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Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) announces that it will restore the Tigray Regional Council, the region's erstwhile legislature, and potentially push to resume control of the region's executive in a development that threatens the fragile peace in the Tigray region. The European Union (EU) announces that it will resume budgetary support after a five-year break, which is a welcome development given the country's economic challenges. The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) (central bank) raises concerns about the threat of inflation related to the externalities of the ongoing Middle East conflict. Amhara nationalist militants claim to have secured battlefield successes against the military.

Tigrayan parliament to be revived, threatening fragile peace

The **Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)** [announced](#) on 19 April that it intended to restore the **Tigray Regional Council**, the region's erstwhile legislature, in a development that will escalate tensions with the federal government and threaten the fragile peace that has followed the 2022 **Pretoria Peace Accords**. The party further stated that it believes that the regional executive needs to be restructured, indicating an intention to challenge and potentially replace the **Tigray Interim Administration (TIA)**.

This announcement followed the TPLF's five-day **Central Committee meeting** in **Axum**, during which senior party officials discussed the possibility of returning Tigray to the TPLF-led government structure that existed prior to the **2020-2022 Tigray War**. The Central Committee meeting was preceded by several months of rising tensions between the TPLF and both the federal government and the TIA. The party remains the most powerful political force in the Tigray region and has chafed at the existence of the TIA as a condition of the Pretoria Peace Accords.

It appears that the TPLF's decision to move to restore the Tigray Regional Council and even eventually assume executive power of the region was catalysed by prime minister **Abiy Ahmed's** (2018-present) decision on 8 April to [extend](#) the TIA's mandate by another year. The TPLF opposed these extensions and denounced them as a violation of the Pretoria agreement. According to the TPLF, Abiy made this decision unilaterally and did not consult with the TPLF or even alert the party to his intention to extend the TIA's mandate.

The TPLF's opposition to the TIA's extended mandate and its intention to reconstitute the Tigray Regional Council portend a new political crisis in the region. The TPLF will soon no longer recognise the TIA's legitimacy to govern the region, and the federal government will view the Tigray Regional Council as an illegitimate body. This will create two centres of political power in the Tigray region, a situation that can only be settled via negotiation or force.

Abiy's decision to extend the TIA's mandate has compelled the TPLF to accelerate its existing plans to regain control of the region. The party considers itself the rightful governing party of the Tigray region and was always uneasy with the TIA. In May 2025, the **National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE)** officially [revoked](#) the TPLF's legal status as a political party due to a dispute over party registration and a contested elective conference (see *ARC Briefing Ethiopia May 2025*). Consequently, the party will not appear on the election ballot in the upcoming June general election and thus cannot be elected as the governing party in the Tigray region nor have representation in the federal parliament. The TPLF was never going to allow itself to be displaced as the ruling party in Tigray, and

some form of intervention was expected, despite the fact that such an action would cause a constitutional crisis and threaten a return to war.

The decision to reconvene the Tigray Regional Council provides some insight into the TPLF's likely strategy going forward. The Council will be reconvened and used by the TPLF to create a mandate to take over the regional government. The Council is likely to elect to restore TPLF chairperson **Debretsion Gebremichael** as the regional president. Debretsion will claim that this mandate is binding and will place extreme pressure on the TIA to dissolve and for TIA president **Tadesse Worede** to resign – that is, if this has not already happened by this point. Failure to do so is likely to lead the TPLF to order its armed wing, the **Tigrayan Defence Force (TDF)**, to forcibly remove the TIA. This will be a direct challenge to the federal government's authority and is likely to force Abiy to order the **Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF)** to intervene, triggering a new war in the region, unless a negotiated settlement can be reached.

A renewed conflict in the Tigray region could be as devastating as the first war, if not more so. Such a war will exacerbate the existing conflicts in Ethiopia, especially between **Amhara** nationalist (**Fano**) militants in the neighbouring Amhara region. Furthermore, there is a real possibility that **Eritrea** will be drawn into the conflict, which could lead to a cross-border war. Eritrea was involved in the first Tigray War and sided with the federal government; however, in recent years, the Eritrean and Ethiopian governments have fallen out, and Eritrea has reportedly grown closer to the TPLF. This relationship appears to be based on the principle that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'. Highlighting this possibility, [local reports claimed](#) on 24 March that senior Tigrayan security officials hosted Eritrean military officers in **Mekelle**. If these reports are accurate, it could suggest growing security cooperation between the two sides in preparation for a potential conflict.

