

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 Egypt^{[290](#)} 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 drones^{[296](#)} 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 International^{[305](#)} 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 SAF^{[312](#)} 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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