



# ETHIOPIA

## WHAT HAPPENED?

The federal government declared an “indefinite humanitarian truce” to allow aid into the Tigray region. Meanwhile, violence remained rampant in several other regions, including Afar, Amhara, Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The pause in large-scale fighting between the federal coalition and Tigray’s forces continues to hold despite localised clashes. The parties must go beyond a humanitarian truce and seize the moment if they are to end hostilities in a durable manner.

## FEBRUARY TRENDS

While a lull in major hostilities continued and central authorities lifted a state of emergency on 15 February, fighting between Tigray’s fighters and Afar security forces continued in the north-eastern Afar region. Insecurity also persisted elsewhere, especially in Oromia.

### 1 ➔ Humanitarian truce declared, clashes in Afar and Amhara

On 24 March, the federal government declared an “indefinite humanitarian truce”, saying it hoped to facilitate a free flow of aid into Tigray. In response, Tigray’s government pledged to respect the cessation of hostilities if aid was speedily delivered.

In Afar, however, Tigray forces and Afar regional special forces and militias continued to clash during the month. In Amhara, Tigray forces on one hand, and Amhara special forces and militias on the other, clashed along the Amhara-Tigray border.

### 2 ➔ Oromia’s security crisis continued

In Oromia, fighting between security forces and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) expanded into West, North and East Shewa zones. On 8 March, OLA forces attacked and reportedly killed seven civilians in Ilu Galan district in West Shewa Zone.

On 5-7 March, in East Shewa Zone, suspected Fano militia shot dead an unknown number of ethnic Karayyu pastoralists in Fentale district. Unidentified assailants also killed 26 people in a 31 March ambush of Oromia government’s security forces and allied militia.

### 3 ➔ Violence in Benishangul-Gumuz, thousands displaced in border areas

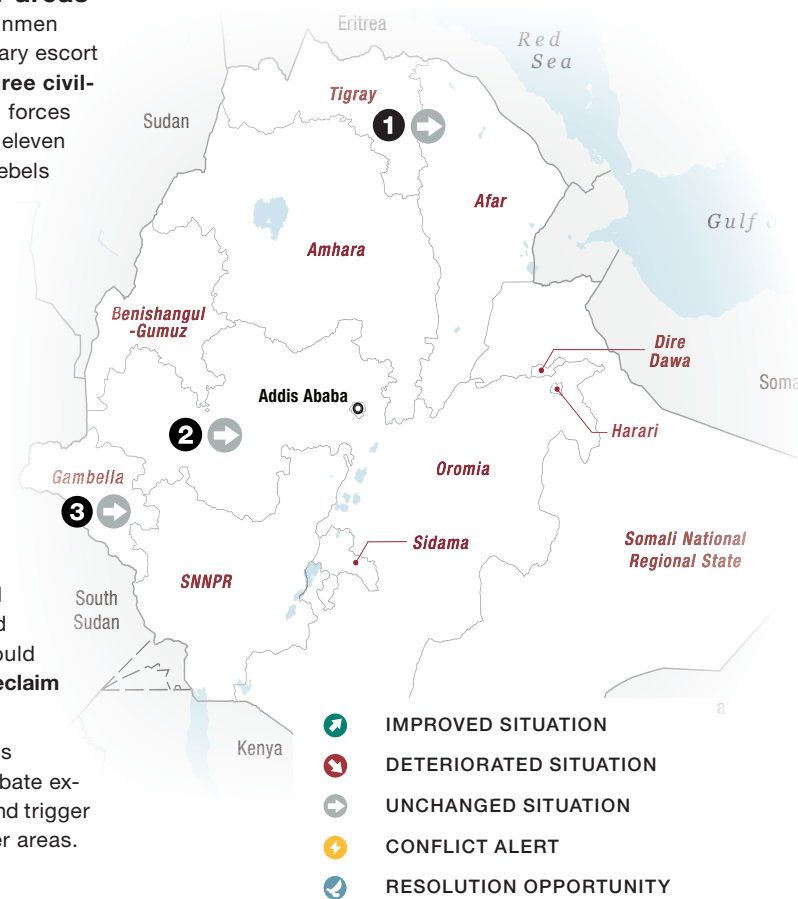
In Benishangul-Gumuz, on 2 March, gunmen ambushed a civilian convoy and its military escort in Metekel Zone leaving 20 soldiers, three civilians and 30 assailants killed. Regional forces and militia subsequently summarily killed eleven suspects, mostly ethnic Tigrayans. OLA rebels allegedly abducted three Kamashi Zone police on 31 March.

On 12 March, Gambella authorities reported clashes between South Sudanese troops and rebels in border areas leaving at least one dead and displacing over 9,000 residents of Lare and Jikawo districts.

## WHAT TO WATCH

Amid lower violence, there is a modest chance the federal and Tigray governments advance a peace process. If that occurs, Amhara and Eritrea could feel their interests are compromised and lash out. Should it fail, federal troops could re-enter Tigray and Tigray may seek to reclaim Amhara-occupied Western Tigray.

A worsening economic crisis and serious drought in southern areas could exacerbate existing fault lines, including within Oromia, and trigger further conflict in Amhara-Oromia border areas.



## TRENDS TIMELINE

