



Ethiopia

by *Levente Kardkovács*



Summary

Ethiopia is a land-locked country, and one of Somalia's Western neighbours. Despite economic reforms in the 1990s, and the transition to a democratic federal republic in 1995, it remains one of the poorest countries in the world. The country has also been a victim of internal conflict, leaving almost 3 million people internally displaced. The most notable one in recent times was the Tigray War, which ended in 2022. The end of the war did not lead to the end of conflict however, as it led to a power struggle between Tigrayan factions, and there have been smaller conflicts in other regions of the country too.

Relations with Somalia

In January 2024 Ethiopia struck a deal to lease a stretch of coastline from Somaliland with the aim of operating a commercial port and a naval base there. Though this has not been officially stated, reports indicate that Ethiopia offered to recognize Somaliland's independence as part of the agreement. Unsurprisingly this did not go down well with the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). After a year of diplomatic tensions it appeared that a deal was reached between the nations on the 12th of December in Turkey. The Ankara Declaration is expected to offer

Ethiopia alternative access to the sea in Somalia.

Role in Jubaland

Tensions rose again mere days after the meeting in Ankara. Somali forces carried out an attack on a Jubaland state delegation near an airstrip at the Ethiopia-Somalia border. Ethiopian soldiers stationed in the area against Islamist insurgents intervened on the side of the pro-Jubaland forces. The FGS considered this a violation of Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the foreign ministry of Somalia said in a statement, that the actions of Ethiopia "constitute a blatant violation of the Ankara Declaration".

