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2.2.2. Recruitment and forced recruitment by the Rapid Support Forces

○ (a) Recruitment by the RSF

The RSF was reported to conduct intensive recruitment campaigns in areas under its control, mobilising fighters along tribal lines, such as the Misseriya, the Ta'aysha and the Rizeigat tribes.[316](#) In October 2024, the leader of the RSF, Muhammad Hamdan Dagalo, 'Hemedti', called for a 'general mobilisation'.[317](#) In January 2026, The Horn Review noted that the RSF has used *Faza'a* (a pre-Islamic Sudanese tradition allowing tribes to call on their members and allies for support against attacks by other tribes) [318](#) to recruit fighters in South Sudan, primarily in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Western Equatoria states.[319](#) In previous reports, it was noted that the RSF also recruited along tribal lines in Chad and Niger members of Baggara Arab groups.[320](#) The RSF reportedly received support from Colombian mercenaries recruited through private companies registered in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and operating under the 'Desert Wolves' (*Lobos del Desierto*) battalion.[321](#)

○ (a) Forced recruitment by the RSF

RSF recruitment along tribal lines and using customary administrations appears to have elements of coercion.[322](#) According to tribal leaders, 'going to fight is a tribal duty that cannot be avoided'.[323](#) In April 2025, the RSF reportedly threatened tribal leaders in South Darfur with arrests and expulsion from the RSF-controlled areas if they resisted the mobilisation, detaining the sheikh of Borno 'for refusing the mobilisation drive'.[324](#) Similar instances of detention of tribal leaders by the RSF have been reported.[325](#) In 2024, 'intimidation, torture, summary execution and the withholding of food and medical aid' was used to recruit men and boys into RSF ranks.[326](#)

Some Colombian mercenaries were deployed in Sudan after recruitment under deceiving circumstances,[327](#) with one source claiming ‘they had been sent to Sudan against their will’.[328](#) In November 2024, Colombian media outlet La Silla Vacía reported testimonies from Colombians in Sudan who claimed they were held captive and described their situation as a form of trafficking in human beings, alleging they had been recruited under false pretence elsewhere; some of those interviewed stated they were not allowed to leave the army and feared reprisals for sharing information.[329](#) However, in March 2025, La Silla Vacía interviewed a Colombian mercenary who had been deployed in Sudan and was able to return to Colombia upon requesting it. He also estimated that around 80 Colombian mercenaries returned to Colombia from Sudan.
[330](#)

For information on child soldiers, see section [2.7.2. Child soldiers](#).

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