EU to resume budget support

A renewed conflict in the Tigray region would threaten to derail and reverse Ethiopia's ongoing economic recovery. Indicative of this recovery, the **European Union (EU)** [announced](#) on 20 April that it would resume providing budgetary assistance to Ethiopia. According to the EU commissioner for international partnerships **Jozef Síkela**, the EU would provide Ethiopia with €140m (\$163.92m) in budget support as part of a wider €400m (\$468.35m) funding package.

The €400m (\$468.35m) funding package comprises the budget assistance, two lending agreements from the **European Investment Bank (EIB)** valued at €130m (\$152.21m), a €20m (\$23.42m) line of credit for agri-food businesses and smallholder farmers, and a €110m (\$128.8m) loan to support rural finance in Ethiopia. This package will be welcomed by Ethiopia's government and will provide a much-needed boost to rural development efforts in the country.

The resumption of budgetary assistance is the most significant inclusion in this assistance package. The EU [suspended](#) budgetary assistance (then worth €90m (\$105.38m)) in December 2020 due to humanitarian concerns related to the outbreak of the Tigray War. The EU stated at the time that it was concerned about ethnically motivated violence and the lack of humanitarian access in the country. During the intervening five years, the EU has resisted resuming assistance due to consistent concerns about alleged war crimes in the Tigray region. This latest development indicates that the EU believes there has been sufficient improvement in conditions in Ethiopia to allow for the resumption of budgetary assistance.

This funding is [intended](#) to help finance Ethiopia's reform agenda and development goals, including the expansion of electricity access, improvement of healthcare systems, strengthening of digital infrastructure, and reforms to improve the business environment.

Central bank raises inflation concerns related to Middle East conflict

Ethiopia may need the EU's support even more as the country is potentially facing challenging economic conditions exacerbated by the ongoing war in the **Middle East**. The **National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE)** (central bank) is concerned about the threat that supply shocks related to the conflict

pose to Ethiopia. In a [statement](#) on 31 March, the NBE's Monetary Policy Committee warned that shortages related to the conflict could place upward inflationary pressure on the economy and reverse the gains made in reducing consumer price inflation in the country.

Ethiopia is highly exposed to the externalities of the conflict between the **United States, Israel** and **Iran**. The country imports most of its petroleum products from producers located in the **Persian Gulf** and has already been impacted by the sustained disruption to shipping through the **Strait of Hormuz** since the war began on 28 February (see *ARC Briefing Ethiopia Mar 2026*). The government has already [implemented](#) new criteria for fuel suppliers to follow to ensure stability in fuel supply chains and to give priority access to essential services and industries. The government has had to [increase](#) the price of fuel twice since the war began, with [diesel prices up by as much as 26%](#). Higher fuel costs will have a knock-on effect throughout the economy as transport costs rise, leading to increased operating expenses; operators will attempt to pass these costs on to consumers, driving inflation across the sector. This will be especially evident in the price of food, which will be impacted by both higher food costs and increased fertiliser costs and shortages – Ethiopia imports a substantial proportion of its fertiliser, much of it from the Persian Gulf.

Higher inflation rates are a serious concern for Ethiopian policymakers; the country has battled with high consumer price inflation for several years. In fact, consumer price inflation only fell to single digits in December 2025 for the first time since December 2018. A series of domestic and external shocks, ranging from the Tigray War to the Covid-19 pandemic, along with poor government policies, has made the NBE's task of bringing down inflation challenging in recent years. A major external shock, such as widespread fuel and fertiliser shortages, could easily reverse these gains and return Ethiopia's economy to a point where inflation exceeding 20% is the norm.

Amhara nationalists claim battlefield gains

Among the many reasons why Ethiopia can ill afford a new Tigray conflict is the continued deterioration of the security environment in the Amhara region, where the ENDF is combating armed Fano, militant groups. These Amhara nationalists have grown in strength and capabilities despite the military's efforts to defeat them. Indicative of this, Fano militants [claimed](#) repeated battlefield gains in April. The **Amhara Fano National Movement (AFNM)** claimed on 3 April to have killed over 40 ENDF soldiers in a multi-front battle in the **North Shewa Zone**, inflicting casualties on the ENDF in clashes in the **Menz-Gera-Midir** and **Gishe-Rabel** districts. On 15 April, the AFNM claimed that it had captured part of the town of **Kobo** in the Amhara region's **Semien Wollo** zone.

