

# 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 20 January)**

- The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have used chemical weapons against the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) at least twice, US officials state.
- The weapons were deployed in remote areas. They appeared to use chlorine gas, which causes damage to tissue and could lead to suffocation and death.
- One person was killed and 17 injured in shelling of Omdurman by the RSF. The Sudanese Health Ministry states the attack targeted civilians filling water from a well in the Karari area.
- SAF is reportedly getting close to controlling the centre of Khartoum Bahri, as RSF is retreating from several neighbourhoods.
- Drone attacks by RSF have caused power outages in large parts of SAF-controlled areas.
- 14 civilians were killed in an attack in northeastern Um Kadadah in North Darfur, a local resistance committee states.
- The Saudi Hospital in El Fasher, North Darfur, is increasingly under attack, medics state. Doctors shared photos of completing a caesarean by the light of mobile phones after the hospital was shelled.

### **Situation in South Sudan (per 20 January)**

- Protests broke out in Juba, South Sudan, following the reports of the killing of South Sudanese people in the SAF takeover of Wad Madani in Al Jazirah state, Sudan. At least 7 people were shot as police opened fire to disperse people during the protests, of which 3 were killed.
- Protests also spread to other towns. Nine people were reportedly killed during protests in Aweil on Saturday, including two South Sudanese and seven Sudanese people.
- Three houses belonging to Sudanese nationals were set on fire. Police took hundreds of Sudanese nationals into protection.
- Protesters targeted stores owned by Sudanese nationals, which were looted and vandalised.
- South Sudan President Salva Kiir urged citizens to remain calm and refrain from retaliation against Sudanese people. A curfew was implemented from 6PM to 6AM.
- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) condemns an attack on two clearly marked MSF boats in Upper Nile state, South Sudan. Gunmen attacked the boat, which was carrying six MSF staff on the way back from delivering medical supplies to Nasir County hospital.
- The staff members jumped off the boat and swam to a nearby village. One staff member was injured. In response, MSF suspended all movements in Nasir and Ulang counties.

### **Situation in Ethiopia (per 20 January)**

- The wing of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) under the leadership of Debretsion Gebremichael rejected a notice issued by National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) to organise a mandatory general congress ahead of the deadline of 10 February 2025.
- A TPLF statement in response accuses the NEBE of denying the TPLF legal recognition, and of not facilitating continuation of political dialogue.

## Situation in Eritrea (per 20 January)

- Former prisoners in Eritrea recall harrowing experiences of beatings, unsanitary conditions, extreme conditions underground or in the heat, as well as deaths. Many who escaped still carry scars.

## Regional Situation (per 20 January)

- Eritrea is seventh in the list of the worst jailers of journalists worldwide, with 16 journalists in detention, states the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). This includes some of the longest-known cases of journalists imprisoned around the world.
- Five of the six journalists held in Ethiopia are facing terrorism charges over their work covering the conflict in Amhara, for which the maximum penalty is death.

## International Situation (per 20 January)

- The US sanctioned leader of the SAF, Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, as well as one company and one person involved in weapons procurement. The sanctions follow continued atrocities, targeting of civilians and obstruction of progress towards peace.
- The sanctions follow earlier sanctioning of RSF leader Hemedti in January. The sanctions “underscore the U.S. view that neither man is fit to govern a future, peaceful Sudan”, according to a press statement by Antony Blinken, US Secretary of State.
- African Union Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat strongly condemned the killing of South Sudanese nationals in Wad Madani, Al Jazirah state, in Sudan. He called for the Sudanese authorities to launch a full investigation and put the perpetrators to justice.
- The war in Sudan is becoming increasingly dangerous to civilians as “direct and ethnically motivated attacks on civilians are becoming increasingly common”, states UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk.
- The Financial Affairs Control Officer at Libya’s Embassy in Eritrea was reportedly detained for allegedly defrauding the Libyan state of US\$ 160,000. He allegedly used forged official documents to conceal the seizure of the funds, which were allocated to the mission.
- UNICEF has appointed Sofia Tesfamariam as vice-president of its board. Sofia Tesfamariam is accused of defending the Eritrean government’s controversial policies and dismissing human rights violations, including the indefinite national service in Eritrea, as the reason for Eritrean youth fleeing the country.
- REDRESS and Eritrea Focus have submitted a dossier to the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office to seek Magnitsky sanctions against senior Eritrean officials and Eritrean state entities for their role in human rights violations in Eritrea and the Tigray region.

## Links of interest

[Sudan's Military Has Used Chemical Weapons Twice, U.S. Officials Say](#)  
[Sudan says 1 killed, 17 injured in RSF shelling in Omdurman](#)  
[Paramilitary Attack Near Besieged Darfur City Kills 14: Activists](#)  
[Medics under siege: 'We took this photo, fearing it would be our last'](#)  
[Sudanese army advances in Khartoum Bahri as RSF retreats](#)  
[Power outages hit army-controlled Sudan after drone attacks](#)  
[3 killed, 7 injured in Juba protests: Police](#)  
[Chaos in Juba as citizens attempt to loot shops](#)  
[More deadly anti-Sudanese protests in South Sudan: officials](#)  
[President Kiir urges calm in Juba as police grapples with shop looters](#)  
[Curfew and deaths in South Sudan after revenge attacks on Sudanese](#)  
[MSF strongly condemns armed attack on our healthcare workers in Nasir county](#)  
[TPLF rejects Election Board's call for general assembly](#)  
['It was almost a relief when someone died': former prisoners on the torture and terror of Eritrea's secret prisons](#)  
[In record year, China, Israel, and Myanmar are world's leading jailers of journalists](#)  
[Sanctioning Sudanese Armed Forces Leader and Weapons Supplier](#)  
[AU strongly condemns killing of South Sudanese nationals in Sudan](#)  
[Sudan war becomes more deadly as ethnically motivated attacks rise](#)  
[Financial Controller at Libya's Eritrea Embassy detained for US\\$ 160,000 fraud](#)  
[Sophia Tesfamariam – Mouthpiece of the Eritrean dictatorship – now Vice President of the UN's Children's organisation](#)  
[REDRESS and Eritrea Focus Seek UK Sanctions on Eritrean Officials for Torture and Forced Labour](#)

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