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ETHNIC IDEOLOGY OF THE SUDANESE RAPID SUPPORT FORCES (RSF)

ABSTRACT The Sudanese Rapid Support Forces (RSF), derived from the extremist Janjaweed militias, are participating in Sudan's civil war by seeking power and terrorising the population, yet without a clearly and convincingly articulated vision or ideological program. Deciphering or reconstructing the drivers of the RSF's violent approach poses a dual challenge: to researchers, and to the authorities of states and international organizations seeking to end the war. Nevertheless, analyzing the organization's origins, recruitment dynamics, propaganda, and statements by members and commanders, as well as its methodology of crimes including ethnic cleansing with hallmarks of genocide, enables us to reconstruct the beliefs that underpin the organization and its affiliated groups. These beliefs concern ethnic relations in the region and are predominantly informed by a specific conception of Arabness characterized by a sense of superiority and the historical role of nomadic Arab tribes in the Sahel. This ethnically motivated animosity is directed not only towards indigenous African groups, as in the past, but also towards Arab-Nubian communities in central and northern Sudan. The RSF seek to expel and supplant these communities. Overlaid on this was the ambition to embody the marginalized periphery and exact retribution for the center's historical domination.

Keywords: Sudan, RSF, Darfur, war, ethnicity, mobilization, ideology

INTRODUCTION

The criminal activities of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have resulted in the world's largest present-day humanitarian crisis. At its peak in April 2025, some 12.4 million people had been forced to flee their homes¹. It was estimated that 25 million people needed humanitarian assistance. Famine was observed in ten regions of Sudan, with a further seventeen approaching it.² However, despite the catastrophic humanitarian toll, and the importance of adequate analysis for any peace-seeking initiatives, the nature of the Sudanese conflict and its real drivers continued to elude outside observers. The prevailing narrative of this conflict has generally been portrayed as either a 'war of the generals' or a proxy conflict between regional powers. While these factors played a role, they do not provide a comprehensive explanation of the war's dynamics, particularly with regard to the criminal activities of RSF members and associated militias, or their attempts to force a demographic shift. This article therefore seeks to provide a comprehensive definition of the ethnic identity of the group.

This is occasionally characterized by a certain degree of simplification for reasons of necessity. Clearly, some of the cases outlined exhibit characteristics indicative of the group's internal discourse and influence its external perception, while being inextricably intertwined with local dynamics. This is because, like the Janjaweed before them, the RSF functions on the premise of collaborating with local allied militias to acquire the manpower necessary for warfare on a national scale. Without this component, the group's base would be limited to the small Mahariya clan of the Rizeigat tribe, from which the family of the militia leader, Mohamed Hamdan 'Hemeti' Dagalo, originates. These affiliated militias primarily pursue their own micro-goals, such as gaining control of land or resources, or settling a feud with a neighboring community. Utilizing the RSF's authority and resources for these purposes is common, often with the RSF's complicit consent. The 'core' conflict has, in effect, ignited *a hundred wars across the country*.³ This necessitates exercising caution when classifying all actions of RSF fighters as stemming from the organization's agenda. This dependency poses significant challenges to the RSF leadership in terms of exerting control over its forces and establishing credibility for a consistent nationwide program.

In the context of tribal mobilization and the political choices of individual chiefs or leaders, it is important to recognize that alliances formed during war are often *ad hoc*. These decisions are guided by a calculation of benefits for their respective communities, and leaders most often align with whichever side currently appears stronger or provides security (or sometimes survival). Consequently, it is not uncommon for

¹ Throughout the forthcoming year, this figure would subsequently drop by 4 million as people returned to areas freed from the RSF's presence.

² V. Mishra, "Millions Displaced, Health System in Ruins as Sudan War Fuels Famine," *UN News. Global Perspective Human Stories*, 14 April 2025, at <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/04/1162241>, 3 June 2026.

³ J. Craze, "Sudan's World War," *New Left Review*, 17 April 2025, at <https://newleftreview.org/sidecar/posts/sudans-world-war>, 3 June 2026.

communities to change their allegiance at different stages of a conflict. Consequently, the ideological underpinnings of declarations made alongside these decisions must be approached with caution.

Despite the aforementioned caveats and limitations, as well as other dynamics that this article does not have space to describe (e.g. mercenarism or the influence of third states), the article attempts to present the overarching themes of ethnic narratives in the circles of fighters and supporters of the RSF, as well as the basis of this group's ethnic policies.

THE IDENTITY OF THE ARAB NOMADS OF THE BAGGARA BELT

More than three years after the war began in April 2023, Sudan was still divided into zones under the control of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Following their expulsion from parts of central Sudan (the Sennar, Gezira and Khartoum states), the RSF entrenched themselves in most of the Darfur region, with the exception of parts of North Darfur and the three states that make up Kordofan. This area corresponds almost exactly with the Sudanese part of the so-called *Baggara belt*, where traditionally nomadic Arab tribes live.⁴ Historically, these tribes have been herdsmen engaged in cattle grazing, moving with their livestock between present-day Sudan and Nigeria (Baggara) and camel keepers (Abbala). In Sudan, major tribal groups belonging to this cluster who identify as Arab include the Rizeigat, Misseriya, Ta'isha, Beni Halba, Humr and Hawazma, among others. They represent less than 10% of Sudan's population. They speak Chadian Arabic, a dialect situated on the south-western periphery of the Arabic language and influenced by features from the dialects of non-Arabic ethnic groups, most notably the Fulani.⁵ Despite their differences, the nomadic Arab tribes of Western Sudan will constitute the core ethnic base of the RSF. The organization's leadership will therefore reach out to them through their tribal leaders, who will use their authority to provide an essential recruitment resource. However, this *modus operandi* is highly vulnerable to abuse and manipulation by the RSF organization or its commanders and this generally consensual relationship occasionally turns violent. For instance, in September 2025, when RSF pushed for a general mobilization, commander Tegani Shamal besieged areas adjacent to Om Kadadah, Al-Tawisha and Al-Lait, forcing local tribal leaders to pledge allegiance to the RSF at the threat of death or arrest.⁶

