

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 24 October)

- Hundreds of people are missing and many others have fled after the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) attacked villages in Al Jazirah state following the defection of a local commander, Abu Aqla Kikal, to the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) earlier this week.
- The RSF retaliated by looting homes and cutting off communications, leaving families separated and fleeing the area.
- SAF recaptured the town of Dinder in Sennar State on Wednesday as part of its broader offensive aimed at regaining areas under RSF control.
- SAF reportedly made steady progress in Khartoum Bahri, gaining control of key neighbourhoods and infrastructure including the Shambat area and Al-Mashreq University.
- SAF launched airstrikes in Khartoum, killing 20 people, including children, and injuring others on Tuesday.
- A separate airstrike by SAF in Wad Madani targeted a mosque, leaving 31 people dead shortly after prayers on Sunday. The Wad Madani Resistance Committee accused the army of using "barrel bombs".

Situation in Ethiopia (per 24 October)

- A fire erupted in the Shema Tera area of Merkato, Addis Ababa largest market, on Monday, causing significant damage to properties within the market and surrounding areas. The fire started around 7 p.m. and was controlled by 11 p.m., although firefighters continued working through the night.
- Nine people sustained injuries due to the fire. The Addis Ababa Police announced the start of an investigation of the incident together with an Ethiopian federal police forensic team.
- An armed attack in the Segen Zuria District of South Ethiopia Regional State killed two civilians and injured two others on Tuesday. The attackers, believed to be militants from the Gumayed area, opened fire on civilians dining at a local hotel.
- 52 cases of enforced disappearances and arbitrary detentions have been documented by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in and around Addis Ababa between July 2023 and October 2024. 44 people were released since their arrest while 8 people are currently unaccounted for.
- Witnesses describe that they were forcibly detained by armed civilians or uniformed security forces without any official arrest warrant or formal charges.
- The EHRC has urged for accountability, highlighting severe human rights violations, including inhumane treatment, lack of legal representation, and the use of unofficial detention centres.
- 11 political parties have been suspended for their "non-compliance with audits, financial support for female members, and general assembly procedures", announced the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE). These parties are barred from all political activities until further notice.
- NEBE also raised the fees for party recognition, with temporary recognition now costing 15,000 birr and full recognition 30,000 birr.

International Situation (per 24 October)

- The RSF reported to have shot down a cargo jet plane in Darfur on Monday, reportedly carrying Russian crew members and being used to carry supplies to the Sudanese army.
- The Russian embassy in Sudan confirmed that it is investigating this incident as there is a possibility that Russian nationals might have been on board.
- Germany announced a donation of €2 million to UNICEF in support of efforts against gender-based violence (GBV) targeting women and girls in South Sudan. 14,000 people, including 11,000 women and girls are set to benefit from the funding.

Regional Situation (per 24 October)

- The Somali government reaffirmed that it will hold a firm stance in determining which troops will contribute to the joint African Union Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) aimed at combating Al-Shabaab from next year.
- In a statement, Somali Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that “Ethiopia’s recent unilateral actions, including an illegal agreement with Somalia’s northern region violate [Somalia’s] sovereignty and erode the trust essential for peacekeeping”.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 24 October)

- The Netherlands is exploring a plan to send rejected African asylum seekers to Uganda, with Uganda potentially hosting them in reception camps in exchange for financial compensation.
- While the idea is in its early stages, Uganda’s Foreign Affairs Minister expressed openness to discussions, though no formal agreement has been reached yet. This sentiment is aligning with the EU’s growing focus on harsher migration policies.
- Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, announced plans to introduce stricter laws and strategies for deporting rejected asylum seekers. Von der Leyen confirmed that European leaders discussed setting up “return hubs” during last week’s summit in Brussels.
- The Spanish government is advancing a new legislation proposal through which it aims to regularise thousands of migrants who arrived in Spain prior to 2024.
- The Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez states that this initiative is driven by the need for legal immigration to bolster the labour market and the sustainability of Spain’s welfare system.
- A special immigration court in Rome ruled that the first asylum seekers that were transferred from Italy to Albania last week should be brought back to Italy as they were from countries considered unsafe to be returned to even though their applications had been turned down.
- Four Sudanese refugee journalists are in danger of deportation from Egypt back to Sudan. Arrested while interviewing a human rights defender, they have been held in detention for over a month, despite holding temporary asylum registration from the UNHCR, state the Reporters Without Borders.

Links of interest

[Map: Sudan army advances in eastern states](#)

[Sudanese army advances in Khartoum Bahr](#)

[Sudan : More than 50 killed in Consecutive Airstrikes](#)

[Sudan: 31 Killed in Mosque Air Strike in Wad Madani](#)

[Hundreds missing in Sudan’s Al Jazirah state after RSF attack](#)

[Shema Tera, Merkato : Fire blazes a business center in Addis Ababa](#)

[Facebook: Addis Ababa Police](#)

[News: Armed attack in South Ethiopia’s Konso zone leaves two dead, two injured](#)

[Facebook: Ethiopian Human Rights Commission](#)

[News: NEBE suspends eleven political parties for non-compliance](#)

[Exclusive: Plane downed in Darfur with suspected Russian crew was supplying army, rivals say](#)

[Russia investigates the claimed shoot-down of a cargo jet in Sudan’s Darfur region](#)

[South Sudan: Germany donates €2m for gender-based violence fight](#)

[X: Somalia Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)

[Netherlands considering sending failed asylum seekers to Uganda](#)

[Von der Leyen promises more deportations as EU veers right on migration](#)

[Spain considers regularising hundreds of thousands of migrants](#)

[Italian court rules outsourced migrant detentions in Albania illegal](#)

[Egypt: four Sudanese refugee journalists risk expulsion, endangering their lives](#)

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