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2.1.1. Actors involved and territorial control

As of early June 2024, without taking into account the situation in the three cities of Khartoum, Bahri and Omdurman, Khartoum state was divided into territories in the east controlled by the SAF, central areas where control was contested between the SAF and the RSF and their respective allies, and areas in the west largely under the control of the RSF.[549](#) The SAF coalition groups operating in the Khartoum area included the SAF's conventional units and special forces, newly recruited mustanfareen battalions, Darfuri armed groups[550](#) including SLM-MM and JEM,[551](#) and other militias such as the Islamist Al-Bara bin Malik Brigade.[552](#)

The SAF made territorial gains in the city of Omdurman during an offensive in the first quarter of 2024.[553](#) By mid-February 2024, the SAF had broken the RSF's siege of its Engineers Corps base[554](#) and residential quarters of Old Omdurman.[555](#) Further SAF advances were reported in eastern and southern Omdurman, as well as around Bahri.[556](#) As of autumn 2024, much of Omdurman was reported to be under the army's control.[557](#) The SAF had troops stationed at its Engineers Corps base[558](#) in the city's south[559](#) and, in northern Omdurman,[560](#) it retained control of the Karari locality, which now serves as its military operations headquarters.[561](#) As a result of the military campaign, the SAF was able to link its forces in the city's north with those stationed in the south.[562](#) Despite the SAF's territorial gains, the RSF remained in control of large areas in the western and southern parts of Omdurman,[563](#) although it was affected by infighting over leadership issues and supply shortages in western Omdurman[564](#) and faced some defections towards the end of the reference period.[565](#) During the following months, the conflict in the Khartoum area continued[566](#) but remained largely frozen[567](#) with both sides firmly entrenched in their positions,[568](#) although the SAF made continuous 'incremental' territorial gains in Omdurman.[569](#)

In Khartoum city, most of which has been under RSF control since April 2023,[570](#) the SAF remained unable to dislodge the effective RSF ground units positioned in the city.[571](#) RSF fighters were entrenched in residential areas, occupying homes, businesses, and key infrastructure installations such as healthcare facilities.[572](#) Meanwhile, the SAF held on to a few strategic positions, including the General Command Headquarters in the city centre and the Armoured Corps base in the south,[573](#) both of which were under RSF siege. Meanwhile, the Strategic Corps base remained under RSF control.[574](#)

Following multi-pronged attacks launched by the RSF in Bahri in early September 2024, including in the surroundings of the Weapons Corps and Reconnaissance bases in Kadaro and

Hattab,[575](#) the SAF launched a major offensive in late September 2024 against RSF positions in Khartoum and Bahri,[576](#) conducting waves of infantry assaults supported by airstrikes and heavy artillery fire.[577](#) During its offensive launched in late September 2024, the SAF gained control of arterial bridges and roads linking Omdurman with Khartoum city and gained a foothold on the eastern bank of the Nile[578](#) in the al-Muqran district.[579](#) After achieving rapid initial territorial gains between late September and mid-October 2024,[580](#) the SAF's advances slowed down.[581](#)

As of November 2024, control was fiercely contested in Khartoum's al-Muqran district,[582](#) although the SAF established a perimeter[583](#) and held its ground in this strategically important area.[584](#) Little change of control of territory was reported in the area as of late October 2024.[585](#) Another embattled area was the surroundings of the Armoured Corps base further south.[586](#) The SAF also took control of the Lamab neighbourhood, located north of the Armoured Corps base.[587](#) In Khartoum, armed confrontations remained largely limited to areas within al-Muqran district.[588](#)

Most of the city of Bahri has been under RSF control,[589](#) while the SAF held on to several strategic bases in the area.[590](#) SAF troops were stationed at the besieged Signal Corps base in the city's south, at the Weapons Corps base further north in the Kadaro area,[591](#) and at the Reconnaissance Corps base in the Hattab area.[592](#)

During the offensive that began in late September 2024, SAF units captured a bridge connecting Omdurman to Bahri,[593](#) infiltrated Bahri[594](#) and ended the RSF's sieges of the Reconnaissance Corps and Weapons Corps bases while capturing the neighbourhoods around the Weapons Corps base as well. The SAF also captured the city's al-Izrigab[595](#) and al-Halfaya neighbourhoods[596](#) and later also retook some areas in the Al-Samrab neighbourhood east of al-Halfaya. Meanwhile, the RSF maintained its stronghold in the Shambat district[597](#) on the route towards the still besieged General Command and Signal Corps bases.[598](#) In November 2024, SAF units managed to seize some further ground in Bahri, although the momentum of the SAF's ground offensive was waning. Well-trained RSF special units at Bahri's Paratroopers Corps base were reported to have repeatedly obstructed the SAF's advances.[599](#) The RSF launched counterattacks in Bahri's al-Halfaya district in an attempt to reverse the SAF's territorial gains, pushing back the SAF and reportedly inflicting several casualties.[600](#)

According to a mid-November 2024 field report cited by the Sudan Tribune, the RSF only maintained a weak presence in several Bahri neighbourhoods, including Shambat, al-Sababi, al-Safiya and al-Shaabiya.[601](#) In early December 2024, following SAF drone attacks, it was reportedly forced to retreat from some positions within Shambat as well as from the al-Safiya neighbourhood.[602](#)

At the same time, the RSF had highly trained special units positioned at the Paratroopers Corps base in Khartoum Bahri[603](#) and remained in control of the Al-Jaili oil refinery, a key source of fuel for RSF troops[604](#) situated north of Bahri.[605](#) However, the refinery was being surrounded by SAF troops as of October 2024.[606](#)

Moreover, the reference period witnessed a series of SAF attacks on the heavily defended RSF-controlled Al-Jaili oil refinery in late April/early May[607](#) and August 2024,[608](#) an area that has

witnessed persistent armed confrontations during the current conflict.[609](#)

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