Despite the absence of a formal political community, the nomadic Arabs of Western Sudan, Chad and further into the Sahel may find in the RSF a means of consolidating

⁴ Compare maps in: S. Manfredi, C. Roset, "Towards a Dialect History of the Baggara Belt," *Languages*, vol. 6, no. 3 (2021), p. 4; and J. Craze, R. Makawi, "The Republic of Kadamol: A Portrait of the Rapid Support Forces at War," *Small Arms Survey. HSBA Briefing Paper*, January 2025, p. 4.

⁵ S. Manfredi, C. Roset, "Towards a Dialect History...", p. 1.

⁶ Amgad Fareid Eltayeb (@Amgad_Fareid), X, 25 September 2025, https://x.com/Amgad_Fareid/status/1971166233924919369.

a broader identity that encompasses both their historical roots and their contemporary aspirations. Thus, it can be argued that, for those Arab tribes, the RSF has become a proto-state organization, within which they would recognize their own representation and the continuation of ancestral traditions, as referenced in their collective mythology.

However, it should be noted that not all Western Sudan's Arab groups have adopted this attitude. For example, the Humr tribe of Kordofan did not generally follow their brethren, instead siding with the army in its efforts to reclaim the region for the Sudanese state. Local Humr tribesmen supported the citizens of besieged army-held cities in the Kordofan, and their paramount chief, Abdelqadir Monem Mansour, remained critical of the RSF even after they took over Nuhud, where Mansour stayed until his death in October 2025.⁷ Furthermore, tensions between the Misseriya and the Rizeigat have led to numerous internal conflicts within the RSF.⁸ Sometimes these conflicts turned deadly; for example, in June 2025, Harika Ismail, leader of the RSF-aligned Kordofan Braves militia, was killed after publicly criticizing the discrimination of the Misseriya by Dagalo's Mahariya tribesmen. This led to major clashes in Nyala.⁹ Similar confrontations have also been recorded within the RSF camp involving the Salamat, Falata, Tulus, Beni Halba and Mahamid tribes and clans. RSF's punitive raid on Mahamid (a sub-group of Rizeigat) heartland in February 2026 led to defections of some high-level commanders hailing from this community.

Among the references to historic nomad-led entities were depictions of 'Hemeti' as a new incarnation of Rabih Fadlallah: the 19th-century warlord and slave trader who established his own empire around Lake Chad.¹⁰ However, the historical analogy that had the greatest influence on the collective imagination of the RSF recruits was that of the Mahdi's anti-colonial revolution and the state he established (1881–1899). In a telephone interview with Al-Jazeera, Abdulrahman al-Kahir Al-Fahim, an RSF advisor from the Misseriya tribe, stated: *The RSF was established 130 years ago!*¹¹ Contrary to the facts, the RSF ideologues presented the Rizeigat Arabs as if they had played a leading role in forming the Mahdi state when recounting the history of the Mahdists. They invoked the indigenous warriors as the ones who overthrew the colonial regime.¹² In

⁷ "Sudan Blames RSF for Death of Tribal Leader in Kordofan," *Sudan Tribune*, 25 October 2025, at <https://sudantribune.com/article/306403>, 3 June 2026.

⁸ "Will the RSF Fragment? A Comprehensive Report on RSF Infighting," *Sudan In The News*, 8 March 2025, at <https://www.sudaninthenews.com/janjabeef>, 3 June 2026.

⁹ أخبار شرق كردفان (@EastKordofan), X, 25 June 2025, <https://x.com/EastKordofan/status/1937993471630942268>.

¹⁰ Yousra Elbagir (@yousraelbagir), X, 29 June 2023, <https://x.com/yousraelbagir/status/1674336158967291906>.

¹¹ "Janjakezan: A Profile of Islamists in the Rapid Support Forces (RSF)," *Sudan in The News*, 2. August 2024, at <https://www.sudaninthenews.com/janjakezan/rsf-islamists>, 3 June 2026.

¹² van Oudenaren D., "The RSF's Distortions of Mahdist History: Examining the Role of the Rizeigat Tribe in the 1880s Uprising," *Sudan War Monitor*, 3 November 2024, at <https://sudanwarmonitor.com/p/the-rsfs-distortions-of-mahdist-history>, 3 June 2026.

reality, the Arab tribes of Western Sudan were mostly absent from the scene in the early Mahdist period. However, they subsequently formed the core of the armed forces of the Mahdi's successor, Caliph Abdullahi (who was also from Darfur), and, akin to the RSF in contemporary times, they distinguished themselves during this period by their animosity towards the population of northern Sudan. This is exemplified by the massacre of 6,000 Ja'alin in Metemmah in 1891, where Darfurian Arab forces spared neither women nor children, with the former jumping into the Nile to avoid rape.¹³ Both RSF propagandists (like Alrabea Abdelmonem) and the Sudanese public have referenced this comparison, with the latter being horrified when similar cases of suicide to avoid rape have been reported from Gezira province.

