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War in Sudan: Who are the driving forces, who are the victims, and who are the profiteers?

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For several years now, armed conflicts of indescribable proportions have been raging in Sudan. International aid organisations are at their wits' end in the face of the mass suffering. All attempts to end the killing have so far failed. Clearly, there is much to be gained for the masterminds and profiteers of the war.

To euphemistically refer to this conflict in Sudan – which the UN has described as ‘the greatest humanitarian catastrophe since the Second World War’ – as a ‘civil war’ is a particularly deceitful euphemism. For the mass slaughter that has been raging in this African country since 2023 – with tens of thousands dead, hundreds of thousands starving and millions displaced – is a particularly cruel example of boundless greed for power and profit, of racism of the worst kind, and of unprecedented ignorance on the part of the world’s rich nations. Yet the war did not descend upon the north-east of the African continent like a sudden natural disaster; rather, it has a long history, extensively documented by historians. The author of this text even associates the start of his journalistic career with it.

Map of Sudan:



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Preliminary remark

When I travelled to Sudan in 1972, as a budding television journalist working for a German NGO, to film a report on the so-called ‘brain drain’ – the exodus of experts trained in Germany from their home countries¹ – I was able to witness not only military parades featuring brand-new G3 rifles – developed by the German arms manufacturer Heckler & Koch – but also witnessed the misery of thousands of refugees from neighbouring Chad, who had fled a similar ‘civil war’ to Sudan – which was still at peace at the time – and were seeking shelter in and around the mosques of Khartoum and Omdurman. In rem , after completing my studies, I first produced a series of reports on German weapons in what was then still known as the ‘Third World’ for the German

¹ “For example, Abdelmoneim or the brain drain”, 30 mins. BR Germany/Sudan 1972

public TV political programme **Monitor**, and subsequently a series of documentaries for **Das Erste** on the global trail of blood left by the G3 rifle from Oberndorf in Swabia and from licensed factories in many countries around the world.²

When, in 2011, a full-blown civil war between the predominantly Arab north and the oppressed south of the country – whose population was predominantly Black African – led to the secession of South Sudan and the establishment of its own state, this marked merely the provisional end of a series of post-colonial wars on the African continent, for example in Biafra, Nigeria, in Angola, Algeria, Morocco, Ethiopia, Somalia and other states, accompanied by huge profits for American, Soviet and Western European arms manufacturers, who supplied weapons there on a massive scale. Today's Sudan is the latest chapter in this imperialist 'success story'. Some of those profiting are the same as they were decades ago, whilst others are corporations in Asia that are new to the market.

The driving forces behind the current conflict

It is hard to believe that, essentially, this is a conflict between just two men: the Commander-in-Chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and his opponent, the militia leader Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo – alias Hemeti – commander of the *Rapid Support Forces (RSF)*. Dagalo was once Burhan's deputy in the Sudanese Army when it was still under the command of the former president and dictator Omar al-Bashir. Al-Bashir, for his part, was responsible for tens of thousands of victims of the civil war and was consequently wanted by the International Criminal Court on charges of genocide. However, he was never extradited. Al-Bashir was overthrown in a military coup in 2019 and has been in custody in Sudan ever since. Since then, the deadly power struggle between al-Burhan and Hemeti over his succession as President of Sudan has continued.

But anyone who believes that the conflict between the two generals is purely about a lust for power is mistaken. For there are also tangible economic interests at stake. Sudan possesses rich mineral resources, particularly gold, which is extracted through rudimentary open-cast mining as well as professional mining operations. The main deposits are located in the north-east, in the centre – including the Khartoum metropolitan area – and in the south-west of the country. It is hardly surprising that these areas are also the main conflict zones from which most of the refugees originate.

Whoever controls these areas also controls gold mining. The long-standing rise in the world market price of gold has further ensured that the struggle for these territories has been waged for years using modern weapons, with no peace agreements in sight.

