

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 5 September)

- A starvation crisis in Sudan reached “historic proportions” with children starving to death and over 25 million people, more than half of the population, facing acute food insecurity, warned the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Danish Refugee Council, and Mercy Corps in a joint statement.
- The humanitarian organisations urged the global community to take immediate action and not to ignore this crisis, else the death toll from hunger could surpass the fatalities caused by violence.
- Abubakr El Bishri, Sudan’s Minister of Agriculture, reportedly denied that there are any signs of famine, questioning the relevance of reports by the UN and other organisations.
- Sudanese civil society groups and organisations launched a campaign to extend the mandate of the International Fact-Finding Mission in Sudan by the UN Human Rights Council, which is scheduled to meet on 9 September.
- The coalition is gaining support of various stakeholders by raising awareness that without extending the mission, accountability for committed crimes and evidence preservation will be at risk.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 5 September)

- The surge in kidnappings across the Oromia and Amhara regions has been documented by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) over the past period. Abductions are carried out by various perpetrators including armed groups as well as members of the security forces.
- The EHRC’s report describes many incidents that occurred in the past months with victims being kidnapped while at home, travelling in public transport, or at work.
- Victims, including children, students, humanitarian and health workers are being held hostage until a ransom money is paid for their release. EHRC called on the federal and regional governments to carry out effective protection and control mechanisms to prevent abductions.
- Oromia region restructured its local administrative system, effective as of Monday, aiming to bring more efficient services to local communities, support community outreach, strengthen peace and governance.
- “This transformative initiative will enable the government to provide equitable services at the village level,” said Shimelis Abdisa, President of Oromia Regional State.
- Security forces opened fire against demonstrators marching in the centre of Gondar city, Amhara region, killing at least four people. The demonstration was held in response to the killing of a two-year-old girl who was abducted on 28 August. The kidnappers killed the child despite receiving ransom money.

Regional Situation (per 5 September)

- Flights between Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Asmara, Eritrea, have been suspended as of 3 September by Ethiopian Airlines due to “difficult operating conditions” beyond control of the air operator. Previously Eritrea had announced that it would suspend the flights by Ethiopian Airlines by the end of September.
- Mesfin Tasew, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, stated that at the end of August the airline’s Eritrean bank account was blocked, limiting the access to its funds.

- The Egyptian ministry of irrigation rejected Ethiopia's next phase of filling the reservoir of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, stating that such a unilateral measure violated the "international laws and norms that regulate projects built on the shared basins of international rivers".

International Situation (per 5 September)

- African heads of state travelled to Beijing for The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Summit 2024, including leaders of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. During the summit, Chinese president Xi Jinping pledged funding of \$51 billion over 3 years and creation of 1 million jobs.
- Bilateral meetings have been taking place between the hosting Chinese delegation and the African counterparts securing various agreements in the areas of cooperation and investment.
- South Sudanese representatives sought investment from the China National Petroleum Corporation to support a project of building an alternative oil pipeline through Ethiopia and Djibouti. The existing pipeline running via Sudan's territory has been cut off due to the ongoing conflict.
- Sudan's representative and head of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, has signed several agreements with Chinese companies focusing on investments in oil, solar energy, electricity, and infrastructure.
- There are doubts whether any of these agreements will come into effect due to the current circumstances and instability in Sudan.
- The Eritrean and Somali presidents met on the sidelines of the FOCAC summit discussing bilateral and regional issues.
- US Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Mike Hammer, travels to Belgium, Kenya and Ethiopia between 3 and 13 September, aiming, among other things, to review the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement in Ethiopia.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 5 September)

- Abd al-Rahman Milad (Bidja), a former head of Libya's coast guard, notoriously known for his involvement in human trafficking and smuggling of refugees and migrants, was reportedly killed in Tripoli, Libya, on Sunday. The attacker remains unknown.
- Bidja was previously convicted of human trafficking and being directly involved in the sinking of migrant boats using firearms after which they were rounded up and taken to detention centres where they were subjected to violence and torture.
- Hundreds of Sudanese refugees have been stuck around the Gallabat-Metema border crossing between Sudan and Ethiopia which had been closed due to unrest in Amhara region, Ethiopia. Clashes are causing problems with water and food supply, according to refugee witnesses.
- 12 refugees and migrants, including 6 children and a pregnant woman, died in the English Channel after their boat capsized, making it the deadliest incident in the Channel this year.
- The UNHCR refugee agency boosted humanitarian aid to Libya as Sudanese refugees increasingly seek refuge on Libyan territory. The Alkufra border region receives 350 new arrivals daily which, together with recent flooding, strains the local resources and infrastructure, said the UNHCR.

Links of interest

- [Starvation crisis of 'historic proportions' in Sudan, aid groups warn](#)
- [Sudanese groups campaign for extension of fact-finding mission](#)
- [Minister denies famine in Sudan](#)
- [አማራ፣ ኦሮሚያ፣ ሙሉ ግድግዳ፣ ባትስፋፋ፣ ሁኔታ የማይፈጸም የሰዎች እግታን ለይስቆምና ተጠቀኝነትም ለይረጋግጥ ይገባል](#)
- [News: Oromia region implements 'largest local administration restructure' in half a century](#)
- [Four killed in Gondar as security forces fire on protesters after 2-year-old girl's kidnapping and murder](#)
- [Eritrea Freezes Ethiopian Airlines' Bank Accounts, the Airline Suspends Flight To Asmara](#)
- [Egypt angry as it says Ethiopia has resumed filling GERD](#)
- [South Sudan seeks Chinese funding for alternative pipeline](#)
- [El Burhan's China visit secures major deals amid Sudan gov isolation](#)
- [Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Hammer Travels to Belgium, Kenya, and Ethiopia](#)
- [Libyan trafficker 'Bidja' gunned down in Tripoli](#)
- [Sudan closes El Gedaref border crossing with Ethiopia](#)
- [Twelve die after migrant boat sinks in Channel](#)
- [UNHCR increases aid to Libya amid refugee influx](#)

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