Against the backdrop of the ongoing war in Sudan, the politicization of the Arab nomad community has given rise to slogans calling for the establishment of the state of 'Attawa' (or 'Atiya'), which refers to a common (even if sometimes fictitious) Arab genealogies covering Misseriya, Rizeigat and Ereigat tribes.¹⁴ In a recording from September 2023, Commander Makan al-Sadig declared at a Misseriya tribe rally in West Kordofan: *This is Attawa's war. We must create an Attawa state. Everyone from Attawa is ours. It doesn't matter if you are a member of the National Congress Party [NCP — Omar al-Bashir's party], a federalist or a communist. What matters is that you belong to Attawa and swear allegiance to the RSF.*¹⁵

According to Dr Muhammad Jalal Hashim the concept of 'Attawa' represents an *imagined community of tribes who self-identify as descendants of Jineid bin Abdallah al-Juheyri*.¹⁶ This may be confusing, because those who self-identify as the Attawa trace their origin similarly to those who see themselves as part of 'Junaid' (Jineid). The latter represents a broader, transnational Juheyrist tribal entity, also including Salamat and Awlad Rashid (tribes mostly found inside Chad), and sometimes even seen as stretching from southern Egypt to the Central African Republic (CAR) in the south and Mali in the west. Within this entity, Hemeti may have hoped to establish a polity under his leadership.¹⁷ It was no coincidence that he chose the name Junaid for his business empire. This includes the Al Junaid Industrial Group, a major industrial conglomerate based in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and a Sudanese company involved in mining and gold export that operates in areas controlled by the RSF. While consolidating 'Junaid' may have been his ultimate, maximalist goal, the 'Attawa' project would have fit within it either as a component or, more likely, as a condensed, more achievable version.

¹³ A.A. Ibrahim, "الحرب واجترار التاريخ... هجرة أم منفي؟", *Independent Arabia*, 1 October 2023, at <https://www.independentarabia.com/node/501816/%D8%A2%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A1/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%A8-%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AE-%D9%87%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D9%85-%D9%85%D9%86%D9%81%D9>.

¹⁴ Jérôme Tubiana, author's interview, 2026.

¹⁵ M.M. Jama, "خطر وجودي يهدد المقاومة الشعبية هي الحل؟", *Noon Post*, 30 December 2023, at <https://www.noonpost.com/188885/>, 3 June 2026.

¹⁶ Ibidem.

¹⁷ F. Hikmat (Advisor to EU Delegation to Sudan), author's interview, Khartoum 2019.

Historically the term ‘Attawa’ has also been used to describe a situation in which various nomadic tribes and sections formed a wider war alliance against an outside enemy. In a war situation, therefore, genealogy served to define certain wars as ethnic.¹⁸ In contemporary discourse, the concept synthesizes elements of these two meanings. Evidence for this assertion can be found in the statement made by the Nazir General (the state-appointed chief in the so-called *Native Administration*, a colonial institution that still operates in parts of Sudan) of the Misseriya tribe in October 2024. In this statement, he emphasized: *We are grateful to Hemeti for reviving the term Attawa in Sudan.*¹⁹

The concept of ‘Attawa’ has become a significant motivating factor for many combatants from the nomad Arabs communities within the RSF. To a certain degree, it was elevated to quasi-official status in October 2024 when government forces expelled the RSF from their strategic bases in the Jebel Moya hills in the Sennar province of central Sudan. Following this defeat, Hemeti interpreted it as the end of his hopes of controlling all of Sudan. Consequently, he declared the implementation of a ‘Plan B’.²⁰ Most likely his ‘Plan B’ was to consolidate a distinct centre of power and establish a *de facto* quasi-state in western Sudan that would have been analogous to ‘Attawa’ in terms of geographical reach. Subsequent preparations included expanding the RSF’s political base (e.g. through an alliance with Abdulaziz al-Hilu, a rebel leader from the Nuba Mountains), establishing its own government (declaratively meant for the whole of Sudan) and additional layers of alternative administration, announcing plans to print passports and currency, while seeking international recognition. However, fueling the narrative of a national project did little to alter the fundamental nature of ‘Plan B’, which essentially involved establishing a nomadic Arab-led ethno-state.

GENESIS: THE ISLAMIC LEGION, THE ARAB GATHERING AND THE QOREISH

While the identity of the nomadic tribes consolidated the core of the RSF ‘army’, the modern genesis of the ideology that the militia has become a vehicle for can be traced back to the Islamic Legion, founded by Muammar Gaddafi in the 1970s. The intention behind its formation was to establish a new ‘Arab’ state encompassing the Sahel region, where ‘Arabness’ was conceived in a broad sense to include the Tuaregs and the Zaghawa. The organization’s formation and activity on the Sudan-Chad border has been linked to Gaddafi’s support for the Sudanese military ruler Jafaar Nimeiri, whom the Libyan revolutionary saw as a potential pan-Arab leader. In the early days of the

¹⁸ Mohanad (@mohanadElbalal), X, 9 September 2023, <https://x.com/mohanadelbalal/status/1700497915519672732>.

¹⁹ Salma | سلمى (@salma1siddig), X, 30 October 2024, <https://x.com/salma1siddig/status/1851718819229888962>.