The supply chains for weapons to the warring parties are sometimes difficult to trace, partly because weapon systems frequently change hands during combat operations. As early as late 2024, Human Rights Watch attempted to document the weapon systems that had reached Sudan since April 2023. In doing so, the human rights

² Including 'Under German Roofs – The Oberndorf Conscience', 45 mins. ARD/DasErste, 8 August 1984

organisation identified systems from companies in China, Iran, Russia, Serbia and the United Arab Emirates.³

The inglorious role of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and its defence contractor EDGE

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that some of the neighbouring Gulf states are considered the main buyers of the gold, foremost among them the United Arab Emirates, which is itself fuelling the war with arms supplies. According to numerous reports, UN experts have confirmed this. Arms for gold, then, and the supply of this precious metal from Sudan is not likely to end any time soon.

In the shadow of this war and several others that have flared up out of the ongoing conflict between the US, Israel and Iran, the Gulf states – particularly Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the Emirates – have not only amassed a vast arsenal of state-of-the-art weapons. Rather, some of these states have used their petrodollar revenues to build up a huge arms industry. The UAE also plays a leading role in this regard, and the newly established arms firms, together with Israel and Turkey, are emerging as global players in the arms market, as has been evident for several years at relevant trade fairs such as IDEX in Abu Dhabi.

Added to this are defence firms from all over the world, which see the conflicts in the Middle East as an extremely lucrative market from which they hope to reap billions in profits. These include, first and foremost, US giants such as Lockheed Martin, RTX Corporation (formerly Raytheon), Northrop Grumman, Boeing, General Dynamics and others, but increasingly also Chinese conglomerates such as NORINCO, AVIC and CETC, the Russian state-owned firm Rostec, and European conglomerates such as BAE Systems from the UK, Rheinmetall from Germany and Leonardo from Italy. Almost all of them supply the Near and Middle East, fuelling the conflicts there to an unprecedented extent.

A relatively new player in this market is the Abu Dhabi-based EDGE Group, which is state-owned by the United Arab Emirates and, as stated in a press release issued by the group at the end of 2024, “celebrated five years of innovation, growth and global success” – or, in the English version: “5 Years of phenomenal growth”.⁴ The press release goes on to state: “As of September 2024, the companies managed by the EDGE Group had achieved an impressive order backlog of USD 12.5 billion through secured contracts” – a sum that is likely to have increased significantly as a result of the war now underway between the US and Israel against Iran and the attacks carried out by Iran against the Gulf sheikhdoms.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), EDGE is already ranked amongst the world’s top 25 defence companies.⁵

³ “Fanning the Flames”. Human Rights Watch, 9 September 2024.

⁴ EDGE press release dated 9 December 2024, accessed on 12 March 2026

⁵ bicc Country Report: United Arab Emirates No. 08/20025, accessed 12 April 2026

In addition to naval vessels and high-tech cyber equipment, EDGE manufactures and supplies weapons systems that are particularly suited to desert warfare: 6- and 8-axle wheeled armoured vehicles such as the *Nimr Ajban* and other armoured personnel carriers from the Nimr family, which can be fitted with heavy machine guns and mortar launchers. EDGE is also active in the growing market for armed drones and drone defence systems.

According to a UN report, the desert-capable Nimr armoured vehicle has been sighted not only in Sudan but also in Somalia and Libya, as reported by the Somali news service *Hiiraan Online* in 2025. “The United Nations has accused the United Arab Emirates of violating international arms embargoes after investigators traced British military equipment sold to the Gulf state back to militia groups in Sudan, Somalia and Libya. A report submitted to the UN Security Council shows that weapons and components manufactured in the UK, including sighting systems for small arms and engines used in *Nimr Ajban*’s armoured vehicles, were recovered from positions held by Sudan’s paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF)...”⁶ A report that was immediately denied by the UAE, along with several others alleging the Emirates’ involvement in the conflict in North-East Africa.⁷

