

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

No. 515 - 5 February 2024

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Situation in Sudan (per 5 February)

- Senior leaders of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) reportedly met at least three times in Bahrain during the month of January.
- The talks were attended by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, supporters of the SAF and RSF respectively, as well as the United States and Saudi Arabia.
- Critics note that competing platforms for peace negotiations in Sudan may hinder the peace process.
- Internet and communications networks have been disrupted in Sudan since Friday evening. The providers Sudani and MTN face complete blackouts, while Zain is partially functioning in some areas.
- The SAF and RSF are blaming each other for the blackouts. Sources from the NGO Digital Rights Lab - Sudan state that the RSF has taken over data centres of internet service providers (ISPs) in Khartoum.
- New attacks in the disputed region of Abyei between Sudan and South Sudan resulted in civilian deaths, injuries, kidnappings, the burning of a village and cattle theft.
- The attacks, which killed at least 23 civilians, took place in Malual Aleu, Banton, Awolnhom, Abathok, Majbong, Awal, and East of Rumamier. Heavy weapons such as rocket propelled grenades and mortars were used.
- United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) peacekeepers were targeted in the attacks. Earlier attacks on 27 and 28 January led to the death of at least 52 civilians and two peacekeepers.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) has raised the alarm over approximately five million people experiencing emergency levels of hunger in conflict areas, including Khartoum, Kordofan and Darfur.
- Food aid is present in the country, but "lack of humanitarian access and other unnecessary hurdles" prevent aid from reaching those most in need, the WFP Country Director states.
- The WFP is receiving reports of people dying of starvation in Sudan.
- UNFPA notes that Sudan is facing a "massive destruction of healthcare infrastructure", stating that 60 attacks on healthcare facilities have been verified. Sudan has the largest number of internally displaced persons globally at the moment, with over 9 million people.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 5 February)

- The State of Emergency in the Amhara region was extended for four months by the Ethiopian parliament.
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission expressed grave concerns over the extension, including the implications in relation to conflict casualties, the humanitarian crisis and prolonged pre-trial detentions.
- Over 50 people were reportedly killed in an attack on the town of Merawi in the new North Gojjam zone in the Amhara region on 20 January, according to witnesses.
- The killings took place following a battle between the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) and Fano militia. After Fano left the town, ENDF reportedly killed civilians in their houses and on the streets.
- Some eyewitnesses estimate that the total deaths from the revenge attacks may number to over 100.
- Big explosions were reported from Nekemte and Mendi in the Oromia region.

- A rapid nutrition and mortality assessment of the Zamzam camp for displaced people in North Darfur shows that the situation is catastrophic, states Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF).
- MSF estimates that one child is dying in the camp every two hours. Almost a quarter of the children in the camp are acutely malnourished, with 7% of the cases being severe.
- The number of total deaths in the camp is double the emergency threshold.

Situation in Tigray (per 5 February)

- Eritrean troops are abducting farmers and stealing large numbers of livestock in the regions of Tigray that border Eritrea, according to an aid memo by the Ethiopian Health Cluster seen by the media.
- The memo documents several instances of kidnapping of farmers and stealing of cattle in two districts, based on assessments by the UN and NGOs. The recorded incidents took place on 5 and 6 December 2023 and 22 January 2024.
- Parts of the districts are either “fully occupied or patrolled” by Eritrean forces. The memo notes that the ENDF is absent in many areas.
- The memo reports at least 50 starvation deaths in the subdistricts of Shimblina and Ademeyti, as areas remain hard to reach for humanitarian aid.
- People in Tigray are hungry not because they are not able to produce, but because they have been denied the opportunity to produce, stated Head of the Tigray Interim Government Getachew Reda.
- Channel 4 News reported about the developing situations of hunger in Tigray. A local clinic stated that children with malnutrition have tripled. Especially pregnant women and children run the risk of dying of starvation in large numbers if they do not receive aid.
- Some of the people displaced by failing harvests have moved to Mekelle in search of food. The numbers of malnourished children at Ayder Hospital in Mekelle have doubled since the start of the war. Especially in the more remote areas, the situation is worsening.

International Situation (per 5 February)

- Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki continued his tour in Italy, meeting with the Italian Minister of Defense, focused on enhancing cooperation in light of Eritrea’s strategic position in the Red Sea.
- Isaias also visited a tourism company and a waste recycling factory.
- The international community needs to step up to halt and reverse the food crisis in Ethiopia, states UK Africa Minister Andrew Mitchell. He states that the risk of a humanitarian catastrophe is growing.
- Mitchell announced a new UK fund worth £100 million for Ending Preventable Deaths in Ethiopia.
- Mitchell paid a two-day visit to Tigray, discussing the humanitarian situation, as well as the return of IDPs and the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.
- Mitchell also met with PM Abiy Ahmed, and discussed the humanitarian crisis.
- The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) completed phase two of its withdrawal from Somalia, withdrawing 3000 soldiers, transferring seven operating bases to Somalia and closing two. The floods delayed the withdrawals for one month. ATMIS wants to complete withdrawal by the end of 2024.

Links of interest

- [Sudanese warring parties hold first high-level talks in Bahrain](#)
- [Sudan experiences widespread internet outage amidst war and accusation](#)
- [WFP pleads for aid access in Sudan, amid reports of starvation](#)
- [Sudan: Urgent response needed amid high death rates and malnutrition crisis in North Darfur](#)
- [UNFPA Sudan Emergency Situation Report No.10 - 5 February 2024](#)
- [UNISFA condemns attacks on civilians and peacekeepers, calls for immediate end to violence in Abyei](#)
- [Ethiopia extends state of emergency in Amhara](#)
- [Daniel Bekele on X](#)
- [በአገሩ ከልል መርጋጭ ከተማ ከ50 በላይ ሰዎች መገደልቸውን የዐይን ለማኞች ተናገሩ](#)
- [Eritrean troops are accused of abducting farmers and stealing livestock in Ethiopia’s Tigray](#)
- [Deadly combination of war and drought leaves Ethiopia facing famine](#)
- [Ethiopia: UK warns of food crisis triggered by war and drought](#)
- [Eritrea: President Isaias Afwerki Engages in Bilateral Talks with Italian Officials](#)
- [We must act on Ethiopia food crisis, says UK minister](#)
- [Africa: Floods Derail AU Mission Exit Plan in Somalia](#)

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