²⁰ صحيفة التغيير, “Hemeti Accuses Egypt of Air Bombing His Forces, Announces Mobilization of Million Fighters,” *Al Taghyeer*, 10 October 2024, at <https://www.altaghyeer.info/en/2024/10/10/hemeti-ac-cuses-egypt-of-air-bombing-his-forces-announces-mobilization-of-million-fighters/>, 3 June 2026.

current war in Sudan, references to Gaddafi and the Islamic Legion were commonplace in graphics posted by RSF supporters on social media, especially TikTok, and on instant messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram.²¹

Building on the Islamic Legion's presence in Sudan's Darfur region during the 1980s, Gaddafi supported the formation of the Arab Gathering (Tajammu al-Arabi), a coalition of Darfurian Arab intellectuals and politicians who sought to impose their dominance in the province at the expense of indigenous African ethnic groups. The Arab Gathering developed an extremist, chauvinistic ideology of racial superiority and fixed identities which threatened to tear the region's social fabric apart. A series of strategic documents outlining a proposed course of action to achieve the Arab Gathering's stated goals were published by authors from within the organization. In the current context, their 1987 'Qoreish 2'²² manifesto is particularly salient. According to its provisions, the local African tribes were identified as *ad hoc* adversaries, whereas the Arab-Nubian tribes of central and northern Sudan (Ja'alin, Dangala and Shaygiya) were considered the true strategic enemy. Defeating them would grant the Darfur Arabs power over the entire country. As de Waal observed, these ideas resonated with the *strange and desperate worldviews* of the young men who would soon flock to Darfur's Arab militias.²³

Alrabei Abdolmoniem, a leading figure within the RSF and a propagandist, has clearly built on this extremist agenda. A video commentator who resides in the UK and publishes content on social media, he stirs up hatred against the people of Northern Sudan with calls for ethnic violence. For example, he states that *war must escalate in Northern Sudan*, and that *this is not an ordinary war, but a profoundly destructive war*, and *if Hemeti dies, the Janjaweed will slaughter everyone in the North! This is a race war!*²⁴ A prominent female RSF officer and propagandist, Shiraz Khalid, has also expressed similar views. She was recorded encouraging militiamen to travel to Northern Sudan and rape women in order to 'cleanse their lineage'. In a speech made to fighters who took over El Fasher in October 2025, she clearly differentiated between goals in Darfur and the north. *The Northern State! It's different. You will only go there for the women!*²⁵

Abdolmonem garnered a significant following among the rank and file of the RSF and its leadership. Consequently, he was invited to West Darfur, where he delivered a speech attended by the RSF military commander, Abderrahman Dagalo, and

²¹ Daniel VO (@daniel_van0), X, 20 July 2023, https://x.com/daniel_van0/status/1682128579868479489.

²² A.O. El-Tom, "The Arab Congregation and the Ideology of Genocide in Darfur, Sudan," *Journal of African National Affairs*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2009), pp. 27-3.

²³ J. Flint, A. de Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*, London–New York 2008, p. 52.

²⁴ Sudan In The News (@SudanInTheNews), *Alrabea Abdelmonem: the UK-Based Taxi Driver Inciting War Crimes in Sudan*, X, 23 February 2024, <https://x.com/SudanInTheNews/status/1761103295068754094>.

²⁵ R. Uddin, "Host for UAE's Sky News Arabia Hugs RSF Officer Accused of Inciting Rape in el-Fasher," *Middle East Eye*, 10 November 2025, at <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/host-uae-sky-news-arabia-el-fasher-hugs-rsf-officer>, 3 June 2026.

Abdelrahman Juma'a, the individual who instigated the murder of the governor of that province and the genocide of the Masalites in al-Geneina in June 2023.²⁶ Similarly, RSF advisor Mustafa Mohamed Ibrahim explained the reasoning behind the execution of around 30 unarmed Saliha residents in April 2025. This incident was condemned by the UN and others. He claimed that his forces were entitled to launch pre-emptive attacks on entire communities believed to be linked to the central government. He cited the proverb, *Have dinner with them before they have supper with you*²⁷, which was intended to emphasize that the other side allegedly had similar intentions towards communities supporting the RSF.

In other cases, the mobilization of tribal forces for the RSF indicated that the groundwork for the war, including ideological preparation, had been laid well before the current conflict began. This could be linked to the politics of 'Hemeti' from the time he was in state office as vice-president of the Sovereign Council and in charge of the transitional government's economic and peace portfolios (2019-2021). During this pre-war period, he played a key role in brokering local agreements between the Arab tribal communities of Darfur, while simultaneously winning (or buying) their support for his own plans. For instance, in January 2024, the leader of the Turjum tribe made a presumably relevant statement at a rally: *We have been preparing for this war for the last three years!*²⁸ This echoed earlier statements by prominent tribal leaders such as Rizigat paramount chief Mahmoud Moussa Madibo, often considered the 'spiritual father of the RSF', who had been recorded speaking about war at RSF rallies since September 2022,²⁹ and East Darfur governor Muhammad Issa, who warned that residents of Khar-toum would be displaced.³⁰

THE JANJAWEEED AND RACISM

The Janjaweed militias were the immediate precursors of the RSF. Between 2003 and 2006, they led a campaign of pacification in Darfur on behalf of Omar al-Bashir's government, killing around 300,000 civilians. The deliberate destruction of villages inhabited by the Fur, Zaghawa and Masalit peoples was an intentional strategy intended to alter the ethnic composition of Darfur and eliminate the 'African' population from the region.