EDGE partnerships with German and Spanish arms manufacturers

EDGE now has a number of cooperation agreements with European defence firms or has taken them over entirely, such as the German rifle manufacturer *Haenel* from Suhl in Thuringia, which years ago competed against Heckler & Koch in a tender for the Bundeswehr’s procurement of a successor to the G36 standard rifle.⁸ It may now be producing small arms for the UAE and other Arab states. As of May 2026, it is not yet known whether Haenel rifles have already reached Sudan. However, variants of the G36 produced by its former competitor H&K have reportedly been spotted in Sudan, as reported by the German public TV programme ‘*Report Mainz*’, citing photographic evidence.⁹ When questioned by *Report Mainz*, H&K replied, in essence, that they had not supplied Sudan with and could not comment on the origin of the rifles as long as the serial numbers were unknown. Arms control campaigner Jürgen Grässlin suspects the suppliers are in Saudi Arabia, where the G36 has been manufactured under licence for many years, and sees the incident as further evidence of the problems associated

⁶ *Hiiraan Online*, 28 October 2025, accessed 14 April 2026

⁷ including a comprehensive report by *Amnesty International* entitled ‘New weapons are fuelling Sudan Conflict’ dated 25 July 2024, accessed 11 November 2025, or the *New York Times* of 25 September 2024: “How a

US Ally Uses Aid as a Cover in War’ featuring eyewitness accounts, according to which cargo aircraft bearing

bearing the UAE’s national insignia regularly transhipped arms for the RSF militia, disguised as food aid for Sudanese civilians.

⁸ “The Arab Assault Rifle”, *DER SPIEGEL*, 15 September 2020

⁹ *Tagesschau* 24, 19 November 2025

with the licensing of defence products in general, which allow the original weapons developers to evade responsibility for prohibited arms exports. Saudi Arabia is among the supporters of Sudan's de facto ruler Al-Burhan; the documented G36s were presumably captured by the RSF militia.

In February 2025, a defence cooperation agreement between EDGE and a major German partner was announced. *Diehl Defence*, based in Überlingen on Lake Constance, signed a corresponding agreement with the Abu Dhabi-based company at IDEX.¹⁰ *Diehl Defence* is one of Europe's leading companies in the development and manufacture of surface-to-surface, surface-to-air and air-to-air missiles, such as the *AIM-19 Sidewinder*, and artillery ammunition.

There is also a cooperation agreement with the Spanish defence group Indra for the "development, manufacture and life-cycle support of loitering munitions and smart weapons", as reported by the industry service *CPM Defence Network* in early 2026.¹¹

How drones and other European weapon systems are being used to kill in Sudan

Further research by Amnesty International sheds light on European military equipment being used by the warring party, the RSF. For instance, in November 2024, the human rights organisation reported that the Nimr-Ajban personnel carriers from the Emirates were equipped with the French Galix system from *Lacroix Defence* and *Nexter* (now KDNS France), a defence system for land forces that deploys decoys, smoke and projectiles. According to Amnesty, *Lacroix* advertises the Galix system as "concealing combat vehicles from an approaching threat and protecting vehicles, main battle tanks and personnel carriers."¹²

Amnesty concluded that "the constant flow of arms into Sudan is causing immeasurable human suffering. The supplying countries must immediately halt all direct and indirect exports of arms and ammunition to the warring parties in Sudan. "They must respect and enforce the arms embargo on Darfur imposed by the Security Council before there are even more civilian casualties," said Amnesty.¹³

To this day, more than two years later, the appeal has gone unheeded. Neither has the UN Security Council taken effective measures against the influx of weapons and equipment into the region, nor has the fighting abated or ceased. On the contrary, it is being waged with increasing ferocity. Reports of massacres in Darfur, Kordofan and other provinces continue unabated. One such incident occurred in March 2026, when a drone exploded over the market in Abu Zabad in West Kordofan, killing 33 people and seriously injuring dozens more. Or in October 2025, when a drone struck a shelter for internally displaced persons at the Islamic University in Omdurman, resulting in 57

