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Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Ethiopia – July to December 2022

01 January 2023

04 July 2022

Sudan blames Ethiopia for death of soldiers

On 22.06.22, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and unspecified Ethiopian units clashed in the locality of Al Qureisha in the disputed Al-Fashaga region between Sudan and Ethiopia. Seven SAF members were initially reported missing. On 27.06.22, the Sudanese government accused the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) of killing the soldiers and one civilian. The Ethiopian government and the ENDF denied the allegation, saying that the ENDF was not present in the area, blaming the crime on local militias. Sudanese media reported that the SAF attacked ENDF positions, retook areas and captured dozens of Ethiopian soldiers. Sudan also recalled its ambassador from Ethiopia and lodged a complaint with the UN Security Council.

This fertile region has seen an increasing number of armed clashes between the two countries since November 2020, when Sudan claimed the land for itself, citing colonial-era treaties, and ordered Ethiopian farmers who have been living there for decades to leave. Talks have so far failed to produce an agreement (cf. BN of 29.11.21, 08.02.21 and 11.01.21).

11 July 2022

Dozens killed in massacre in Ethiopia

According to eyewitnesses, dozens of civilians, mostly women and children, were killed in an attack by an armed militia in the West Welega Zone in Oromia Regional State on 04.07.22. Prime Minister Abiy confirmed the attack but did not give casualty figures. The victims were mainly from the Amhara ethnic group. Abiy spoke of a massacre and accused the Oromo Liberation Front (OLA-Shane). Only a fortnight ago, a similar incident had occurred in the same region in which more than 300 people lost their lives. The authorities held the OLA responsible for that incident as well (cf. BN of 20.06.22), accusations the OLA denies.

Talks to resolve the border dispute with Sudan

On 05.07.22, Prime Minister Abiy and Sudan's military leader, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, met and declared their intention to settle the border dispute over the Al-Fashaga region through dialogue. Recently, the two armies and militia groups clashed repeatedly causing deaths on both sides (cf. BN of 04.07.22).

25 July 2022

Cross-border attacks by al-Shabaab

On 20.07.22, al-Shabaab fighters attacked the villages of Yeed and Aato near the Ethiopian border in the Bakool region, killing at least 17 people, including at least three civilians and Ethiopian police, according to military sources.

At least 63 al-Shabaab fighters were killed in subsequent cross-border fighting between al-Shabaab and Ethiopian forces in Ethiopia's Somali region, according to official figures. Al-Shabaab announced that at least 87 Ethiopian security forces had been killed. The incident happened only a few days after Ethiopian military had killed an al-Shabaab commander on the Ethiopian side of the border who had intended to set up an al-Shabaab group in Ethiopia. As there is a large presence of Ethiopian security forces in the Ethiopian-Somali border region, al-Shabaab only rarely stages attacks there.

01 August 2022

Renewed cross-border clashes

On 29.07.22, fighting broke out between al-Shabaab and Ethiopian police forces in Aato village near the Ethiopian border. Al-Shabaab allegedly fired several mortar shells at the camp of the Ethiopian Liyu police, a special unit responsible for border protection and security of supply routes for Ethiopian forces. This resulted in an exchange of fire in which at least ten people were reportedly killed and 20 others injured. At the time of the attack, members of the Somali parliament were in Aato to distribute food aid to drought-affected residents.

Three al-Shabaab leaders were reportedly killed in a subsequent joint operation by Ethiopian forces and Liyu police in the Ethiopian border region. Al-Shabaab has not yet commented on the deaths of the three leaders. It is unclear whether there were casualties on the side of Ethiopian and Somali forces. Already the week before, violent clashes had erupted in the border region and operations against al-Shabaab in Ethiopia, in which, according to official Ethiopian figures, at least 150 fighters were killed (cf. BN of 25.07.22).