²⁶ "Janjakezan: A Profile..."

²⁷ "Rapid Support Forces Execute Civilians in Omdurman: Field Commander Admits Responsibility as RSF Leadership Scrambles to Deny Involvement," *Sudan War Monitor*, 29 April 2025, at <https://sudanwarmonitor.com/p/rapid-support-forces-execute-civilians-in-salha>, 3 June 2026.

²⁸ Mohanad Hashim (@moehash1), X, 12 January 2024, <https://x.com/moehash1/status/1745815737074159734>.

²⁹ Sudan Plus سولان بلس (@SudanPlusNews), X, 5 June 2025, <https://x.com/SudanPlusNews/status/1930396170997702664>.

³⁰ Mohanad Hashim (@moehash1), X, 5 June 2025, <https://x.com/moehash1/status/1930602494905741727>.

Since 2017, when the RSF was officially recognized by the state as an armed force and formally integrated into its military structure, this aspect of its genesis has not been divulged; the RSF has preferred to be seen as a national military entity. The group has adopted a military aesthetic characterized by field uniforms, berets, and insignia. This adoption of a military aesthetic was accompanied by a pronounced emphasis on black fighters within the group. However, following the onset of the war in April 2023, this image and its connotations were abandoned, and the fighters began to emulate their predecessors, the Janjaweed. The marker of dress – and group identity – became a headscarf covering the head and part of the face. This headscarf is known as the ‘kadamol’ (hence the term ‘*kadamol* war’³¹).³²

Alongside the abandonment of the façade of state-building power, the veil covering the tribal nature of the organization and its deep-rooted racism was also removed.

For instance, at the May 2023 recruitment rallies, statements such as: *The RSF is exclusively for Arabs. We don’t want any ‘ratani’* (a derogatory term for speakers of African languages), or extremely racist lines attacking the Sudanese army’s then deputy chief, Shams al-Din Kabbashi (who is from the Nuba Mountains, a region historically associated with Arab slave expeditions).³³ Jérôme Tubiana, a scholar of the Chadian-Sudanese borderland, also highlighted the deeply racist attitude prevalent in the ranks of the RSF. He cited statements by Chadian tribal leaders who expressed concern about the effects of RSF recruitment: *Our youth, recruited by the RSF for money, return to Chad with a much more racist mentality than is customary for inter-community relations here.*³⁴

Extreme manifestations of racism are spreading amid the confluence of local and national dynamics. Following the assassination of West Darfur Governor Khamis Akbar in June 2023, the black Masalit population in the town of al-Geneina was systematically targeted. According to the United Nations, up to 15,000 people may have been killed.³⁵ The United States government has categorized these actions as genocide. Most of the remaining community, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, sought refuge in neighboring Chad. The militants involved in the killings made statements reflecting their extremist views. These included declarations such as *All the dogs have fled, The Dar Masalit [Masalit homeland] is now for the Arabs*,³⁶ and *The Masalit will never*

³¹ See: J. Craze, R. Makawi, “The Republic of Kadamol...”.

³² Later some anti-RSF groups begun using kadamol as it became associated with war in the desert.

³³ Mohanad (@MohanadElbalal), X, 6 May 2023, <https://x.com/MohanadElbalal/status/1654773110661427200>.

³⁴ “Fearing the Worst in Darfur, Again,” *The Horn*, s. 4, ep. 17 (2023), at <https://shows.acast.com/60afad1bcce600012cebcbf1/64a6cda795c463001188abb2>, 3 June 2026.

³⁵ Security Council, “Final report of the Panel of Experts submitted in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 2676 (2023). S/2024/65,” United Nations, 15 January 2024, at <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2024/65>, p 1.

³⁶ خواجه رافد, “‘All the Dogs Are Gone’; ‘Dar Masalit Is for the Arabs Now’: Videos Shed New Light on Atrocities in El Geneina,” *Sudan War Monitor*, 15 June 2023, at <https://sudanwarmonitor.com/p/all-the-dogs-are-gone-dar-masalit>, 3 June 2026.

return home,³⁷ or referring to them as ‘Nuba’, which, in this context, was synonymous with ‘slave’. Even local Arab children observing the mass exodus of the Masalit have been recorded comparing their fleeing peers to cattle.³⁸ While the violence itself was made possible by reliance on RSF resources, the tragic events were fueled by the deeply rooted local racism of the Arab inhabitants of West Darfur. Tensions and attacks against the Masalit had been building in al-Geneina in the years and months leading up to the war’s outbreak. Subsequently, the eruption of violence gave rise to a plethora of statements and declarations by leaders of local groups affiliated with the RSF who espoused hateful rhetoric. In July 2023, the emirs of the Ta’isha tribe and the Mahamid clan of the Rizeigat tribe appealed to their respective communities to enlist in the RSF, declaring a tribal war against the Masalit.³⁹