¹⁰ *SWR Aktuell*, 20 February 2025, accessed 1 April 2025

¹¹ *CPM Defence Network*, 15 January 2026, accessed 10 April 2026

¹² "Sudan: French-manufactured weapons system identified in conflict – new investigation". Amnesty International. 14 November 2024, accessed 10 May 2026

¹³ Amnesty International, op. cit.

deaths, including 22 women and 17 children. In January of the same year, the Saudi teaching hospital for mothers was bombed. More than 70 people died.¹⁴

The drones used by both sides in the conflict also originate from abroad. The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) use Iranian *Mohajer-6* drones as well as Turkish *Bayraktar TB2* and Akinci models. According to reports by *Al Jazeera*, the Mohajer-6 drone can carry up to two precision-guided bombs with an explosive yield of around 40 kilograms, with a range of up to 2,000 kilometres.¹⁵

It is currently impossible to say to what extent the supply chains for drones and other weapons from Turkey and Iran have been disrupted by the ongoing war in the Persian Gulf. Drones are a preferred weapon system in Saharan Africa. They allow wars to be waged from a great distance whilst avoiding heavy casualties amongst one's own troops.

How China is involved in the Sudan war

Other preferred long-range weapons include artillery pieces, which are also being deployed in large numbers in the Sudan war. There is documentation – also from Amnesty International – of sophisticated Chinese AH 4 howitzers manufactured by the state-owned company *Norinco*, which – according to a well-founded assumption – were supplied by China to the Rapid Support Forces via the Emirates.¹⁶

The *Norinco AH 4* howitzer fires 155 mm shells and causes extremely severe injuries to unprotected targets, such as markets, hospitals or gatherings of religious groups. This is documented by the London-based non-governmental organisation *Action on Armed Violence (AOAV)* in its report '*Counting the Dead: the devastating impact of explosive weapons on civilians in Sudan*'.¹⁷

Thousands of civilians killed by artillery

Even before the conflict broke out in 2023, there were sporadic reports of civilian casualties caused by the use of explosive weapons, according to the AOAV; specifically, between 2010 and 2022, there were at least 797 reports of civilian casualties caused by mortars, grenade launchers, artillery pieces or similar weapons. From 2023 onwards, the casualty figures became more precise – and showed an upward trend: 2,627 in 2023, 4,478 in 2024 and 5,440 in 2025. These are only the figures published by the AOAV. The number of unreported cases is correspondingly high. The AOAV also points out that its figures initially only included victims of ground-based weapons such as artillery shells. A further 4,153 were added as a result of air strikes and bombings. The year 2026 has not yet been recorded at all, as the war continues.

Explosive weapons, when they do not kill their victims instantly, cause particularly severe and long-lasting injuries. Severed arms or legs result in severe, lifelong disabilities. These leave the survivors permanently unemployed and prevent them from

¹⁴ "Sudan, another front in the drone war" in: *Jungle World*, 13 March 2026, accessed 10 May 2026

¹⁵ *Jungle World*, op. cit.

¹⁶ *amnesty zentral-ostafrika.de*, 10 May 2025, accessed 10 May 2026

¹⁷ <https://aoav.org.uk> dated 24 March 2026, accessed 10 May 2026

providing for their families. Disabled children are usually unable to attend school and later find it very difficult to take up a profession. These are lessons learnt from many wars, but in Sudan they are manifesting themselves in new and particularly harrowing ways, because medical care in this desert nation is in many cases impossible or, at the very least, extremely inadequate.

