

During a meeting held in the border town of Metema on 5 January 2022, military delegations from Sudan and Ethiopia discussed plans for the re-opening of the Gallabat-Metema border crossing. This border post, vital for trade between the two countries, was closed in July 2021 after the murder of a Sudanese army officer in the Galabat area by an Ethiopian gunman inside the Sudanese side of the border. Since then, all commercial activities between the two countries through this border post are paralysed.

Despite the Sudanese side refused to re-open the border until the situation in the Tigray Region will stabilise, a decision has been taken during the meeting to establish joint border patrols to maintain security in the area. According to [Sudan Tribune](#), Ethiopian troops suspect the presence of TPLF military elements in some refugee camps in Sudan. The purpose of these joint patrols is also to prevent people in refugee camps to cross the border and enter Ethiopia.

A [report](#) from the Research and Evidence Facility (REF) dated March 2020 reveals that the Metema border post is a transit point for illegal immigrants, as a number of Ethiopians use to cross into Sudan with the aim of reaching Khartoum and from there, move in North Africa and eventually Europe.