



ETHIOPIA

WHAT HAPPENED IN JANUARY?

Tigray's **peace process made notable progress** as the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) handed in heavy weapons, Eritrean troop withdrawals from Tigray accelerated and more services in Tigray resumed. Meanwhile, insurgent-government violence continued in Oromia.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Progress on disarmament and withdrawals **improved federal-Tigray relations**, bolstering the peace process. African Union (AU) monitoring of security arrangements and federal-TPLF talks on an interim administration in Tigray should help consolidate peace.

DECEMBER TRENDS

Following the November peace agreement, **efforts to implement security arrangements continued** and reports of Eritrean troop withdrawals from Tigray began emerging. Escalating violence in Oromia aggravated Oromo-Amhara tensions.

1 ↗ Tigray forces started handing over heavy weapons

On 10 January, Tigray forces **handed over at least some heavy weapons** to the federal military, witnessed by AU monitors, in Tigray. The handover was a key part of the November deal, and so advanced the peace process.

Within days of the initial TPLF disarmament, **Eritrean forces started leaving** Tigray's major cities. Amhara forces left Shire, a strategic town in North Western Tigray, but remained in Western Tigray, a disputed area that they have controlled since November 2020.

2 ↗ Humanitarian flows continued to improve, more services resumed

On 2 January, the private Wegagen Bank resumed services in Tigray's capital, Mekelle, but customers could not withdraw funds exceeding 2,000 birr (\$37) due to cash shortages. Ethiopian Airlines restarted commercial flights to Shire. On 18 January, the UN humanitarian agency said it reached 3.7 million Tigray residents with food between October and early January.

During their two-day visit to Ethiopia on 12-13 January, the French and German foreign ministers urged the federal government to **ensure accountability** for wartime abuses.

3 → Violence continued unabated in Oromia

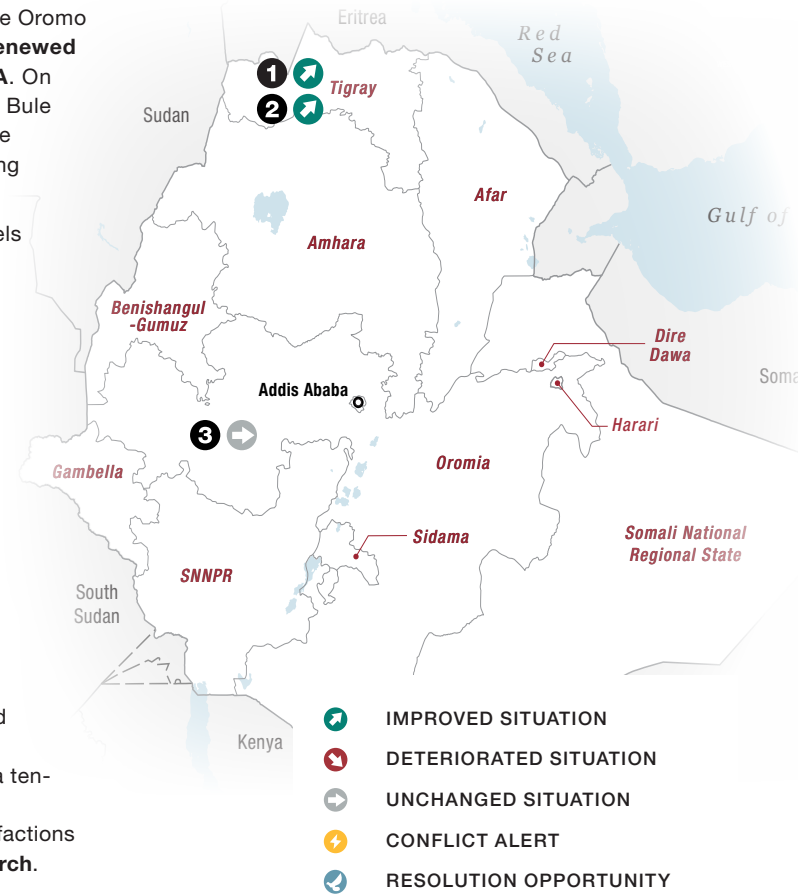
Fighting between security forces and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) persisted amid **renewed government efforts to defeat the OLA**. On 7 January, the OLA attacked a prison in Bule Hora town in southern Oromia, killing five guards and freeing 480 inmates, including OLA fighters.

Ethiopia's government has said the rebels are too disorganised to negotiate with, and that this justifies the continued use of force. This appears to have prompted the OLA to **publish a manifesto** on 23 January detailing its objectives.

WHAT TO WATCH

AU monitors are expected to conduct **field visits** in Tigray to assess progress on TPLF disarmament and Eritrean and Amhara withdrawals. Federal and Tigray leaders are set to form an **interim regional administration**, followed by federal removal of the TPLF from the terrorist designation list.

Violence in Oromia, which is complicated by Amhara militia involvement, will likely escalate amid worsening Oromo-Amhara tensions. That **may exacerbate frictions** between ruling party Amhara and Oromia factions and within the **Ethiopian Orthodox Church**.



- ↗ IMPROVED SITUATION
- ↘ DETERIORATED SITUATION
- UNCHANGED SITUATION
- ⚡ CONFLICT ALERT
- 🕊️ RESOLUTION OPPORTUNITY

TRENDS TIMELINE

