

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 Tigray (per 20 March)

- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) confirmed an ongoing investigation of the incidents in Adi Gudom town, during which at least four people were injured last week.
- The unrest occurred after the representatives of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) were seizing control over government-appointed institutions. Four people, including the mayor of Adi Gudom, who were arrested on the day were since released, stated EHRC.
- The opposition party Salsay Weyane Tigray has condemned the recent violence in Adi Gudom and Mehoni, calling on the TPLF party to "immediately rescind the unlawful martial law" that hinders peaceful resolution of the current crisis.

Situation in South Sudan (per 20 March)

- South Sudan's President Salva Kiir has removed Upper Nile State Governor James Odhok Oyai and appointed General James Koang Chuol as his successor, a move which the opposition states violates the 2018 peace agreement.
- The announcement of this change was done through a presidential decree broadcasted on state TV yesterday. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO) condemned the decision and warned about further destabilization of the region and the future of the peace process.
- An airstrike was reported on Wednesday at around 3:00am, in Nasir Town, Upper Nile State, affecting hospital areas in Wathwaar, the Hai Pur residential areas, and part of Nasir market, according to internal sources. At the time of reporting the number of casualties or injuries is unknown.
- Western Embassies in South Sudan denounced the airstrikes and rising tensions in Upper Nile State and offered to facilitate discussions between South Sudanese leaders to reach a peaceful resolution.

Situation in Sudan (per 20 March)

- Sudan's state television reported that the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) are close to taking control of the Presidential Palace in Khartoum from the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Intense clashes and airstrikes have been reported in the capital since last night.
- In February 2025, Sudan's annual inflation rate rose by 142.34% compared to the same month in 2024, with rural areas being hit the most, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 20 March)

- Gunmen reportedly abducted at least 51 passengers from a bus in the North Showa zone, Oromia on Monday morning. Attackers opened fire on three buses en route between Addis Ababa to Debre Markos, Amhara region, resulting in one bus being taken while the others managed to escape.
- During today's session of the House of People's Representatives, members of the parliament questioned Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on various critical national and economic issues, including the implementation of the Pretoria Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement.
- PM Abiy expressed confidence that the mandate of the Tigray Interim Regional Administration (TIRA) will be extended for another year, potentially with changes in its leadership.

- He emphasized that any extension would require legal amendments and further evaluation, while acknowledging the TIRA's efforts over the past two years to prevent conflict and promote dialogue.
- PM Abiy further told MPs that "Ethiopia does not have any intention of engaging in conflict with Eritrea for the purpose of gaining access to the sea. Our desire is to engage in dialogue and discussion on this matter instead," while emphasizing the importance of Ethiopia's access to the sea.
- An epidemic that began on 14 March has led to the deaths of over 230 livestock in Uba Debretsehay district of Gofa zone and neighbouring areas in South Ethiopia region. The exact cause of the disease remains unclear, and local health professionals are conducting tests.

Regional & International Situation (per 20 March)

- Eritrean Foreign Minister Osman Saleh met with resident ambassadors and members of diplomatic corps at the Foreign Ministry in Asmara, addressing claims regarding Eritrea's alleged military preparations against Ethiopia, and issues relating to CoH agreement.
- He dismissed accusations of Eritrea preparing for war against Ethiopia and emphasized that the Eritrean Defense Forces have returned to their recognized borders, asserting that Eritrea does not intend to interfere in Ethiopia's internal affairs, particularly regarding the Pretoria CoH Agreement.
- The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) convened a meeting in Addis Ababa with international envoys to unify mediation efforts aimed at resolving the ongoing conflict in Sudan, despite the Sudanese government's previous rejection of IGAD's involvement.
- The forum focused on enhancing coordination among mediators, engaging with Sudanese civil society, and establishing a roadmap for peace.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 20 March)

- Libyan authorities have initiated a significant crackdown on migrants and refugees, including many Sudanese, in response to growing public and official pressure against their presence in the country, with security forces conducting raids in several cities, including Tripoli and Misrata.
- The UN has raised concerns about the dire situation of over 200,000 Sudanese refugees who have fled to Libya, highlighting their exposure to severe human rights violations, including arbitrary detention, torture, and human trafficking.
- In a letter to EU leaders, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen outlined plans to enhance the EU's migration policy, including a review of Frontex's mandate in 2026 to strengthen its role in organizing return operations and curbing illegal migration.
- The letter also announced an additional €3 billion in funding for the implementation of the EU Migration and Asylum Pact from 2025 to 2027, while emphasizing the need for member states to finalize their national implementation plans.
- Austria's three-party coalition government announced plans to temporarily suspend family reunification for asylum seekers, a decision critics argue violates European asylum law and the European Convention on Human Rights.

Links of interest

- [ትግራይ፣ ፖለቲካዊ አለመግባባቶች በቡብአዊ መብቶች ላይ ተጨማሪ ጉዳት እንዳያደርሱ አፋጣኝ ሰላማዊ መፍትሔዎችን መውሰድ ያስፈልጋል Salsay Weyane Tigray \(ከልጋይ ወይን ትግራይ\)](#)
- [Kiir sacks Upper Nile governor, names Gen. Koang Chuol as replacement](#)
- [Sudan TV says army close to taking control of Presidential Palace from paramilitary RSE group](#)
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- [Over 50 passengers kidnapped in Oromia region](#)
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- [News: Tigray interim admin to stay another year, leadership overhaul possible —PM Abiy](#)
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- [More than 230 livestock dead in Gofa zone as unknown epidemic spreads in South Ethiopia region](#)
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