29 August 2022

Renewed fighting in Tigray

Despite a ceasefire agreement and the basic willingness on the part of the Ethiopian government and the regional government of the Tigray Regional State, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), to end the armed conflict by peace negotiations, fighting broke out again. Both parties accuse each other of escalation. On 24.08.22, the Ethiopian government announced that the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) had attacked army positions in eastern Tigray, while the TDF stated that the Ethiopian army - with the support of Amharic militias - had launched a largescale military offensive in southern Tigray. According to eyewitnesses, heavy fighting took place in the mountainous region around Kobo, a border town in the Amhara region on Tigray's southern border. In addition, a representative of the Ethiopian air force declared that he had shot down an aircraft that was supposed to deliver weapons to the TPLF. On 27.08.22, Tigrayan media reported that civilian targets, including a kindergarten, were hit by an air strike on the regional capital Mekelle. Other reports mentioned a playground. There had been several casualties, including children. The Ethiopian government denied the allegation and accused the TPLF of faking civilian casualties but urged the population to stay away from military installations as selected targets in Tigray could be hit. Uncertainty about the actual extent and course of the fighting persists, as the government is blocking access to the region. UN Secretary-General António Guterres called on the parties to the conflict to stop the fighting and return to the negotiating table. However, the Ethiopian government and the TPLF have yet failed to agree on who should chair any future peace negotiations. While the central government favours the African Union as a mediator, the TPLF is counting on outgoing Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta. In addition, the TPLF is demanding the return of Amhara occupied western Tigray and the restoration of essential services such as banking and communications before talks can be held, while the government insists that no preconditions should be stipulated. The ceasefire was agreed in March 2022 primarily to bring urgently needed humanitarian aid to Tigray. According to UN figures, half of the population is suffering from hunger.

05 September 2022

Fighting in Tigray intensifies

A week after renewed fighting between the Ethiopian army and Tigrayan militias (cf. BN of 29.08.22), the conflict has escalated. According to local media, the Ethiopian air force flew attacks on the regional capital Mekelle on 30.08.22. A residential area was reportedly hit, causing civilian casualties. In return, the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) claim territorial gains in the neighbouring southern region of Amhara. Fighting is also reported from Wolkait,

Woreda (district), a disputed zone between Tigray and Amhara in the northwest of the country that is currently controlled by Amharic units. Ethiopian and Eritrean forces have launched a joint offensive against the TDF, according to TDF spokesperson Getachew. There is information of another front line in the neighbouring Wag Hemra zone in northern Amhara. A night curfew was imposed in several towns considered to be potential targets of further TDF advances, including Dessie and Kombolcha, which were already under TDF control after the last offensive in November 2021 (cf. BN of 08.11.21). Due to the tense security situation, humanitarian aid deliveries to Tigray have been suspended again. Almost 90 % of the population there are dependent on food aid. These reports cannot be independently verified as media workers have no access to the region, telecommunication networks are very limited and neither the Ethiopian nor the Eritrean governments respond to enquiries.

Dozens die in Oromia

In the regional state of Oromia in the town of Agamsa in the Woreda Amuru (Horo Guduru Welega zone, about 370 km west of the capital Addis Ababa), Amharic militias are allegedly responsible for the deaths of at least 62 civilians. According to a BBC report, members of the Fano, a group of mainly nationalist Amharic youth, targeted ethnic Oromo on 30.08.22, looted and set fire to their houses. Oromo and Amhara regularly clash in this region. The security forces are accused of withdrawing their troops and leaving the population defenseless against the militias.

12 September 2022

TPLF proposes ceasefire

The Tigray regional government, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), declared its readiness for a renewed ceasefire. The TPLF statement of 11.09.22. said that the TPLF was "ready for an immediate and mutual cessation of all hostilities," It also agreed that peace talks could take place under the leadership of the African Union (AU). So far, the TPLF had accused the organisation based in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa of being biased in favour of the Ethiopian government and rejected its mediation. Prime Minister Abiy had previously stated that the government was ready for unconditional talks mediated by the AU "anytime, anywhere".

This followed intensive diplomatic efforts after renewed fighting on several fronts in Tigray at the end of August 2022, with both sides accusing each other of breaking the ceasefire agreed in March 2022. As a result of the renewed escalation, urgently needed humanitarian aid to the crisis region was suspended (cf. BN of 29.08.22 and 05.09.22).

19 September 2022

Several dead in air strikes in Tigray

In Mekelle, the capital of the regional state of Tigray, at least ten people were reportedly killed in air strikes. According to Tigrayan reports, the target of a first drone attack was the university's Adi Haki campus on 13.09.22. Most of the victims were reportedly killed in a second attack a day later. Another target was the regional radio station Dimtsi Woyane, the reports said.