Incidentally, in Sudan, warring factions on both sides are using artillery and drones against the civilian population. The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) under General al-Burhan are simply more adept at diverting the attention of the few international observers and journalists remaining in Sudan's war zones away from their own, often racially motivated, atrocities. There are numerous reports to this effect.¹⁸ The report 'Kanabi Killings', for example, documents massacres of groups of farmers with non-Arab roots, according to correspondent Arne Perras of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Furthermore, civilians are increasingly being persecuted as collaborators. 'The SAF have killed people they believe to be RSF spies,' reads one of many eyewitness accounts.¹⁹ Yet these rarely make the headlines in the international press.

Arms supplies from third countries, primarily China

The UAE's supply chains to Sudan are gradually coming to light in media reports. At the end of 2025, for example, the news portal France 24 documented in a lengthy investigative report how an Emirati company acquired mortar shells from Bulgaria, which were then allegedly smuggled into Sudan via Libya by Colombian men.²⁰ Most recently, in July 2026, Reuters revealed how a company owned by a former US soldier operated a fleet of Boeing aircraft that flew to the RSF's main logistics centres.²¹

Answers to the question of which third countries supply the SAF with weapons remain unsatisfactory. There is no doubt that, over the past few decades, Sudan has built up an extensive arms industry, operating under the name 'Military Industry Corporation' (MIC) and comprising a number of subsidiaries, as listed on *Wikipedia*.²² The armaments produced include not only infantry weapons such as assault rifles and machine guns, but also grenade launchers and artillery, missile systems and drones. The MIC also exhibits at international defence trade fairs. For example, in early 2023, before the outbreak of the ongoing war, the company exhibited at the IDEX defence trade fair in Abu Dhabi. In Abu Dhabi, the company showcased, amongst other things, so-called 'loitering munitions' – which were in the development phase at the time. These projectiles are deployed by drones and can track a target for up to 60 minutes.²³

¹⁸ "In Sudan, the army is waging war against its own people – investigations support the finding that it is not only the RSF militia that is torturing and killing civilians," reads, for example, a report by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* correspondent Arne Perras dated 23 December 2025. He draws on research carried out by the investigative portal *Lighthouse Reports* in collaboration with the broadcaster CNN.

¹⁹ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, op. cit.

²⁰ "European weapons in Sudan (3/5): The mercenaries who travelled through Libya". France 24, 19 April 2025.

²¹ "The US army veteran and the mystery Boeings flying Sudan's war routes". Reuters, 15 July 2026.

²² Wikipedia: Military Industry Corporation, accessed 18 May 2026

²³ "IDEX 2023: Sudan displays UAV-launched loitering munition". Janes.com, 24 February 2023.

The company also showcased drones at the IDEF 2025 defence exhibition in Istanbul.²⁴

Meanwhile, the Amnesty reports on arms deliveries from third countries to the two warring parties in Sudan are now also being cited by the Research Service of the German Bundestag.²⁵ This lends them even greater reliability, in addition to their already high level of credibility. China, in particular, would find itself in a disreputable dual role as a result of these reports.

On the one hand, as a long-standing ally of the regular Sudanese armed forces, the country has equipped them with a wide range of small and heavy weapons.²⁶ On the other hand, China has apparently allowed the United Arab Emirates to supply state-of-the-art Chinese weapons, such as drones, to areas where they are allegedly being used by the RSF militias. China, too, has consistently denied such allegations.

However, eyewitness accounts of RSF operations involving Chinese weapons are mounting. One such example concerns incidents on the night of 9 March 2025 near the town of al-Malha in North Darfur. The RSF carried out a drone strike, presumably targeting the SAF. According to *Amnesty*, whose researchers cite local media and a Sudanese human rights organisation, 13 people were killed and many more injured. “By analysing digital evidence from the remains of the bomb used in the attack, *Amnesty International* was able to establish that the fragments belong to a *Norinco GB50 A* guided aerial bomb. The markings on the bomb fragments indicate that the bomb was manufactured in 2024. These bombs can be dropped by various Chinese drones, including *the Wing Loon II* and *FeiHong-95*, both of which are used by the RSF in Sudan and were supplied by the UAE.”²⁷

