



# ETHIOPIA

## WHAT HAPPENED?

Ethiopia's eleven-month civil war is intensifying. Tigray forces faced resistance from government forces and their allies in Ethiopia's north amid a deteriorating humanitarian situation. Violence rose in Oromia, killing dozens, and more federal troops reinforced operations in Benishangul-Gumuz.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Since July, the war has entered a **dangerous new phase**. With the rainy season ending, fighting could increase and expand further outside of Tigray, likely leading to thousands more deaths and greater instability countrywide and potentially beyond its border.

## AUGUST TRENDS

The war in Ethiopia's northernmost region, Tigray, continued as Tigray forces maintained offensive positions across the country's north, particularly in Amhara region. In parallel, the federal government intensified its war rhetoric and mobilised reinforcements.

## Tigray forces faced resistance

The federal government said on 9 September that federal troops and local forces from the Afar region had compelled Tigray forces to withdraw from Afar. Tigray leaders denied this and said that the forces had redeployed to neighbouring Amhara. Federal mobilisation continued, with the military graduating tens of thousands of new recruits.

In late September, Addis expelled seven senior UN officials, citing "meddling". The UN reported that **1.7 million people were food insecure** in Afar and Amhara due to the war.

## Violence increased in Oromia

The Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), allied to Tigray forces since August, claimed in late August-early September that they had captured localities in East Wollega Zone and parts of Borana Zone in Oromia. The OLA clashed with federal government and Oromia forces in North Shewa Zone in late September.

The OLA attacks reportedly **killed at least 28 civilians** in KIRAMU district, East Wollega Zone between 16-18 September. The group denies it targets civilians.

## Federal reinforcements to Benishangul-Gumuz

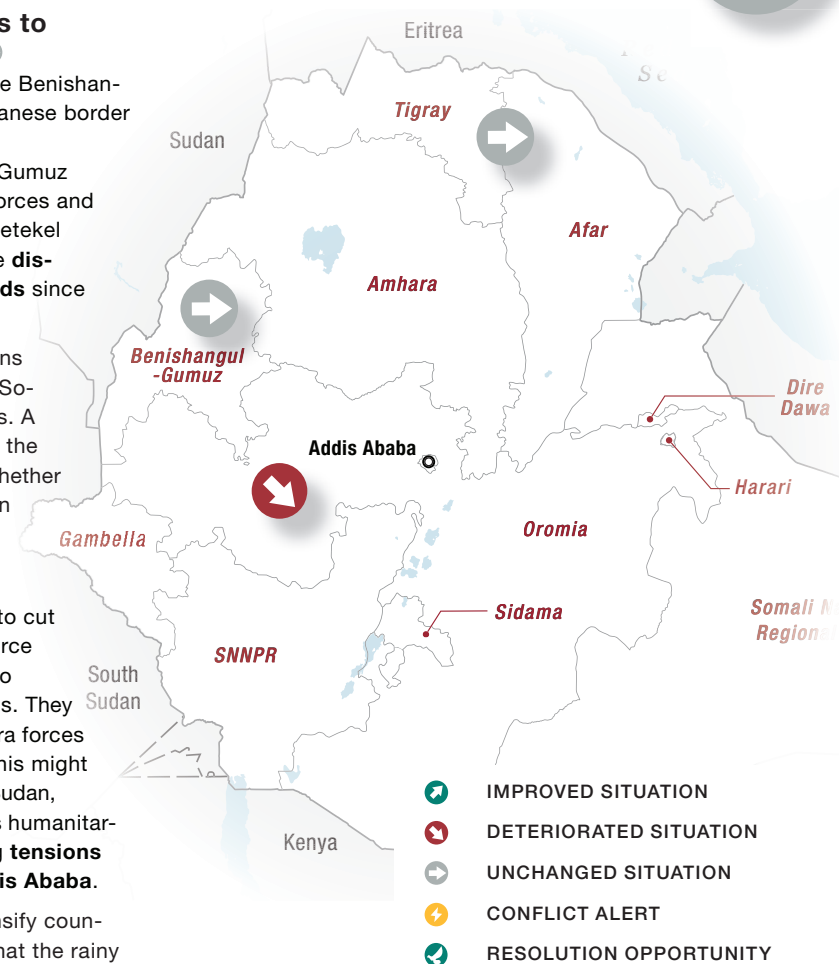
Federal troops deployed to the Benishangul-Gumuz region on the Sudanese border after regional authorities on 9 September accused ethnic Gumuz rebels of killing five security forces and one Chinese national in the Metekel Zone. Attacks in Metekel have **displaced hundreds of thousands** since September 2020.

Delayed parliamentary elections were held on 30 September in Somali and Harari regional states. A referendum also took place in the Southern Nations region on whether or not to form a South Western regional state.

## WHAT TO WATCH

In Afar, Tigray forces may try to cut the **Djibouti trade route** to force Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed into accepting their ceasefire terms. They may also try to push out Amhara forces that control western Tigray. This might allow supplies to enter from Sudan, which would help ease Tigray's humanitarian crisis, but risk aggravating **tensions between Khartoum and Addis Ababa**.

Federal forces are set to intensify counter-offensive operations now that the rainy season has tapered off.



## TRENDS TIMELINE

