

# ETHIOPIA

## WHAT HAPPENED IN JUNE?

The Tigray leadership and federal government announced their **readiness for peace talks**, marking a turning point in the long-running civil war and creating an opportunity to alleviate the humanitarian crisis. Meanwhile, violence escalated in Oromia region.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The prospect of talks between Tigray's leadership and the federal government is **welcome news**, but deciding who will mediate and where negotiations will take place could cause delays. Eritrea and hardline Amhara factions may try to derail the peace process.

## MAY TRENDS

Despite signs of renewed hostilities between Eritrean and Tigray forces, the Tigray leadership announced a mass prisoner release in an alleged bid to advance peace, and **aid deliveries to Tigray significantly increased**. Authorities carried out mass arrests in Amhara region.

### 1 ➔ Tigray leadership and federal government readied for direct talks

On 14 June, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced **plans for a peace process** while Tigray's leadership expressed its willingness for talks. On 28 June, Abiy's government named a seven-person negotiating team headed by Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen.

UN OCHA said on 16 June that 1,200 aid trucks had arrived in Tigray since 1 June. Despite increased aid, it said on 27 June that over **13 million people needed food assistance** in northern Ethiopia, compared to 9 million in November.

### 2 ↘ Deadly violence in Oromia increased, spilling into Gambella

Amid high levels of violence in western Oromia, the regional government and Ethiopian Human Rights Commission accused Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) fighters of **killing hundreds of ethnic Amhara civilians** in Gimbi district of West Wollega Zone. The OLA denied responsibility and blamed the government.

Days earlier, on 14 June, OLA and Gambella Liberation Front rebels attacked government forces in the capital of neighbouring Gambella region. **Forty people were reportedly killed**, including 28 rebels.

### 3 ➔ Clashes with Sudan in al-Fashaga, violence in Benishangul-Gumuz

On 26 June, Khartoum accused Ethiopian forces of executing seven Sudanese soldiers and one civilian after abducting them in Sudan. Addis Ababa claimed that Sudanese units had entered Ethiopia when clashes erupted with a local militia. From 27-28 June, **Sudan fired heavy artillery into the disputed al-Fashaga borderlands** and on 28 June claimed control of Jabal Kala al-Laban town.

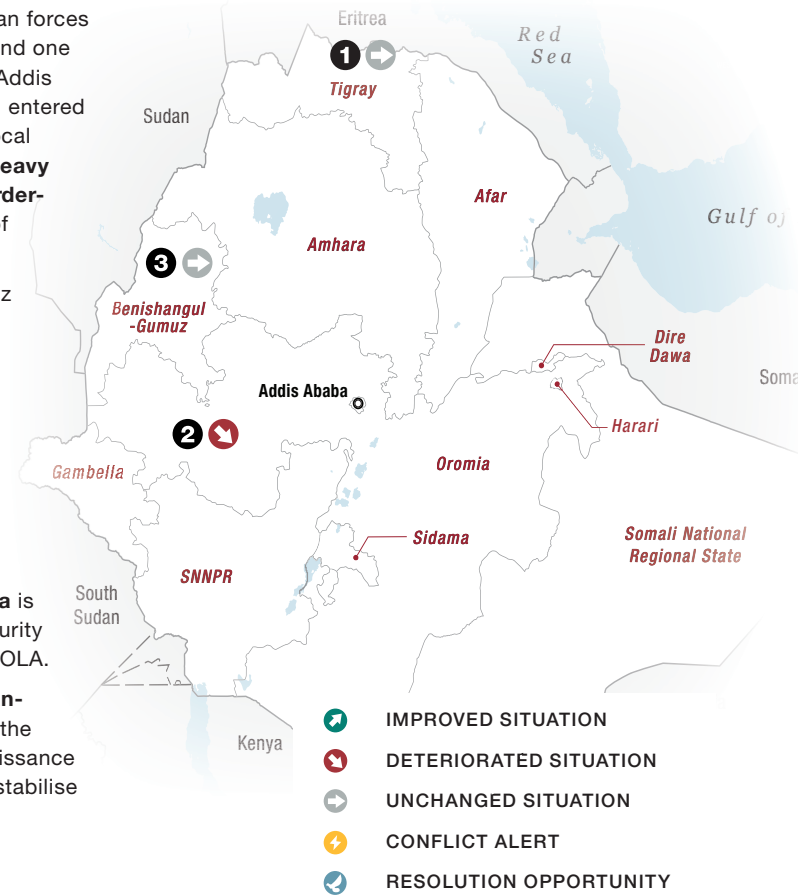
Elsewhere, clashes in Benishangul-Gumuz region between ethnic Gumuz rebels and regional forces reportedly killed 19 in Kamashi Zone on 1 June.

## WHAT TO WATCH

The federal and Tigray governments may agree on the **details of planned peace talks and convene** for the first direct negotiations, probably in Kenya.

**Increasing violence in western Oromia** is likely, as federal troops and Oromia security forces make another effort to defeat the OLA.

There may be a further **increase in Sudan-Ethiopia tensions** if Ethiopia conducts the third filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam's reservoir, which could further destabilise the Horn of Africa.



## TRENDS TIMELINE

