

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 6 February)

- The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) made significant territorial gains, announcing their capture of El Kamlin in Al Jezira, and their advancement towards Khartoum from multiple directions.
- Despite the attempts by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) to slow the SAF's advance, they have been forced to retreat, with speculations that they may abandon Khartoum entirely. RSF is reportedly regrouping at Giad Industrial City for a potential stand.
- Local relief workers fear they will face a new wave of retaliation amid rising tensions over control of Khartoum. Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs) staff members, providing essential humanitarian services, are increasingly targeted, facing arrests, kidnappings and killings from both sides in the conflict.
- Recent shelling incidents in three separate areas across Sudan, including Kadugli, El Fasher, and Khartoum, have resulted in the deaths of at least 40 children over a span of three days at the beginning of February, states UNICEF.
- Reports indicate that between June and December 2024, over 900 serious violations against children were documented, with a significant portion involving killings and injuries, underscoring the urgent need for all parties to adhere to international humanitarian laws
- A "mass influx" of war-injured patients in Sudan, particularly in Khartoum, North Darfur, and South Darfur, has been reported by the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) amid escalating fighting over the past week. Recent airstrikes and clashes have resulted in dozens of casualties and injuries.
- The Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) refuted accusations of the recent shelling of Kadugli in South Kordofan, which killed at least 44 people, and instead accused the SAF of these attacks.

Situation in South Sudan (per 6 February)

- The South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) has introduced an "Active Non-Violence" initiative aimed at promoting reconciliation and peace within communities in South Sudan, as the country is increasingly dealing with interethnic conflicts and armed attacks.
- Significant challenges remain to be fulfilled by South Sudan, stated Nicholas Haysom, the head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, calling on political leaders to implement outstanding peace benchmarks ahead of the elections that are currently scheduled for December 2026.
- "The parties should be under no illusions that there will be resources from the international community to sponsor the implementation of the peace agreement, ending with elections, if there is no evidence of political will to accelerate implementation of the key benchmarks," said Haysom.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 6 February)

- US suspension of foreign aid will have a severe impact on Ethiopia's HIV response programmes, warned the Joint UN Program on HIV/AIDS, stating that over 270,000 individuals in regions including Oromia, Gambella, and Addis Ababa will lose access to essential services such as HIV testing and treatment.

- Tigrayans in Addis Ababa held a peaceful rally titled "Our Choice is Peace", calling for support for peace and the development in Tigray. The participants urged local politicians to settle their disputes through dialogue and emphasized the importance of maintaining peace.
- Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed called on Tigray leaders to resolve their differences through dialogue, emphasizing the need for unity among the Tigrayan people. His statement comes as a reaction to recent tensions among two factions within the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) party.
- In a response to PM Abiy, Debretsion Gebremichael, head of one of the TPLF factions, reassured of his commitment to peace and called for full implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

Regional & International Situation (per 6 February)

- The National Police Service of Kenya has initiated 'Operation Ondoa Jangili' to target hideouts reportedly used by the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) in Marsabit and Isiolo counties, after receiving intelligence about OLA's presence in Kenya.
- The OLA denied any involvement in illicit activities asserting its commitment to Kenya's sovereignty.
- The EU has pledged to provide an additional €1 million to aid the cholera response in South Sudan, following a previous allocation of the same amount in November 2024, as the situation worsens amid a widespread outbreak in the country.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 6 February)

- Tunisian authorities have been involved in the expulsion and human trafficking of migrants and refugees to Libya, as detailed in a report by an international research team, detailing stages of a logistical chain through victims' accounts.
- The report describes a systematic process where migrants and refugees are arrested in Tunisia, transported and detained at the border run by Tunisian military, and subsequently sold to armed groups in Libya, constituting what the authors label as "state crimes" under international law.
- Rights groups have repeatedly highlighted the role of the EU as being complicit with the human rights abuses through its funding and border externalisation processes.
- The new coalition agreement in Belgium aims to significantly reduce the number of asylum seekers by implementing the strictest migration policies in Europe.
- The Belgian government plans to prioritize work and study migration while making it more challenging for refugees and asylum seekers to access benefits and family reunification.
- Nearly 50% of the 14.8 million school-age refugee children worldwide are not receiving an education, according to UNHCR, prompting the agency to launch a fundraising campaign aimed at improving access to schooling for refugee children.
- The Deputy Director General of Ethiopia's Refugees and Returnees Service, Biruhtesfa Mulugeta, met with a Dutch delegation led by Special Envoy for Migration, Peter Schuurman, to discuss enhancing cooperation on migration, particularly regarding return and reintegration strategies.

Links of interest

- [Map: Battle looms as Sudan army advances on Khartoum](#)
- [UNICEF Sudan Humanitarian Annual Situation Report](#)
- [At least 40 children reportedly killed in three days across Sudan](#)
- [Sudanese relief workers in the capital fear reprisals from army](#)
- [Mass influxes of wounded patients arrive at hospitals across Sudan as "war on people" continues](#)
- [SPLM-N FL Hilu accuses Sudan army of shelling South Kordofan capital](#)
- [South Sudan churches unveil guidelines to tackle violence](#)
- [Remarks by Mr. Nicholas Haysom Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS United Nations Security Council](#)
- [News: U.S. aid suspension jeopardizes Ethiopia's fight against HIV, putting over a quarter-million beneficiaries at risk, warns UNAIDS](#)
- [Tigrayans in Addis Ababa hold peaceful rally, reaffirming commitment to peace and dev't](#)
- [News: TPLF affirms peace as "foremost choice" of Tigray following PM Abiy's remarks](#)
- [South Sudan: €1 million top-up in response to cholera epidemic](#)
- [Kenya Police destroy OLA hideouts days after warning](#)
- [State Trafficking: Expulsion and sale of migrants from Tunisia to Libya](#)
- [Mr De Wever launches Belgium's 'strictest migration policy yet'](#)
- [UNHCR: 7.2 million refugee children not in school](#)
- [Exclusive: EU Commission poised to propose migrant 'return hubs' in legislation](#)
- [Ethiopia, the Netherlands seek cooperation on refugee return and reintegration](#)

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