The attacks came shortly after the Tigray government, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), declared a ceasefire and its willingness to participate in African Union (AU)-mediated peace talks with Prime Minister Abiy's government (cf. BN of 12.09.22). However, the government has so far not responded to the TPLF's proposal nor to the accusation that it is responsible for the renewed attacks.

26 September 2022

Tigray: Reports of major offensive by Eritrean forces

According to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Eritrean forces have launched a major offensive in the border area between Tigray and Eritrea. As TPLF spokesperson Getachew Reda reported on Twitter on 20.09.22, the Eritrean Defence Forces (EDF) were supported by the Ethiopian army and Amharic special forces. Heavy fighting is raging along the entire front. Only last week it was reported that Eritrea had mobilised large parts of its population (cf. BN of 19.09.22). No EDF operation has been officially confirmed so far. The American special envoy for the Horn of Africa, Mike Hammer, confirmed reports of the Eritrean offensive and called the situation extremely worrying.

10 October 2022

African Union invites government and TPLF to peace talks

The meeting planned for 08./09.10.22 in South Africa between Ethiopian government representatives and the regional government of Tigray – the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) – has been postponed at short notice “for logistical reasons”. A new date has yet to be announced. The talks, to which the African Union had invited the two sides on 01.10.22, would have represented the first bilateral negotiations since the outbreak of the war in Tigray in November 2020.

Fighting continues in Tigray

It is reported that the Eritrean armed forces in particular are redeploying units and heavy artillery to the border region in the north-west of Tigray. On 27.09.22 the BBC published satellite photographs from the previous day which purportedly show troop movements and positions in the area around the town of Shiraro. Tigrayan media additionally report that sustained drone attacks by the Ethiopian air force have resulted in numerous civilian casualties, particularly in the town of Adi Daero, where more than 50 civilians allegedly died on 03.10.22. On 07.10.22 at least five people were reportedly killed in an air raid near Mekelle, Tigray's capital. The Ethiopian government has accused the Tigrayan militias of hiding their weapons in residential areas. The Tigray Defense Forces (TDF) announced on 02.10.22 that it had retreated on tactical grounds from North Wollo (Amhara Region), which it had occupied in a renewed outbreak of fighting in August 2022, in order to counter the offensive at the border with Eritrea (cf. BN of 26.09.22). Neither the Ethiopian nor the Eritrean sides have commented on this. Independent confirmation of the reports is not possible, as the areas affected by the fighting are largely cut off from telephone and internet communications and media representatives are banned from entering the territories.

EU condemns human rights violations in the Tigray conflict

In a resolution on 06.10.22, the European Parliament condemned the human rights violations committed by all parties to the conflict, including the recruitment of child soldiers, targeted attacks on the civilian population and the civilian infrastructure and sexual violence against women. The resolutions calls on all parties involved to respect human rights and to engage in peace talks without delay in order to end the conflict.

Over 100 civilians killed in Oromia

According to information from the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC), more than 100 civilians were killed in armed attacks in the woreda (district) of Amuru in the Horo Guduru Wollega zone (regional state of Oromia) in September 2022. The EHRC further reports that there have been cases of looting and thousands of people have left the region, which borders with the regional state of Amhara, for fear of further violence. Local authorities blame the attacks on the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA Shane) and Amharic militias (cf. BN of 05.09.22). The EHRC accuses the security forces of being incapable of bringing the increasing violence under control.

There are also reports of fighting between OLA Shane and regional security forces in the Guji zone in southern Oromia, following an attack by the OLA on a military camp of the Ethiopian armed forces (Ethiopian National Defense Forces, ENDF). OLA claims it launched the attack in revenge for ENDF killing an OLA commander on 23.09.22.

The OLA was formerly the armed wing of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). After the OLF signed a peace accord with the Ethiopian government in January 2019, the majority of OLA fighters backed demobilisation. Some OLA factions – such as OLA Shane – continued the armed struggle for an independent Oromia, however. Hostilities are concentrated first and foremost in the west and south of the regional state.

