



📷 Soldiers of Tigray Defence Force (TDF) in Mekele, Tigray region, Ethiopia. Photo: Yasuyoshi Chiba/AFP/Getty Images

AFRICA

Tigray Rebel Forces Begin Demobilizing in Ethiopia: Reports



STAFF WRITER WITH AFP  MAY 26, 2023  1 MINUTE READ

Rebel fighters in Ethiopia's northern Tigray Region began demobilizing on Friday, marking a new stage in the

The two-year war in Africa's second most populous country [killed untold numbers of civilians](#) and forced about two million from their homes before it ended with a surprise truce in November last year.

The demobilization of the Tigray Defense Forces was “set to launch” on Friday afternoon, according to *Tigrai TV*, the official channel of the Tigray region.

implementation of the peace agreement.

The *Fana Broadcasting Corporate*, a media outlet close to the party of Prime Minister **Abiy Ahmed**, said “the first round of the TPLF (Tigray People’s Liberation Front) ex-combatants’ reintegration and rehabilitation programme was officially launched.”

Members of the AU mission attended the launch in the suburbs of Tigray’s regional capital Mekele, the broadcaster added.

Brigadier General **Derbe Mekuria**, deputy head of the National Rehabilitation Commission set up by the federal government, called on the Tigrayan fighters to “work to ensure lasting peace.”

“Militants, seize the advantage of this peace to change your own lives and participate in the development of the region and Ethiopia at large,” Mekuria was quoted as saying by *Fana*.

Tigray representative Brigadier General **Megbey Haile** also called

“When you complete the rehabilitation program and reintegrate to the society, you must be a force for development and peace,” he was quoted as saying.

The [fighting in Tigray](#) has stopped since the surprise signing of the peace deal on November 2.

Forces from neighboring nation Eritrea, which had [supported the Ethiopian army](#), have mostly left Tigray — though their presence has still been reported in some border areas.



As per the [#Pretoria Agreement](#), [#Tigray](#) continues handing over all the heavy artilleries and light

*We demand the Federal gov't to do its part and mainly
remove non-ENDF forces & return Tegar
IDPs. #EritreaOutOfTigray #Ethiopia
pic.twitter.com/WHmyQ4HmtQ*

*— Happtom Berhe (@Happtom) [May 26,](#)
[2023](#)*

The Tigrayan forces began to surrender their heavy weapons in January and disarmament continues.

However forces from the neighboring region of Amhara, which also backed the federal forces, still control the western part of Tigray.

Under the peace deal, disarmament would occur alongside the departure of Eritrean and Amhara troops from Tigray.

The AU did not respond to questions from *AFP*.

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[#Tigray People's Liberation Front \(TPLF\)](#)

