

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

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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 19 February)

- Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) members from the Karari military area, north of Omdurman, have reportedly reached SAF forces in the south of Omdurman. This is the first advancement of SAF since the start of the war.
- SAF forces are reportedly arresting and torturing citizens in Omdurman, as well as looting their houses, witnesses state; most of those arrested belong to the Gouran ethnic group.
- Journalists in Sudan are facing threats and retributions for their reporting. In addition, the family members of journalists are also threatened or killed.
- Only 23% of the journalists remaining in Sudan are still being paid. Many of those who remain are forced to self-censor or remove certain aspects of their stories.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 19 February)

- 17 cholera treatment centres have been set up by the World Health Organization (WHO) across Ethiopia to address the rising death toll from the cholera outbreaks.
- Ethiopian authorities are abusing the state of emergency over the situation in Amhara to arrest politicians and journalists who are critical of the government, states Amnesty International.
- The extension of the state of emergency has not yet been published in the Negarit Gazeta, the official gazette of Ethiopia, which constitutes a lack of transparency, states Amnesty.

Situation in Tigray (per 19 February)

- Eritrean refugees escaping from Eritrea are being kidnapped for ransom in Tigray, Eritrean human rights activists warn. After the family pays for their release, the victims are sold on to other traffickers who perpetuate the cycle of violence.
- The victims are tortured and their families are forced to pay up to 4,000 or 5,000 USD. Thousands of Eritreans have reportedly already become victims of trafficking for ransom in Tigray.
- Activists urge the Ethiopian and Tigrayan authorities to protect the refugees.

Situation in Somalia (per 19 February)

- Somalia and the US signed a security pact for the construction of five military bases for Somalia's National Army.
- The bases are for use by the Danab Brigade, which is trained by US forces, for the purposes of fighting al-Shabaab.
- Abdinasir Muse Dable, employee of the Somali Civil Aviation Authority of Somalia, was killed in his home in Mogadishu last night. The government of Somaliland has accused the authorities in Somalia of killing him, reportedly in relation to an airspace dispute.

Situation in South Sudan (per 19 February)

- A UN Commission found that violence and gross human rights violations continue with impunity in South Sudan, mainly targeting women and children. The UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan completed its 12th visit from 12-17 February.

- “Establishing a unified national army and transitional justice processes to deal with the past and the root causes of the conflict is indispensable,” the Chairperson of the Commission stated.
- The leaders of South Sudan must “carefully navigate” the conclusion of the country’s political transition, the Commission urged.
- The Commission further called attention to the abductions and violent attacks in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area and Jonglei State, where abductions, ransoming, forced marriage and sexual slavery frequently take place.

Regional Situation (per 19 February)

- Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud accused Ethiopia of wanting to annex Somalia in remarks to the press at the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa on Saturday.
- Mohamud also told reporters that Ethiopian security had initially blocked him from gaining access to the Summit. Ethiopia denied the allegations, stating that Mohamud’s security detail had attempted to enter the premises with weapons on them.

International Situation (per 19 February)

- Violent clashes took place in The Hague, The Netherlands, at a festival organised by pro-government Eritreans. Eight police officers were injured, and cars and buildings were lit on fire and hit by stones. 13 people were arrested.
- The location where the event was held, was told that it concerned a New Year’s party and that it was not political. However, images from the meeting showed participants wearing t-shirts with the name of Eritrea’s ruling party and flags with the government’s colours.
- The festival was announced on social media, as were the calls to protest the festival. The authorities underestimated the tensions around the events, the mayor of The Hague stated.
- Experts call on authorities to thoroughly investigate who initiated the clashes in The Hague, a call that is supported by Dutch Members of Parliament.
- Eritrean human rights activists in the Netherlands call for peaceful protests and condemn the violence.
- Eight people were arrested in Charlotte, US, following protests at an Eritrean festival. Two pro-government Eritreans were reportedly arrested for carrying guns.
- Getachew Reda, Chief Administrator of the Interim Regional Administration of Tigray, met with the US’s assistant secretary of state for African affairs Molly Phee and Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Mike Hammer in Addis Ababa. They discussed the implementation of the Pretoria Agreement.
- Moussa Faki Mahamat, chair of the African Union Commission (AUC), called on African leaders to address the conflicts in Africa, and condemned the series of coups that have taken place.
- He particularly addressed the situation in Sudan, Libya and the Sahel region.

Links of interest

- [Sudan armed forces advance in Omdurman for first time since start of war](#)
- [The deadly challenges of reporting on Sudan’s “forgotten war”](#)
- [News: Amid rising cholera death WHO sets up 17 standard treatment centers in Ethiopia](#)
- [Ethiopia: Authorities must stop using state of emergency law to silence peaceful dissent](#)
- [Urgent Appeal: Eritrean Refugees Held for Ransom in Tigray, Ethiopia](#)
- [Eritrean refugees fleeing to Ethiopia are being ransomed and tortured - report](#)
- [US Signs Agreement to Build Bases for Elite Somali Army Force](#)
- [Somali police detain suspects in the death of civil aviation employee](#)
- [Human Rights must guide the completion of South Sudan’s transition – UN experts](#)
- [Somalia accuses Ethiopia of seeking to annex Somaliland](#)
- [Rellen in Den Haag om verre dictator Eritrea: 'We zullen jullie met ijzeren staven](#)
- ['Rellen Den Haag kunnen ook werk regering Eritrea zijn'](#)
- [8 arrested for day-long unlawful protest; 1 officer hit, tractor-trailer set on fire](#)
- [AU Commission chief urges action on Africa instability](#)

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