Even more extreme violence and open glorification of racist ideology emerged in El Fasher, a multi-ethnic city in North Darfur that was besieged for over 500 days by the RSF, who were seeking to take control of the city and defeat the army’s 6th Infantry Division, which was stationed there. For many militia foot soldiers, political or military-strategic considerations were secondary to the deeply racist motivations that drove them: the desire to kill non-Arabs who resisted the agenda of Arab domination. This was symbolized by videos of the sadistic Brigadier-General Al-Fatih Abdallah Idris (also known as ‘Abu Lulu’, of the Awlad Rashid subsection of the Rizeigat). He video-recorded himself executing civilians fleeing El Fasher after interrogating them about their ethnicity, boasting that he had never spared anyone and that his intention was to kill 2,000 people personally.⁴⁰ Although the RSF’s political leadership officially distanced themselves from Abu Lulu’s excesses, many considered him a hero of the genocidal campaign. One of the pro-RSF social media accounts displayed an AI-generated golden statue of Abu Lulu in El Fasher, which has just fallen to the RSF, who have massacred thousands of its inhabitants in one of the biggest mass killings of the 21st century. The author of the post wrote a lengthy tribute to Abu Lulu, calling him *the ambassador of humanity* (sic!), an *example of a dedicated Janjaweed* and a *role model for future generations*.⁴¹ The statue made a victory sign. Considering Abu Lulu’s gruesome record, ‘victory’ in this case can only be interpreted as the successful implementation of a racist, genocidal agenda. In other videos, RSF militiamen were seen chasing and killing

³⁷ “The Massalit Will Not Come Home: Ethnic Cleansing and Crimes Against Humanity in El Geneina, West Darfur, Sudan,” *Human Right Watch*, 1 May 2024, at <https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/05/09/massalit-will-not-come-home/ethnic-cleansing-and-crimes-against-humanity-el>, 3 June 2026.

³⁸ Mohanad (@MohanadElbalal), X, 17 June 2023, <https://x.com/MohanadElbalal/status/1670076425569726466>.

³⁹ Daniel VO (@daniel_van0), X, 9 July 2023, https://x.com/daniel_van0/status/1678057647562432513.

⁴⁰ “Investigation: Unmasking RSF Brigadier ‘Abu Lulu’: The Man Behind Gruesome Execution of Unarmed Civilian in El Fasher,” *Sudans Post*, 24 August 2025, at <https://www.sudanspost.com/unmasking-rsf-brigadier-abu-lulu/>, 3 June 2026.

⁴¹ KadmooolX (@KadmooolX), X, 27 October 2025, <https://x.com/KadmooolX/status/1982801004627136902>.

civilians while routinely using racist slurs against black tribes, calling them 'slaves', for example.⁴² In another shocking case, an RSF fighter named Abdullah al-Sakka hanged Qisma Ali Omar, a young black woman from Zalingeli, from a tree by her tied hands. She eventually died from torture. The perpetrator recorded the gruesome scene and did not shy away from showing his face. Following a public outcry, he recorded another video in which he boasted about what he had done, making a victory sign and playing a recording of a popular racist song whose lyrics went, *We will drag these Nuba to the ground again... We don't accept these slaves*.⁴³ This celebration of extreme racial violence exposed the deeply rooted cultural reality in which racism is the backbone of the Arab RSF fighters' understanding of ethnic relations in Western Sudan, as well as being one of the main motivators for their involvement in the fighting.

The practice of incorporating members of conquered local African communities into the RSF with the intention of exploiting them as 'cannon fodder' was also racially motivated. A notable example of this was the public declaration of accession to the RSF by the leaders of the Gimir ethnic group from Darfur in May 2024.⁴⁴ This group had previously been subject to ethnic cleansing, along with the Masalit.

Racism also manifested itself in tensions within the RSF. Mercenaries from countries such as South Sudan and Ethiopia, who joined its ranks in significant numbers, encountered resentment and, at times, aggression from its fighters during their day-to-day interactions. A pertinent example of these conflicts can be seen in a video of a South Sudanese mercenary being brutally assaulted by an RSF 'colleague'.⁴⁵ Racism and mistreatment also became the norm in relation to militiamen from non-Arab groups who had opportunistically aligned themselves with the RSF or had been influenced by its narrative of solidarity of the marginalized groups (Darfuri ex-rebels led by El Hadi Idriss and Tahar Hajar; factions led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu in the Nuba Mountains and Joseph Tuka in Southern Blue Nile).

Despite the RSF's continued rhetoric of inclusivity, their *modus operandi* in areas under their control was analogous to that of the historical Janjaweed, characterized notably by the systematic burning of villages as a means of ethnic cleansing. By early 2025, the US government estimated that around 10 per cent of settlements inhabited by non-Arab communities in West Darfur had been destroyed since the war began.⁴⁶ Similarly,

⁴² M. Thomas, M. Murphy, P. Mwai, R. Irvine-Brown, "'Our Job Is Only Killing' – How Sudan's Brutal Militia Carried Out a Massacre," *BBC Verity*, 7 November 2025, at <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8dr5e30m5ro>, 3 June 2026.

⁴³ أخبار شرق كردفان (@EastKordofan), X, 11 September 2025, <https://x.com/EastKordofan/status/1966036994712285422>.

⁴⁴ Video posted on official RSF account on X (@RSFSudan), 26.05.2024, currently unavailable due to closure of the account.

⁴⁵ Elbashir Idris (@elbashiridris), X, 31 January 2023, <https://x.com/elbashiridris/status/1752808335798054913>.

⁴⁶ Office of Global Criminal Justice, "Sudan: Destroyed Structures in West Darfur in 2023," *U.S. Department of State*, 16 January 2025, at <https://2021-2025.state.gov/office-of-global-criminal-justice/releases/2025/01/sudan-destroyed-structures-in-west-darfur-in-2023/>, 3 June 2026.

