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2.18.1. Actors involved and territorial control

During the reference period, the SAF controlled Red Sea state[1257] together with national militias of the Sudanese Popular Resistance/Mustanfareen.[1258] The SAF have reportedly mobilised members of these militias from local communities.[1259] The largest ethnic group in Red Sea state are the Beja with its subgroups of the Hadendowa, Amarar, and Bishari,[1260] from which the local militias of the Beja Congress (BC) led by Shaiba Dirar, were formed.[1261]

There is a territorial dispute between Sudan and Egypt over the Hala'ib triangle border region [1262] – historically Sudanese territory currently under Egyptian control.[1263] The triangle reportedly offers rich natural resources and ideal conditions for smuggling and trafficking operations beyond Egypt and Sudan.[1264] Since the outbreak of the war, the mines in the adjacent area belonging to Sudan (Red Sea state), according to Sudanese administrative maps, have attracted thousands of Sudanese workers. Egypt reportedly carried out repeated military operations to clear the area of the miners, aiming at handing it to an Egyptian mining company. [1265] Further external actors' involvement in Sudan, among them the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye (see section 1.2.2. International actors in this report), is largely based on strategic interests in the Red Sea,[1266] including Port Sudan as a major hub.[1267]

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