ACLED
Bringing clarity to crisis

Ethiopia Peace Observatory

EPO YEAR IN REVIEW

2023-2024

29 April 2024

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Please contact admin@acleddata.com with comments or queries regarding the ACLED dataset.

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) is a disaggregated data collection, analysis, and crisis mapping project.

ACLED is the highest quality and most widely used real-time data and analysis source on political violence and protest around the world. Practitioners, researchers, journalists, and governments depend on ACLED for the latest reliable information on current conflict and disorder patterns.

EPO YEAR IN REVIEW 2023-2024

The Ethiopia Peace Observatory (EPO) is a special project launched by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) in April 2021 to enhance local data collection efforts in Ethiopia and offer deeper analysis through weekly and monthly updates. To mark three years since its first publication, the EPO is proud to present this annual report reviewing the project's achievements over the past 12 months and outlining new plans for the coming year.

Since the end of the northern Ethiopia conflict in November 2022, most political violence in the country has been recorded in Amhara and Oromia regions. In Amhara region, conflict between Fano militias and the government escalated in some areas in April 2023, after the government's decision to disband all regional special forces. The conflict spread across the region, including to the regional capital city, Bahir Dar, in August 2023. Meanwhile, in Oromia region, in addition to clashes between government forces and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) — referred to by the government as the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)-Shane — an internal dispute within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church synod led to instability fueled by religious tension in February 2023. Though OLA/OLF-Shane and the government met twice for peace talks, from 27 April to 3 May 2023 and again in November 2023, they failed to reach an agreement.

[1] For information about the EPO's first and second year, see the Year in Review: 2021-2022 and Year in Review: 2022-2023 reports.

BY THE NUMBERS

Last Year: 1 April 2023-1 April 2024

DATA

RECORDED

1,634
Political violence events

178
Demonstration events

ANALYSIS

PRODUCED

42
Weekly reports (English and Amharic)

12
Monthly reports (English and Amharic)

One
Special report in English

ENGAGEMENT

EARNED OVER

2,090
Media citations

Overall: 1 April 2021-1 April 2024

DATA

RECORDED

4,186
Political violence events

515
Demonstration events

ANALYSIS

PRODUCED

135
Weekly reports (English and Amharic)

33
Monthly reports (English and Amharic)

Seven
Special reports in English

ENGAGEMENT

EARNED OVER

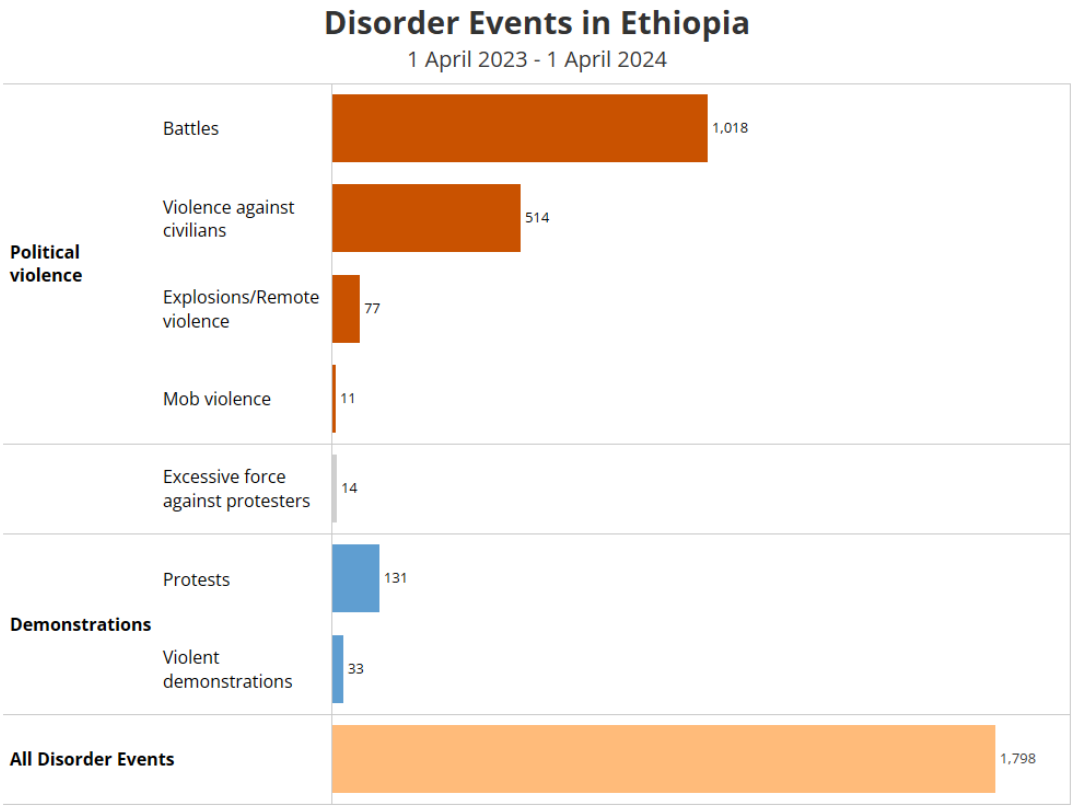
3,500
Media citations

WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN 2024

Continued publication of weekly data
Weekly and monthly reports
Updated and expanded conflict, regional, and actor profiles

