across 9 Sudanese states with 245 deaths recorded, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) and Sudan's Federal Ministry of Health.
- The work of the WHO is hindered by "increasing violence, mass displacement, spread of diseases such as cholera, insecurity and looting", said WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.
- Due to the spread of conflict in Al Jazira state, the operations of the WHO have been halted temporarily.

### **Situation in Ethiopia (per 11 January)**

- The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), expressed concerns over the security of Ethiopian nationals living in Somalia amid rising tensions between Ethiopia and Somalia. The statement of the OLF comes after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ethiopian government and Somaliland.
- The Joint Council of Ethiopian Political Parties expressed unanimous support for the agreement reached between Ethiopia and Somaliland.
- Urgent food assistance is required for nearly 4 million people across drought-affected areas of Afar, Amhara, Tigray, Oromia, Southern, and Southwest regions, states the Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.
- The Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission announced a comprehensive action plan to assist 6.6 million people between January and March 2024 in the areas affected by droughts.

### **Situation in Tigray (per 11 January)**

- The Tigray Education Bureau (TEB) appealed to the federal government and international community to establish a student feeding program in support of communities affected by severe drought in Tigray, which has a negative effect on the education system in the region.
- The hunger crisis causes a significant rise in school dropout rates. According to the assessment, 36 districts are severely affected by drought impacting 625 schools and 222,940 enrolled students.

- Out of 2.4 million students eligible for school enrollment, only 40% have been able to proceed with education. That is caused by starvation, ongoing displacement within the region as well as continuing migration abroad.

### Regional Situation (per 11 January)

- Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki stated Eritrea's support for sovereignty and unity of Somalia during the bilateral meeting with Somali president Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on Monday. The meeting comes amid rising political tensions due to the MoU signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland.
- Somaliland minister of defence, Abdiqani Mohamud Ateye, resigned over the signing of the MoU with Ethiopia as he disagreed with the recent development.
- Prior to the signing of the MoU, Ateye expressed his opposition to Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea to Somaliland president, Muse Bihi Abdi, stating it was "fundamentally inappropriate". Ateye further added that Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed seeks access to the sea without following a proper negotiation process.
- A large protest condemning Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea erupted in Mogadishu today, as protesters accused Ethiopia of interfering with internal affairs of Somalia. Somali state officials were also present at the demonstration.
- Somalia's Minister of Information, Daud Aweis, said Ethiopia should retract the MoU in order to smooth out the tensions that it created.
- Chief of the Ethiopian army Field Marshal Birhanu Jula and Somaliland Major General Nuh Ismael Tanimet met for a bilateral meeting in Addis Ababa in order to discuss military cooperation.
- Djibouti expressed concerns over the rising tensions in the Horn of Africa Region urging for respecting territorial integrity of all IGAD member states.
- A UN helicopter was captured by Al-Shabaab militants yesterday in Galgaduud region, Somalia, after landing in Al-Shabaab territory due to technical issues. At least six out of nine passengers have reportedly been taken hostage.
- The Somali government is preparing a rescue plan which is complicated due to the lack of access to the area where the passengers were captured.

### International Situation (per 11 January)

- Members of the pro-democracy Eritrean movement in Australia requested authorities to cancel a festival in Melbourne due to potential foreign political interference, as they report the festivals are used for propaganda and intimidation of Eritrean refugees.
- The event is announced to take place the coming weekend. Australian federal police and government officials met with the Eritrean community to prevent any potential violence.
- A pro-democracy Eritrean group announced their intent to peacefully protest outside the venue if the authorities will not cancel the event.

### Links of interest

[They're targeting us: Sudan's army cracks down on democracy activists](#)

[Sudan River Nile gov bans FFC and resistance committees](#)

[Today's top news: Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Sudan](#)

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing – 10 January 2024](#)

[Press Release \(OLF Foreign Relations Office\)](#)

[Joint Statement by the Ethiopian DRMC and of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator](#)

[Tigray Education Bureau Appeals for International Aid Amidst Unfolding Famine Crisis](#)

[Eritrea 'voices support for Somalia' amid Ethiopia row](#)

[Somaliland's defence minister resigns over deal to give Ethiopia access to the region's coastline](#)

[Somalia: A Massive Protest Erupts in Mogadishu Against Ethiopia-Somaliland Deal](#)

[Somalia calls on Ethiopia to tear up deal with breakaway Somaliland](#)

[Ethiopia-Somaliland army chiefs meet amid regional tensions](#)

[Djibouti foreign Ministry issues a statement affirming sovereignty and territorial integrity of all IGAD members](#)

[Somalia begins 'efforts to rescue' UN helicopter crew held by al-Shabab](#)

[Police on alert for potential violence at Eritrean festival in Melbourne](#)

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