Sudanese journalist Malik Makkawi has highlighted the complete absence of individuals from indigenous black communities among the personnel of the RSF's South Darfur security committee in their official videos.⁴⁷ The arrival of Anwar Ali Kushayb,⁴⁸ son of Ali Kushayb – the only original Janjaweed leader to be tried by the International Criminal Court in The Hague – at the Kordofan fronts provided a clear sense of continuity between the driving forces behind the horrors of the 2000s and those of today.

DEATH TO THE 1956 REPUBLIC!

One of the most distinctive 'ideological' elements present throughout the ranks of the RSF during this period was the slogan 'Death to the 1956 Republic'. Militants would typically paste the symbol 'X56' on their cars and combat vehicles. Interpreting this symbolism is tricky. The 'Republic of 1956' refers to the Sudanese state that gained independence in 1956. From the outset, the system has been characterized by an imbalance of power and a disproportionate distribution of resources. Political and economic power has been concentrated in the central region of the country, resulting in the marginalization of the peripheries.⁴⁹ This structural tension, which was never resolved, caused the North-South wars and the secession of South Sudan in 2011, as well as the outbreak of conflicts in Darfur and eastern Sudan. It was also the reason for the general lack of interest among the inhabitants of Khartoum in the pacification of Darfur during the 2000s. However, the 2019 revolution, which resulted in the overthrow of Omar al-Bashir, brought about progress on this issue. For example, slogans of cross-regional solidarity emerged, such as 'We are all Darfurians',⁵⁰ and the first transitional government was the most representative in Sudanese history. However, some Khartoum elites continued to display a patronizing attitude towards the rest of the country, for example in the consultation process of newly formed civil society groups, where those from the capital habitually considered themselves representative of the whole country.⁵¹ Consequently, if the phrase 'death to the 1956 Republic' signified a rejection of entrenched structural and cultural inequalities and demanded more equitable relations in Sudan, it would be substantially justified. Furthermore, this agenda has previously been adopted

⁴⁷ Makkawi Elmalik | غاوي الملك (@Mo_elmalik), X, 15 January 2025, https://x.com/Mo_elmalik/status/1912132391134539969.

⁴⁸ أخبار شرق كردفان (@EastKordofan), X, 19 July 2025, <https://x.com/EastKordofan/status/1946605797804314840>.

⁴⁹ See: W. Berridge, "Western Sudanese Marginalization, Coups in Khartoum and the Structural Legacies of Colonial Military Divide and Rule, 1924-Present," *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, vol. 17, no. 4 (2023), pp. 535-556.

⁵⁰ T. Elmahadi, "'We Are All Darfur' in Khartoum: A Conversation on the Sudan Uprising with Sara Elhassan," *National Review of Black Politics*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2020), pp. 154-161.

⁵¹ "Sudan's Main Protest Groups Lay Out Political Vision," *Reuters*, 28 February 2022, at <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/sudans-main-protest-groups-lay-out-political-vision-2022-02-27/>, 3 June 2026.

by the most intrepid reformers, including John Garang, who developed the concept of a 'New Sudan' – a democratic, secular and inclusive state. Despite his own history of quelling rebellions on the outskirts on behalf of the peripheries, the RSF leader has attempted to present himself as someone who seeks justice and recognition for marginalized communities since 2019.⁵²

However, in the current context, this programme must be seen as nothing more than a facade, a 'smokescreen' through which the RSF has sought to establish its credibility, primarily for external consumption. The slogan 'Death to the 1956 Republic' indicates a desire to destroy Sudanese statehood and replace it with a loose tribally driven structure. It is this, rather than an illusory reforming spirit, that provided the rationale for Commander Omer Al Sayid Mohamed Ahmed's demonstrative burning of the Sudanese passport. By doing so, Ahmed declared that the passport was *no longer valid because the RSF is now the state*.⁵³ This is further evidenced by the extreme viciousness with which symbols of the state and urban life have been destroyed. Examples include the burning of Khartoum's iconic buildings (militants were keen to be photographed against the backdrop of the burning structures) and the obliteration of its cultural heritage. Similar incidents were noted in smaller urban centers. In Nuhud (West Kordofan), where pressure from the SAF offensive began to be felt in early 2026, RSF fighters filmed themselves destroying a petrol station and chanting, *We don't want any state; we will destroy everything!*⁵⁴

In the context of the apparent absence of discernible endeavors by the RSF to institute enhanced governance within the domains under its authority, and in the face of a program of ethnic cleansing, including that directed against the populations of central and northern Sudan, the slogan 'Death to the 1956 Republic' functions as a catalyst for destruction. In this context, the shocking words of commanders Omar Jibril and Hamad Al-Fatih, nicknamed Gog and Magog, recorded in Khartoum in November 2023, come as no surprise: *I see people complaining that we kill, rape and pillage. This is our right, brothers. If you have a problem with that, we are waiting for you on the battlefield.*⁵⁵

In order to justify their destructive and genocidal practices, militants refer to those they are fighting as 'remnants' of the former regime, or *keizan*. The latter term is a Sudanese colloquialism for the Islamist cadres who formed the backbone of Omar al-Bashir's regime. However, the RSF's opposition to these structures lacks credibility given that most of the militia's leaders held important positions within al-Bashir's power structures and Islamist organizations.

⁵² A. de Waal, "The Revolution No One Wanted," *London Review of Books*, vol. 45, no. 10 (2023), at <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v45/n10/alex-de-waal/the-revolution-no-one-wanted>; 3 June 2026.