The tight restrictions on media access to these conflict zones makes it difficult to independently verify the AFNM's claims, and it is likely that the group has exaggerated its successes. However, it is evident that the ENDF is struggling to contain the Fano militants, and any new conflict that forces the military to stretch its resources further will provide an opening for militants to secure further successes.

Planner

26-27 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** 8th African Science, Technology and Innovation Forum;

1 Jun 2026 **(Ethiopia)** general election;

Chronology

22 Apr 2026 **New York (US)** *Human Rights Watch*. **United States (US)**-headquartered international watchdog **Human Rights Watch (HRW)** issues a report alleging that the **Ethiopian** federal security forces are persecuting ethnic **Tigrayans** in the **Western Tigray Zone**;

18 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *Borkena*. Police arrest 105 people in Addis Ababa, reportedly for listening to a song by musician **Teddy Afro** that is critical of the government, claiming that the suspects used the music to incite unrest;

- 17 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *BBC*. At least seven people are killed in clashes between **Fano** militants and soldiers in the town of **Sali** in the **Amhara** region's **South Gondar** zone;
- 17 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *Borkena*. **Oromo Liberation Army (OLA)** accuses the military of carrying out drone strikes in the **East Wollega** and **Gidda Ayana** districts in the **Oromia** region that killed local civilians;
- 17 Apr 2026 **Washington, D.C. (United States)** *Borkena*. **Ethiopia's** finance minister, **Ahmed Shide**, meets United States (US) **International Development Finance Corporation (DFC)** CEO **Ben Black**, who expresses interest in supporting projects in Ethiopia;
- 17 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *Addis Standard*. Opposition **Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP)** announces plans to stage demonstrations in major cities on 8 May if the **National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE)** does not approve its request to stage rallies;
- 16 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *Addis Standard*. The **United States**-headquartered **Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)** releases a statement calling on Ethiopian authorities to locate and release the editor of the **Addis Standard** newspaper, **Million Beyene**, who was abducted by unidentified gunmen from the outlet's newsroom on 15 April;
- 11 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *The Reporter*. The **European Union (EU)** and the **African Union (AU)** release a joint report revealing that Ethiopia was one of the top 10 recipients of EU energy financing between 2014 and 2024;
- 8 Apr 2026 **New Haven (United States)** *Addis Standard*. **United States**-based **Yale School of Public Health's Humanitarian Research Lab (HRL)** releases a report claiming that satellite imagery indicates that the **Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF)** is providing support to the **Sudanese** paramilitary group, the **Rapid Support Forces (RSF)**, including allowing the RSF to carry out attacks in Sudan from Ethiopian territory;
- 7 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *Borkena*. Opposition **Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP)** claims that security forces detained one of its officials and electoral candidates in **Dire Dawa**;
- 7 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *The Reporter*. The **National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE)** announces that it will deploy a team to assess security situations at polling stations across the country to ensure safety during the June election;
- 6 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *Addis Standard*. Over 700 **Eritrean** nationals have crossed the border into the **Sheraro** area of the **Tigray region** to attend a religious festival, despite the current border closure, indicating that Tigray authorities are not enforcing the federal order to keep the border closed;
- 3 Apr 2026 **Mekelle (Ethiopia)** *Addis Standard*. Two pro-independence opposition parties in the Tigray region – the **Salsay Weyane Tigray** and the **Tigray Independence Party** – sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish a joint front campaign for Tigrayan independence;
- 2 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *The Reporter*. The ministry of agriculture acknowledges that the country is facing fertiliser supply challenges due to conflicts in major production regions such as **Russia-Ukraine** and the **Persian Gulf**;
- 31 Mar 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *ENA*. The **Ethiopian Nuclear Energy Commission** and **Russia's** state-owned atomic energy corporation, **Rosatom**, sign a strategic roadmap for nuclear energy development, paving the way for the possible joint development of a nuclear power plant in Ethiopia;

28 Mar 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) Borkena**. The four-party opposition **Coalition for Ethiopian Unity (CEU)** unveils its election manifesto at an event in Addis Ababa;

24 Mar 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) BBC**. **National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE)** announces a door-to-door voter registration drive as part of its electoral preparations.

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