24 October 2022

Ethiopian and Eritrean troops report territorial gains in Tigray

Following days of air raids and heavy shelling, the Ethiopian military took control of Shire, in the north of Tigray, together with the Eritrean armed forces on 17.10.22. Local sources report a mass exodus among the local population. Many have fled out of fear of a repeat of earlier atrocities, including sexual violence and mass executions. Alamata and Korem in the south of Tigray have reportedly also been taken by the Ethiopian army, although the situation in Korem is unclear as the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) also claim to have the town under

their control. A further advance by the Ethiopian and Eritrean armies in the direction of Mekelle, Tigray's capital, is expected. This is borne out by news that Aksum and Adwa in the north of Ethiopia were also captured on 23.10.22. 70 % of Tigray is now reported to be under the control of the Ethiopian military. At least 100,000 people have allegedly been killed in the re-escalation of fighting since the end of August alone (cf. BN of 29.08.22).

The Ethiopian government had previously announced its intention to continue its attacks, with the aim of taking control of the airports in Tigray so as to enable the delivery of humanitarian aid. Well-informed observers are sceptical, as similar promises have been made and broken in the past. Since the recent fighting began, no convoy of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has reached Tigray, where the UN believes more than 90 % of the population to be in need of food aid.

Experts speak of the “most devastating fighting in the world”. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has stated that the situation in Ethiopia is “getting out of control” and that violence and destruction have taken on alarming proportions. The Council of Europe has called on all parties to enter into negotiations and to comply with international humanitarian law. The EU's high representative for foreign affairs, Josep Borrell, has pointed out that the situation in Tigray has never been so bad, from both a military and a humanitarian point of view. All parties involved have called unanimously for an immediate end to the fighting and for Eritrea to withdraw its army. Diplomats estimate that around 100,000 Eritrean soldiers are in action. On 22.10.22 thousands of people demonstrated in a number of Ethiopian towns and cities against interference by the western international community, including the USA, in the country's internal affairs.

AU invites warring parties to peace negotiations once again

The African Union (AU) has planned new peace negotiations for 24.10.22. This is the AU's second attempt to bring together the Ethiopian government and Tigray's regional government, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), at the negotiating table. An initial meeting scheduled for 08.10.22 was postponed at short notice without stating any reasons (cf. BN 10.10.22). As a gesture of goodwill for negotiations, the TPLF announced the release of 9,400 Ethiopian and Eritrean prisoners of war on 21.10.22, including 500 women.

31 October 2022

Peace talks between Ethiopia and Tigray

The peace negotiations between the Ethiopian and Tigrayan governments, which have been in progress in South Africa since 26.10.22, have been extended beyond their planned date for conclusion on 30.10.22. No official announcements on the state of the negotiations have been forthcoming to date, as a news blackout has been imposed. A notable aspect is the fact that the Tigrayan delegation was flown from Mekelle to Pretoria on board a US military aircraft, for security reasons.

An agreement appears difficult, as the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is demanding the immediate cessation of fighting, unimpeded humanitarian access and the withdrawal of the Eritrean armed forces, although it is under military pressure following substantial territorial gains by the Ethiopian and Eritrean armed forces.

Meanwhile, the Ethiopian government's goal is to completely disempower the TPLF, but it is in urgent need of economic support. The import of food and fuel has become markedly more expensive, due in part to the war in Ukraine, in addition to which the most severe drought for 40 years has left the population in the south of the country particularly reliant on humanitarian aid, while in the north some 13 million people are in need of support on account of the conflict. The international community is calling for an end to the fighting in Tigray as a precondition for further aid measures, however.

Fighting continues

Regardless of the peace negotiations, the fighting continues in Tigray. The Ethiopian and Eritrean armed forces have allegedly captured two further towns, Adwa and Adigrat – although this is disputed by Tigrayan sources – and are advancing in the direction of the regional capital, Mekelle. Ethiopia's air force has apparently stepped up its air raids, with unconfirmed reports of a number of civilian deaths. There are also reports of serious human rights violations occurring once again. According to Amnesty International, Eritrean armed forces were responsible for the extra-judicial killing of 40 people during their capture of the town of Shiraro (cf. BN of 24.10.22).

