

# SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA & NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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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 1 February)**

- The International Criminal Court (ICC) is moving forward with an investigation of war crimes committed in the Darfur region since the start of the war in Sudan.
- The ICC has “grounds to believe” that crimes under the Rome Statute have been committed as a significant amount of evidence is being collected, said the ICC chief prosecutor, Karim Khan.
- Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti), leader of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), stated that “Sudan remains a bona fide member of IGAD” as he does not regard the decision of Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, head of Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), to withdraw from IGAD as legitimate.
- In a letter to the President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, IGAD’s acting chairman, Hemedti stated that Sudan will continue participating in the IGAD’s programme.
- Sudan battles the largest internal displacement of people globally with warring parties carrying the sole responsibility of not protecting civilian populations, stated Human Rights Watch (HRW).

### **Refugee Situation (per 1 February)**

- Nearly 8 million people have been displaced in Sudan since the start of the war in April 2023, said Filippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, calling for urgent additional support for refugees. After concluding his 3-day visit to Ethiopia, Grandi arrived in Sudan yesterday.

### **Situation in Ethiopia (per 1 February)**

- Heavy fighting was reported from south of Bahir Dar in the Amhara region in the past days.
- Fano calls on Amhara citizens not to pay taxes or interact with the regional Ethiopian government administration, according to sources.
- Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) issued a public statement announcing a strategy to “economically suffocate” Addis Ababa. They will allow small transport vehicles to deliver food items to major towns, but will not allow buses and big trucks. This has already taken effect in the West and the South.
- The UN Food and Agriculture Organization award for the PM Abiy Ahmed came as a surprise amid reports of widespread food insecurity in Tigray, Afar, and Amhara regions, states Laetitia Bader, HRW Director for the Horn of Africa.
- Almost 400 people have died due to hunger over the past months in Tigray and Amhara, according to the Ethiopian ombudsman.

### **Situation in Tigray (per 1 February)**

- Since December, over 7,000 internally displaced people from North-western Tigray have been seeking refuge in the town of Endabaguna due to the ongoing presence of Amhara forces.
- “The reasons behind their displacement were attributed to renewed persecution and increasing pressures on ethnic Tigrayans”, stated Addis Standard citing their anonymous source.

### **Regional Situation (per 1 February)**

- The National Intelligence and Security Agency of Somalia (NISA) together with international allies, reportedly killed 6 Al-Shabaab ring leaders on Sunday.

- 14 websites and several Whatsapp groups affiliated with Al-Shabaab were closed down by the NISA as a part of strategy to prevent spreading misinformation and Al-Shabaab's agenda through online means.
- Ethiopia has requested to hold an extraordinary IGAD summit to discuss the regional issues. Ethiopia has not participated in IGAD's January summit due to pre-scheduled commitments.
- The Somali government together with the UN launched the 2024 Action Plan through which they appeal to raise \$1.6 billion in support of humanitarian needs of millions of Somalis grappling with climate shocks, conflict, widespread poverty and disease outbreaks.

### **International Situation (per 1 February)**

- Spain renewed their cooperation agreement with the European Agency Frontex and resumed the operations against irregular migration in the Alboran Sea and surroundings of the Canary Islands which were suspended since 24 January.
- Spain's prior concerns over losing the control of data have been resolved by reaching a compromise with the Frontext. The renewed agreement grants Spain full ownership of sensitive migrant data.
- The US released names of 3 Sudanese companies that assisted RSF and SAF to finance and supply material for war in Sudan. The US previously announced it will impose sanctions on any designated entity which would aid the Sudan conflict.
- The Eritrean president, Isaias Afewerki, met Italian PM Giorgia Meloni and other Italian ministry representatives, discussing bilateral issues and potential cooperation in various sectors, such as mining, energy and manufacturing, infrastructure, as well as agriculture and fisheries.
- The EU has allocated €72 million to Sudan in support of humanitarian needs. In addition, aid of €45 million has been assigned to Chad with part of the funding assigned in support of refugees and returnees affected by the conflict in Sudan.

### **Migration Situation (per 1 February)**

- The EU is holding technical legal discussions over the Pact on Migration and Asylum after a political agreement was reached between the EU Council, Commission and Parliament in December 2023.
- Newly emerged draft documents cover proposed changes such as a common procedure for granting and withdrawing international protection as well as expansion of the EU's biometric database.
- 71 migrants and refugees, including 16 unaccompanied minors, were rescued by the Ocean Viking rescue ship off the Libyan coast while trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea on Monday.
- The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) highlighted the need for regular migration pathways during the Italy-Africa summit in Rome.
- "A comprehensive approach that includes safe and regular pathways [...] is the only solution that will benefit migrants and states alike", said IOM's Director General, Amy Pope.
- French and UK Ministers of Interior pledged to increase measures to stop migration and human smugglers operating in the Channel between France and UK.

### **Links of interest**

- [ICC accuses Sudan and rebels of Darfur war crimes](#)
- [X: Republic Of Sudan Is A Bona Fide Member Of Igad](#)
- [Sudan Conflict Fuels World's Largest Internal Displacement](#)
- [In Ethiopia, UNHCR's Grandi urges more support for people fleeing Sudan](#)
- [UN Food Award for Ethiopia's Premier Ignores Wartime Abuses](#)
- [Nearly 400 Ethiopians have died of starvation recently. Millions more need food aid](#)
- [News: Thousands fleeing Western Tigray seek refuge in Endabaguna town as hunger, persecution rise](#)
- [More Al-Shabaab militants killed in Somalia](#)
- [Somalia's Intelligence Agency NISA closes websites linked to Al-Shabaab](#)
- [UN, Somalia Launch \\$1.6 Billion Appeal for Humanitarian Aid](#)
- [Spain resumes joint operations with Frontex](#)
- [Designating Entities in Sudan that Contribute to War Efforts](#)
- [EU announces the allocation, in 2024, of €117 million in humanitarian aid to Chad and Sudan as Commissioner Lenarčič visits the region](#)
- [EU: Tracking the Pact: Texts of the Asylum Procedure and Eurodac Regulations](#)
- [Ocean Viking crew picks up 71 migrants off Libya](#)
- [IOM Chief: Nearly 100 Disappeared or Dead in Mediterranean in 2024 Underscoring Need for Regular Pathways](#)
- [UK: Government announces more measures to reduce migration](#)

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