



Please cite as: EUAA, '[1.2.2. International actors](#)' in *Sudan: Security Situation*, February 2025.

1.2.2. International actors

Since the eruption of the conflict, both the SAF and the RSF have sought support from external actors. The SAF maintained close ties with Egypt²⁹⁰ reflecting long-standing relations between the two countries' militaries.²⁹¹ It has been alleged, including by the experts and the RSF, that Egypt provided the SAF with aerial support, Chinese-made K-8 fighter jets, ammunitions and training, as well as weaponry and military intelligence to the SAF-allied SLA-MM forces.²⁹² While Egypt's minister of foreign affairs denied that his country was providing military support to the SAF,²⁹³ Egyptian president Abdel Fattah al-Sisi pledged his 'continued support' to the SAF during a November 2024 meeting with al-Burhan.²⁹⁴

After re-establishing diplomatic ties with Sudan in October 2023 following an eight-year break, ²⁹⁵ Iran began to provide material assistance to the SAF with drones²⁹⁶ such as Iran-made Mohajer-6 and Ababil drones that contributed to subsequent SAF victories over RSF fighters.²⁹⁷ Research published by the Conflict Observatory with funding from the US Department of State (USDOS) concluded that 'with near certainty', the transfer of weapons from Iran to the SAF via flights to Port Sudan airport continued during the reference period of this report.²⁹⁸

Meanwhile, the UAE, viewed as the RSF's most important ally in the past years,²⁹⁹ has repeatedly been accused of supporting the RSF in the current conflict.³⁰⁰ Research published by the Conflict Observatory with funding from the USDOS concluded that 'with near certainty', the transfer of weapons from the UAE to the RSF through Amdjarass airport in Chad,³⁰¹ already addressed in a January 2024 report of the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan,³⁰² continued into the reference period of this report.³⁰³ These findings have been corroborated by numerous other reports,³⁰⁴ including by research conducted by Amnesty International³⁰⁵ and Reuters.³⁰⁶ However, the UAE government denied providing military, logistical, political or financial support to any of the warring parties.³⁰⁷ For further information on the UAE's reported military support for the RSF, see section [1.2.1 Major state and non-state armed groups](#).

The RSF also maintained links to the Russian-supported Libyan National Army (LNA) of Libya's warlord Khalifa Haftar.³⁰⁸ Russia's mercenary army Wagner Group, now renamed 'Africa Corps', ³⁰⁹ has also been accused of supplying weapons to the RSF,³¹⁰ including surface-to-air missiles.³¹¹ In response to the Wagner Group's alleged support for the RSF, Ukrainian special forces intervened on behalf of the SAF³¹² and were reported to have started training SAF

personnel in March 2024.[313](#) During the reference period, the Russian government, which has been seeking to establish a Russian naval base in Port Sudan, gradually backed away from supporting the RSF and shifted towards supporting the SAF.[314](#) In November 2024, Russia vetoed a draft UN Security Council resolution that called for an immediate halt of attacks against civilians and for all feasible precautions to be taken by the warring parties to avoid and minimise civilian harm.[315](#)

Saudi Arabia, which had maintained close ties to both General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo prior to the current conflict, has claimed a mediating role over the conflict[316](#) (with no evidence of providing military support to the SAF),[317](#) while also seeking to safeguard its economic interests in the Red Sea region[318](#) and to counter-balance the UAE's military-focused efforts to exert influence in Sudan.[319](#)

- [290](#)

Reuters, Sudan's conflict: Who is backing the rival commanders?, 12 April 2024, [url](#)

- [291](#)

VOA, Analysts: Presence of foreign actors complicates Sudan war situation, 20 June 2024, [url](#)

- [292](#)

Ayin Network, Egypt's intervention in Sudan's war, 27 December 2024, [url](#)

- [293](#)

Sudan Tribune, Egypt rejects RSF leader's accusations of support for Sudanese army, 18 October 2024, [url](#)

- [294](#)

AFP, Egypt's Sisi assures Sudan army chief of 'continued support', 5 November 2024

- [295](#)

ADF, Iran Seeks Influence In Sudan Through An Influx Of Weapons – Analysis, Eurasia Review, 20 October 2024, [url](#)

