

# The Horn of Africa

War and water



# GIS Dossier



The Horn of Africa's immense strategic importance is often forgotten, but the region's conflicts have wide-ranging geopolitical implications.



- 04** Introduction
- 05** Timeline: From empire to fragmentation
- 06** Big picture: Origins of conflict
- 13** Trade focus: Djibouti's strategic significance
- 15** Deep dive: The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
- 17** Actionable insights

## Experts



**Giorgio Cafiero**

CEO of Gulf State Analytics, a Washington, D.C.-based geopolitical risk consultancy, adjunct assistant professor at Georgetown University and adjunct fellow at the American Security Project.



**Colleen Graffy**

Law professor at Pepperdine Caruso Law School, specializing in public international law, international environmental law and international criminal law. Former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia.



**Prince Michael of Liechtenstein**

Executive chairman of Industrie- und Finanzkontor Ets., a leading trust company with expertise in the long-term, multigenerational preservation of wealth, family values and businesses. Among other ventures, he is also the founder and chairman of Geopolitical Intelligence Services AG.



**Teresa Nogueira Pinto**

African affairs expert with a PhD in global studies from the department of social and human sciences at Nova University in Lisbon and a masters degree in international relations from the Institute for Political Studies of the Portuguese Catholic University. Ms. Nogueira Pinto was a visiting researcher at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, D.C., and worked at the political department of the Portuguese Embassy in Algiers.

Layout and graphics by Michał Rogalski

Illustrations of experts by Andreas Leitner

# Introduction

The Western media often overlooks developments in Africa, a tendency that has become even more pronounced amid the intense focus on Ukraine, Gaza and Iran. As global attention has been absorbed by these high-profile conflicts, parallel crises and geopolitical shifts elsewhere have received far less scrutiny. Yet the Horn of Africa, in particular, has been undergoing significant political and security developments with far-reaching implications.

Given the region's highly strategic position along the Red Sea – one of the world's most critical maritime corridors – instability there directly affects global trade flows, energy shipments and broader geopolitical relations. These dynamics not only shape regional balances of power but also influence the strategic calculations of major external actors, from Gulf states to global heavyweights seeking to secure access to vital shipping routes.





Geopolitical  
Intelligence  
Services

visit our website

[www.gisreportsonline.com](http://www.gisreportsonline.com)