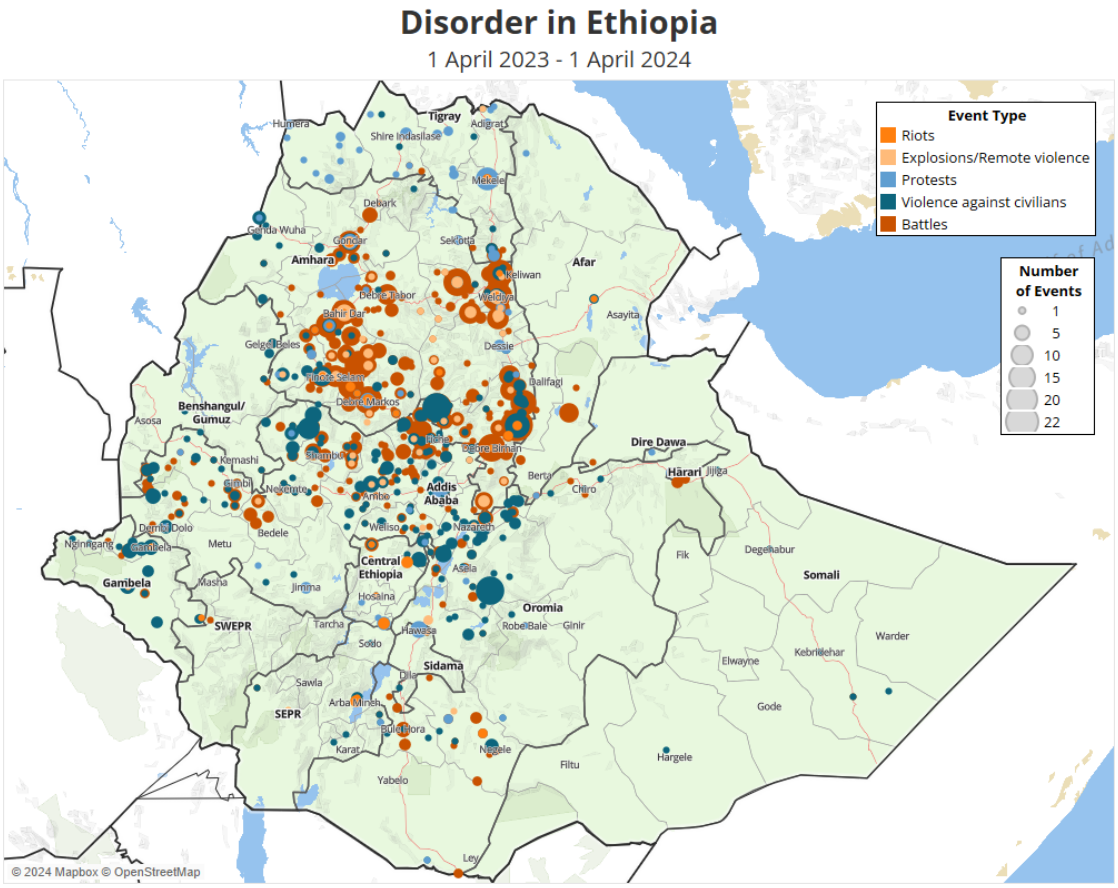
YEAR IN REVIEW

Over the past year, the EPO team has continued to collect data on political disorder throughout Ethiopia in real time, recording a total of 1,634 political violence events and 178 demonstration events (*see graph below*).



Events under the 'Excessive force against protesters' sub-event type are considered both 'Political violence' and 'Demonstrations' and are therefore counted as both kinds of disorder.

In the past year, most political violence in Ethiopia was recorded in Amhara and Oromia regions (*see map below*). Violence against civilians, the second-most common event type after battles, was also frequent in these regions, with 291 events recorded in Oromia and 127 in Amhara. Amhara and Tigray regions registered the highest number of demonstration events. In 2023, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) was the most active group in Ethiopia, meaning it was involved in more events than any other actor, followed by Fano militias. As the regional special forces have been dissolved since April 2023, the ENDF has been the main security sector involved in counter-insurgency operations across the country. Meanwhile, Fano militias have been engaged in armed conflict against security forces, and especially the ENDF, since August 2023. The trends observed in all these regions were analyzed in regular weekly and monthly reports.



The EPO team produced multiple monthly reports examining the dynamics of political violence in Amhara and Oromia, as well as a range of additional topics, including the heightened risk of attacks against officials in Amhara region, the main hurdles to unifying Fano militias, and Ethiopia's quest for sea access. Additionally, a special report was released assessing the peace process after the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front signed the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities.

Despite significant progress toward peace processes in multiple areas of the country, Ethiopia faces many political and security challenges in 2024, especially in Amhara and Oromia regions. To monitor these challenges, the EPO will continue working to improve real-time data collection efforts in low-information and hard-to-access conflict contexts throughout the country and provide regular analysis updates on the latest developments. New reports and resources will aim to delve even deeper into the key political violence and demonstration trends that are most likely to affect the country's future.

We thank you for your support over the past three years and look forward to continuing to provide high-quality data and analysis on disorder trends that will bring clarity to crisis in Ethiopia for the year to come. Make sure to sign up to the EPO mailing list for the latest announcements, follow us on Facebook and Twitter, and subscribe to our Telegram channel for regular updates in Amharic.

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