Attack by Amharic militia on Oromo claims many liv

According to reports in the Ethiopian media, members of the Amharic militia group Fano allegedly killed at least 30 people after attacking four villages in the woreda (district) of Kiremu in the East Welega Zone of the regional state of Oromia on 15.10.22. More than 50 houses were reportedly burned to the ground. Ethnic clashes between Oromo and Amhara are a common occurrence in the region. The Fano were allegedly responsible for the deaths of more than 60 people in the neighbouring Horo Guduru Welega Zone at the beginning of September 2022 (cf. BN of 05.09.22 and 10.10.22).

07 November 2022

Ethiopian government and TPLF agree ceasefire

The Ethiopian government and the government of the regional state of Tigray, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), signed an agreement on an immediate ceasefire in Pretoria, South Africa, on 02.11.22. According to the African Union (AU), which brokered the accord, the two parties have also agreed a disarmament deal. The aim of the agreement is to restore law and order, access to relief supplies and public services. The Ethiopian military's recent successes forced the TPLF to make a number of concessions: Disarming of its troops, recognition of the authority of the Ethiopian state and the installation of a transitional government for Tigray. The AU intends to monitor implementation of the peace process. Very few people had expected such a comprehensive peace plan to come about.

This is not the first attempt to bring a peaceful end to the conflict, which has been ongoing since November 2020. A humanitarian ceasefire was announced back in March 2022, but heavy fighting resumed in August 2022 (cf. BN of 28.03.22. and 29.08.22). At the end of the talks, the AU stressed that the situation in Tigray was fragile and that the persisting problems underlying the conflict could only be resolved through dialogue.

In this context, knowledgeable observers refer in particular to the status of the Eritrean army, which is fighting on the side of the Ethiopian forces in the conflict. Although the agreement states that the Ethiopian military is to be stationed along the national borders, it is not stipulated whether it will ensure Eritrea's withdrawal. Neither Eritrea, which was not involved in the talks, nor Amhara's regional government have responded to requests for statements on this matter. It further remains unclear whether Western Tigray, which is controlled by Amharic security forces and militias, is to be restored to Tigray, whether the return of the approx. 800,000 internally displaced Tigrayans is possible and what is to happen to the approx. 200,000 Amhara who are settled there. It is also unknown who is to monitor the demobilisation of the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF), which is to be completed within 30 days, and who will then provide for the security of the local population.

Regardless of the peace agreement, Tigrayan media have reported that the fighting has continued, with air raids which have claimed civilian lives and offensives by the Ethiopian and Eritrean armies.

15 November 2022

Peace process in Tigray: Agreement on humanitarian aid and demobilisation

Delegates representing the military leadership of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) and the Tigray Defense Forces (TDF) have agreed further details relating to the implementation of the ceasefire accord which was concluded by the Ethiopian government and Tigray's regional government on 02.11.22 (cf. BN of 07.11.22). A declaration brokered by the African Union (AU) which was announced on 12.11.22 includes guarantees of unimpeded access for humanitarian aid and agreements on the course of the TDF's demobilisation process. Under the agreed arrangements, disarmament is to begin immediately, while at the same time all foreign forces and militias which do not belong to the ENDF are to withdraw from the region. This concerns the Eritrean army and Amharic militias, which fought on the side of the ENDF, but which were not involved in the negotiations. As such, it remains unclear whether they will adhere to the agreement. Observers consider it improbable that the Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF) will withdraw entirely from the region. Various sources report that targets in the north of Tigray (Zalambessa, Edaga Arbi, Adigrat) continue to be shelled by the EDF.

Hostilities in Oromia

According to reports in the media, fighting has broken out once again between government forces and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA-Shane) (cf. BN of 10.10.22). The militia, which is classified as a terrorist organisation,

reportedly destroyed a number of military facilities in the town of Nekemte (East Wollega Zone) on 06.11.22 and claims to have freed more than 120 of its members. This operation reportedly involved civilian casualties. Following heavy fighting, the EDNF and regional security forces are said to have regained control of the town. Further air raids by the ENDF on OLA positions in the town of Mendi (woreda Mana Sibbu, West Wollega Zone) on 09.11.22 reportedly caused dozens of civilian casualties. Mendi is believed to be under the control of the OLA. Communications in the region are down.

