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# 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.300Research 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 conflict316 (with no evidence of providing military support to the SAF),317 while also seeking to safeguard its economic interests in the Red Sea region318 and to counter-balance the UAE's military-focused efforts to exert influence in Sudan.319

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