



# ETHIOPIA

## WHAT HAPPENED IN SEPTEMBER?

The Tigray conflict continued to escalate as hostilities expanded to new fronts. **Eritrean forces once more became embroiled in the fighting**, with some clashes also occurring in Amhara-controlled Western Tigray. Violence persisted in Oromia region.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

No side is likely to prevail militarily anytime soon, and external actors' concerted diplomatic efforts have not prevented escalation. Unless dynamics change, Ethiopia could be facing another **period of sustained conflict, with potential to morph further into a regional conflagration**.

## AUGUST TRENDS

Federal and Tigray forces **returned to front-line fighting** in Amhara-Tigray border areas, shattering the precarious truce formalised in March, endangering desperately needed aid deliveries to Tigray and harming prospects for long-awaited peace talks.

### 1 ↘ Tigray conflict escalated as Eritrea re-entered front-line fighting

On 1 September, federal and Eritrean forces launched offensives in Tigray's north, signalling **Eritrea's return to fighting**. On 13 September, federal and Eritrean troops captured Shiraro town. Meanwhile the federal air force bombed urban areas including Tigray's capital, Mekelle, killing at least 16 civilians. On 20 September, Tigray authorities accused **Eritrea of launching another attack** in Tigray's north.

Clashes between the federal coalition and Tigray forces also occurred elsewhere in Tigray, Afar and Amhara.

### 2 ↔ Diplomatic efforts failed to halt fighting in north

On 11 September, Tigray leaders announced **readiness for a truce and African Union (AU)-led peace process**, while privately maintaining opposition to AU Envoy Olusegun Obasanjo, and demanding the return of Western Tigray and resumption of basic services as part of any cessation of hostilities arrangement.

**International actors, notably the UN, AU and U.S., welcomed Tigray's announcement.** On 13 September, Kenyan President Ruto appointed former President Kenyatta as peace envoy to Ethiopia, signalling Nairobi's continued engagement in peace-making efforts.

### 3 ↔ Human rights commission confirmed August massacre in Oromia

**Clashes in Oromia between security forces and the Oromo Liberation Army** continued in North, East and West Shewa Zones, Kellem and West Wollega Zones, and East Guji, Ilu Aba Bora and Buno Bedele Zones.

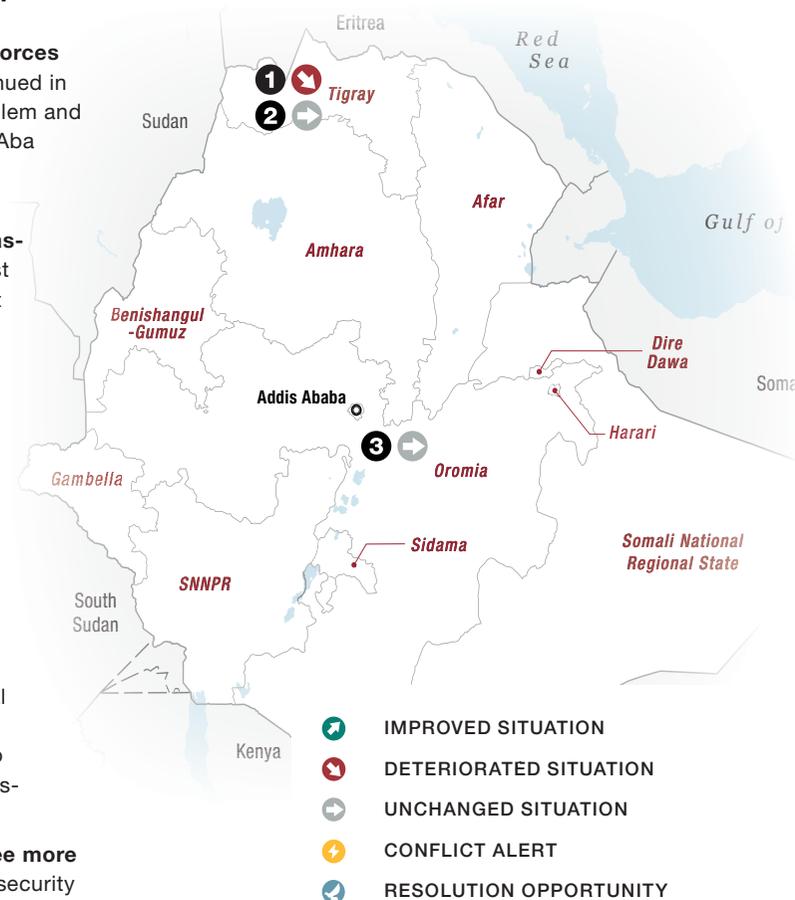
On 6 September, the **Ethiopian Human Rights Commission confirmed the massacre of over 60 civilians** in late August in Horo Guduru Wollega Zone. Its report said "armed militia from Amhara", likely militants known as Fano, perpetrated the violence.

## WHAT TO WATCH

Hostilities between **Eritrean, federal and Tigray forces are set to expand further.**

After the AU delayed peace talks, partly due to clarification requests from Tigray's leaders and Kenyatta, **mediators may struggle to commence negotiations.** Unless the federal government unblocks aid and restores services to Tigray, it could be difficult to make progress even if preliminary discussions convene.

**Drought-stricken Oromia will likely see more violence** as federal troops and Oromia security forces continue their counter-insurgency campaign.



## TRENDS TIMELINE