Clashes between militias in the Afar region claim a number of lives

It has been reported that at least 18 civilians were killed and a number injured in clashes between local militias in the woreda of Dheymeed (Sitti Zone), in the border region between the Ethiopian regional states of Afar and Somali. The regional governments have released no further statements on the incidents. Violence has repeatedly flared up between armed groups and militias from the two regional states in the Sitti Zone. The hostilities stem from territorial disputes. Both Afar and the Somali region lay claim to the territory (cf. BN of 02.08.2021).

21 November 2022

Humanitarian aid reaches Tigray

On 16.11.22 a WFP aid convoy reached Tigray for the first time since the peace accord was signed on 02.11.22 (cf. BN of 07.11.22 and 15.11.22). The WFP reports that 15 trucks have arrived in the region and further trucks are expected in the coming days. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had managed to deliver medical relief supplies to Tigray's regional capital, Mekelle, the day before. According to information from the WHO, around 89 % of Tigray's population, which totals a good seven million, do not have adequate access to food. The resumption of relief supplies was agreed in the peace accord, prior to which the Ethiopian government had blocked all transport routes to Tigray for almost two years. As recently as September 2022, the UN had accused the Ethiopian government of weaponising hunger. Many of the estimated 500,000 deaths in the conflict are believed to have resulted from hunger and a lack of medical care. Informed observers see the catastrophic supply situation in Tigray as the main reason why the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) made substantial concessions to the Ethiopian government in the peace negotiations, including an undertaking to demobilise its own troops and to cede control of the regional capital, Mekelle, to the Ethiopian army.

No indications that Eritrean forces are leaving Tigray

In return for the disarmament of Tigrayan militias, the Eritrean army is supposed to withdraw to Eritrea. There are no indications of any such withdrawal as yet. Rather, Tigrayan sources are reporting the stationing of new units, continuing artillery shelling with civilian deaths and looting by the Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF). On 17.11.22 the US government announced that further economic sanctions would be imposed on Eritrea (cf. BN of 29.03.21 and 15.11.21), should the withdrawal of the EDF fail to be ordered. For its part, the TPLF stated on 18.11.22 that it would only lay down its arms when the Ethiopian government had officially confirmed the complete withdrawal of the Eritrean military.

06 December 2022

Media report on massacre of Tigrayan prisoners in November 2021 / Withdrawal of TPLF troops

It has been reported that 83 members of the Tigrayan military were killed by members of the Ethiopian army at a prison near Mirab Abaya in the south of Ethiopia on 21.11.21. In all, 2,000 Tigrayan soldiers are said to have been held at the detention centre. Almost one year later, the massacre has now been appraised by reference to interviews. According to recent information from the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), just under a month after the ceasefire agreement was concluded between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF (cf. BN of 07.11.22) more than half (65 %) of the Tigrayan troops have withdrawn from the front.

12 December 2022

Hostilities in Oromia

More than 100 people were reportedly killed by an unknown armed group in Kiremu (East Wellega zone) on 28.11.22. Clashes also occurred between Amharic troops and Oromia special units in Kiremu on 29.11.22, apparently claiming eleven lives. Recent weeks have witnessed repeated break-outs of hostilities in Oromia, involving government forces, the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA-Shane; cf. BN of 15.11.22) and regional militias. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has reported human rights violations in this connection, including mass killings, displacements of people and the destruction and looting of property.

19 December 2022

Arrests in Addis Abeba

According to local reports, 97 people were arrested on 08.12. and 72 on 12.12.22 for inciting violence in and around educational establishments. Recent days have witnessed a number of disturbances at schools, with pupils refusing to hoist the Oromian flag or sing the Oromian national anthem, for example. Violent clashes and the destruction of school property have been reported. The disturbances are said to have been sparked by the current unrest in the Oromia region. Pupils and teaching staff are also among those arrested.

Hostilities in Oromia

The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) has reported violent clashes between Amharic militias (the Fano militias are suspected of being involved) and Oromian special units. At least 34 people are said to have been killed in Gutin (East Wollega Zone). Hostilities are also reported to be still ongoing in Kiremu (East Wollega Zone) (cf. BN of 12.12.22). The Oromo Liberation Front (OLA-Shane) are alleged to be targeting Amharic civilians in attacks. OLA-Shane representatives have rejected these accusations.

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