Despite this detailed body of evidence, the UAE has consistently maintained its denial and announced financial aid running into millions for the population affected by the war. And how is China responding? Even though it remains difficult to establish evidence of direct arms supplies to the warring parties, *Amnesty* is nonetheless right in its unequivocal demand: “As a state party to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), China must take urgent measures to prevent the diversion of arms to Sudan. If China continues to supply such weapons to the United Arab Emirates – a state that has long supplied arms to conflicts in which war crimes and breaches of international humanitarian law occur regularly – it runs the risk of indirectly supporting the conflict with weapons.”²⁸ This is a demand that could be directed not only at China but also at many other arms-producing countries around the world, such as the Federal Republic of Germany (as it, too, exports arms to the UAE).

Amnesty and other human rights groups point out that reports of sexual violence against women and girls, and of mass rapes in the conflict zones, are also on the rise.

²⁴ “Sudan’s Safaroog drone debuts at IDEF 2025”. *Military.Africa*, 29 July 2025.

²⁵ “External support for the warring factions fighting for power in Sudan with weapons and other military equipment” – German Bundestag Research Services, Department WD 2 – 3000 – 088/25

²⁶ “China’s hidden machinations: How Chinese weapons are fuelling both sides of the Sudanese war”, *Ayin Network*, 3 June 2025

²⁷ “Supplies of Chinese weapons violate the arms embargo” – *Amnesty International press release* dated 8 May 2025

²⁸ *Amnesty International*, op. cit.

These constitute war crimes just as serious as the killing of civilians through armed violence.

The third group of victims particularly affected are children. The children's charity UNICEF highlights the catastrophic situation facing minors in a recent report. Particularly in Darfur, where 1,300 children alone have been killed in attacks by the RSF, and in Kordofan, they remain defenceless against shelling from artillery, drones and rifles; they are ravaged by hunger and disease and, as a result of their experiences of barbaric violence, are traumatised in a way that, without medical assistance, can lead to long-term mental health conditions. Yet in many places, the war makes medical assistance impossible. "Children in Darfur are at the end of their tether," concludes UNICEF.²⁹

In light of all these crimes, it remains incomprehensible why the International Court of Justice in The Hague has not long since intervened and issued an international arrest warrant for those responsible. The simple answer: it does not consider itself competent, at least as far as a possible indictment of the UAE is concerned. In March 2025, by a vote of 14 to two, the ICJ rejected the Sudanese military government's application to impose provisional measures against the UAE. The allegation was one of complicity with the RSF in the alleged genocide of ethnic groups such as the Massalit people in Sudan. The grounds for the rejection were purely formal: according to a report by **Die Welt** correspondent Christian Putsch, the UAE had entered a reservation against Article IX when ratifying the Genocide Convention. This "allows a State Party to bring a case against another State Party before the ICJ if it believes the latter has violated the Convention. But only if both states have accepted the ICJ's jurisdiction over such disputes – which the UAE has not done. For purely formal legal reasons, then."³⁰ A carte blanche for continued support of murderous campaigns against innocent civilians through unrestrained arms supplies?

The other branch of international justice – the International Criminal Court (ICC), also based in The Hague – is likewise proving to be a toothless tiger when it comes to prosecuting genocide and crimes against humanity in Sudan. More than 20 years late, in October 2026, it convicted a militia leader of 27 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur, including murder, rape and torture. His name: Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman. "According to the court, the defendant, also known as Ali Kutscheib, was one of the key leaders of the government-backed Janjaweed militia, which is held responsible for the murder of some 300,000 people in the Darfur region...The prosecution also intends to put the now-deposed former President Omar Al-Bashir on trial for genocide. However, he has not yet been extradited by the current military regime."³¹

What does the future hold for Sudan? "There are hardly any safe places left," reported SZ journalist Arne Perras, noting: "The people of Sudan have already endured more than 1,000 drone strikes. The supply of weapons from external powers is fuelling the