- [296](#)

Reuters, Sudan's conflict: Who is backing the rival commanders?, 12 April 2024, [url](#)

- [297](#)

ADF, Iran Seeks Influence In Sudan Through An Influx Of Weapons – Analysis, Eurasia Review, 20 October 2024, [url](#)

- [298](#)

Conflict Observatory, Foreign Facilitators of Weapons Fueling Sudan's Civil War, October 2024, [url](#), p. 3

- [299](#)

Reuters, Who is fighting in Sudan?, 15 April 2024, [url](#)

- [300](#)

Sudan Tribune, Sudan reiterates accusations of UAE support for RSF, urges UN action, 12 October 2024, [url](#); VOA, Analysts: Presence of foreign actors complicates Sudan war situation, 20 June 2024, [url](#)

- [301](#)

Conflict Observatory, Foreign Facilitators of Weapons Fueling Sudan's Civil War, October 2024, [url](#), p. 3

- [302](#)

UN Security Council, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 41-42

- [303](#)

Conflict Observatory, Foreign Facilitators of Weapons Fueling Sudan's Civil War, October 2024, [url](#), p. 3

- [304](#)

See, for example, Reuters, Dozens of UAE flights head to airstrip UN says supplies arms to Sudan rebels, 12 December 2024, [url](#); Amnesty International, New weapons fuelling the Sudan conflict, 25 July 2024, [url](#); Howarth, C.N. et al., Special Report: Cargo Plane over RSF Territory & Continued Civilian Displacement from El-Fasher, Yale HRL, 12 June 2024, p. 4; MenchOsint, [@MenchOsint, X], posted on: 14 May 2024, [url](#)

- [305](#)

Amnesty International, New weapons fuelling the Sudan conflict, 25 July 2024, [url](#)

- [306](#)

Reuters, Dozens of UAE flights head to airstrip UN says supplies arms to Sudan rebels, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

- [307](#)

VOA, Analysts: Presence of foreign actors complicates Sudan war situation, 20 June 2024, [url](#)

- [308](#)

Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Country of Origin Information Report on Sudan, May 2024, [url](#), p. 25

- [309](#)

Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Country of Origin Information Report on Sudan, May 2024, [url](#), p. 25, footnote 157

- [310](#)

VOA, Analysts: Presence of foreign actors complicates Sudan war situation, 20 June 2024, [url](#); ADF, Drones Supplied by Iran and UAE Threaten to Prolong the Conflict in Sudan, 9 July 2024, [url](#); Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Country of Origin Information Report on Sudan, May 2024, [url](#), p. 25

- [311](#)

VOA, Analysts: Presence of foreign actors complicates Sudan war situation, 20 June 2024, [url](#); New Arab (The), Will Russia's support for Sudan's army turn the tide in the war?, 3 June 2024, [url](#)

- [312](#)

Reuters, Sudan's conflict: Who is backing the rival commanders?, 12 April 2024, [url](#); Asharq Al-Awsat, Ukraine Fights Russia in Sudan, 9 March 2024, [url](#)

- [313](#)

WSJ, Ukraine Is Now Fighting Russia in Sudan, 6 March 2024, [url](#)

- [314](#)

McGregor, A., Russia Switches Sides in Sudan War, The Jamestown Foundation, 8 July 2024, [url](#); New Arab (The), Will Russia's support for Sudan's army turn the tide in the war?, 3 June 2024, [url](#)

- [315](#)

UN Press, Russian Federation Vetoes Security Council Resolution Aimed at Strengthening Measures to Protect Civilians, Increase Humanitarian Aid Access in Sudan, 18 November 2024, [url](#)

- [316](#)

Reuters, Sudan's conflict: Who is backing the rival commanders?, 12 April 2024, [url](#)

- [317](#)

SWP, How (Not) to Talk About the War in Sudan, 22 April 2024, [url](#)

- [318](#)

Reuters, Sudan's conflict: Who is backing the rival commanders?, 12 April 2024, [url](#)

- [319](#)

Badi, E., Sudan is caught in a web of external interference. So why is an international response still lacking?, 17 December 2024, Atlantic Council, 17 December 2024, [url](#)