²⁹ "Darfur: 29 Years On – Children in Danger", UNICEF News Ticker, 28 April 2026, accessed 10 May 2026

³⁰ "Why the International Court of Justice does not consider itself competent to rule on the war in Sudan", by Christian Putsch, published identically in *DIE WELT* and *DER STANDARD (Vienna)*, accessed 6 May 2025

³¹ DER SPIEGEL Online, 6 October 2025

war ever further.”³² This refers to external powers such as Turkey or the Gulf states, which are pursuing their own objectives by raking in ever-increasing billions through arms sales or, like Egypt or Ethiopia, hoping to expand their sphere of territorial influence in the shadow of the war. International observers already see Sudan as facing “another brutal year of war”³³. The two warring factions have stabilised their positions and established themselves in their respective territories following ethnic cleansing – *Al-Burhan* in the capital Khartoum, to the south in the province of Wad Medani, the country’s breadbasket, and in Port Sudan, the gateway to the sea. *Dagalo*, with his RSF, controls Darfur and Kordofan in the heart of the country and, with them, key trans-Saharan routes.

There are now fears that the conflict will spill over into neighbouring countries. New theatres of war are on the horizon. Ethiopia has built a dam on the Blue Nile, not far from the border with Sudan, which deprives the Nile of a large proportion of the water vital for irrigating fields. “Ethiopia, a millennia-old power on the upper reaches of the Nile, and Egypt, a millennia-old power on the lower reaches of the Nile, are historical rivals – and Sudan lies in the middle,” is how the **taz** describes the situation.³⁴ Neither the Sudanese nor the Egyptian government is prepared to accept this loss of water in the long term. The next conflict seems inevitable.

Neighbouring Chad, to the west of Sudan, is also at risk of being drawn into the war. Soldiers from the Chadian army and Chadian civilians are increasingly being killed by shelling from Sudan. In the border town of Tiné – known as Al Tina in Sudanese – which the RSF captured in February 2026, 20 people died in a drone strike by the SAF on the town’s market on 18 March 2026. Prior to this, Chad’s President Mahamat Déby had instructed his army to return fire in the event of similar incidents in future.³⁵ The conflict thus threatens to spread across the entire North-East African region, whilst global public attention continues to wane. According to observations by journalists on the ground, the war in Iran is already hampering aid to Sudan. “Disrupted maritime traffic in the Gulf is driving up energy and food prices. The starving people in Darfur are also feeling the effects of this. Helping them is becoming increasingly difficult,” writes correspondent Arne Perras in the paper SZ.³⁶

Observers and experts also harbour little hope for a swift end to the conflict and the related conflicts in neighbouring countries. German political scientist Hager Ali from the *German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) of the Leibniz Group*, based in Hamburg, sees little hope of a return to peace in the short term. “Unfortunately, the prospects are very poor, particularly in the short term,” she said on the *‘heute-journal’* programme on German public TV. The high level of armament and the multitude of sources of weapons make effective measures such as embargoes considerably more difficult. The conflict could drag on for years to come. “We are actually looking at a

³² Süddeutsche Zeitung online, 7–8 February 2026

³³ Taz – the daily newspaper online, 13 April 2026, accessed 10 May 2026

³⁴ Taz, op. cit.

³⁵ Taz, op. cit.

³⁶ Süddeutsche Zeitung, 22 May 2026

timeframe of five years, ten years, perhaps even 20 years, before peace can truly be achieved. A quick way out of the crisis is therefore not in sight.”³⁷

It is rare for a political scientist or political journalist to establish a clear link between unrestrained arms exports to crisis regions, on the one hand, and the intensity and duration of the wars triggered by them, on the other. But such a link does exist. The war in Sudan teaches us that, too.

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³⁷ *Heute journal*, ZDF online, 15 April 2026, accessed 20 May 2026