⁵³ Asadoya (@Queen_Asadoya), X, 21 February 2025, https://x.com/Queen_Asadoya/status/1892975369650589743.

⁵⁴ Sudan War Updates (@sudan_war), X, 4 February 2026, https://x.com/sudan_war/status/2019025279520272516.

⁵⁵ 5Pillars (@5Pillarsuk), X, 2 November 2025, <https://x.com/5Pillarsuk/status/1985017148431831067>.

For example, Commander Obeid Suliman Abu Shotal led the NCP in Blue Nile State; Brigadier General Abshir Jibril Balayel managed its Laqawa branch in South Kordofan; and RSF spokesman Alfatih Gorashi headed its youth wing at West Kordofan University. Influential RSF advisers, including Hassabo Abdelrahman, Mohamed Ibrahim Izzat, Osman Al-Sayyid Omar Abbas and Musa Khadaam, also served as NCP officials. Several of the leading RSF cadres also occupied prominent roles within the administration during the al-Bashir era. For example, Abdallah Masar was governor of River Nile State and the government commissioners in Central Darfur State and the Al-Daein capital area in East Darfur were Abdallah Masar (who signed the first Qoreish document) and Ali Al-Tahir Shaarif. The latter was responsible for inter-clan mediation on behalf of the RSF. A significant proportion of the leadership also originated from paramilitary and Islamist factions affiliated with the NCP.⁵⁶ Also, a coalition of pro-RSF 'civic' movements, United Civilian Forces (UCF), announced in mid-2024 on a conference in Addis Abeba and redyeing to build future administration of the RSF government, was largely based on Islamist cadres.⁵⁷

The term *keizan*, as used in RSF propaganda, cannot be taken literally as a reference to Islamist cadres. Notably, it is often used in relation to the displacement of communities regarded as antagonistic. Consequently, the *keizan* category collectively encompasses individuals residing in central or northern Sudan. The families of RSF members who were celebrating in a house in Khartoum that they had forcibly occupied and from which they had expelled the residents chanted, *You put on an abaya and you fled, you put on flip-flops and you fled, you keizans, you fled, you fled!*⁵⁸ In this instance, however, the fugitives were not Islamist cadres, but ordinary residents. Therefore, referring to them as *keizan* could, at best, serve to assuage the consciences of those who had forced them to flee. Similarly, after the militia withdrew from the Saliha suburb of Omdurman, an RSF fighter in a TikTok video complained that its citizens, whom he called the biggest 'NCP remnants', were responsible for this defeat.⁵⁹ He recommended arresting residents wherever the RSF was present, assuming they were all working for the army. According to this logic, citizens of areas not belonging to the RSF ethnic heartland were collectively seen as *keizan* and thus legitimate targets.

In this narrative, the inhabitants of the geographical center of the country were considered synonymous with the 'old regime', so the annihilation of the 'Republic of 1956' was nothing more than the pursuit of their removal and the seizure of their place and property. This notion was further accentuated in a statement made by Al Goni Dagalo, Hemeti's younger brother who is responsible for the RSF's military procurement and

⁵⁶ "Janjakezan: a profile..."

⁵⁷ "United Civilian Forces (UCF): The RSF's New Political Partner," *Sudan In The News*, 15 September 2024, at <https://www.sudaninthenews.com/politics/united-civilian-forces-ucf-the-rsfs-new-political-partner>, 3 June 2026.

⁵⁸ Mohanad (@MohanadElbalal), X, 18 April 2024, <https://x.com/MohanadElbalal/status/1780727541805850848>.

⁵⁹ Sudan War Updates (@sudan_war), X, 21 May 2025, https://x.com/sudan_war/status/1925177930319089769.

communications. During a backstage address at the group's Nairobi conference in February 2025, he attempted to present it as committed to justice and inclusivity. However, in a triumphant moment, Al Goni addressed the camera with an ethnically driven narrative, proclaiming: *Remember our faces! We are the children of the scattered Arabs, and if God permits, we will drive you out of Sudan!*⁶⁰ Similarly, Abdurrahman, his older brother and Commander of the RSF's military structures, who was overseeing numerous crimes (he was soon to lead the attack on the Zamzam refugee camp in April 2025) and was the main protagonist at the conference, was greeted with chants of *You who displaced the keizan, you who starved the keizan*. The terms 'displace' and 'starve' are unambiguous.

Further manifestations of animosity towards the 'Republic of 1956' took the form of symbolic acts of disdain directed towards its representatives, such as when two juvenile combatants (aged approximately 16) filmed themselves interrogating a captured Sudanese army officer. When asked how long he had served, the officer replied 34 years, prompting the young militants to erupt in laughter. This scene was indicative of several factors. Firstly, it demonstrated the RSF fighters' sense of racial superiority towards the officer from the center of the country. Secondly, it revealed the militants' youthful self-confidence, as they perceived themselves as representing the future. Most importantly, however, it conveyed a profound sense of disdain for the state institutions embodied by the interrogated soldier's career.⁶¹

VOLUNTEERS FROM THE SAHEL

In most countries south of the Sahara, with the exception of Sudan and Mauritania, Arab groups constitute small minorities that exist on the margins of society. For example, Salamat Province in Chad, home to the Salamat tribe associated with the *Baggara belt*, was recognized by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative in 2015 as the poorest region in the world, with 98% of the population living below the poverty line.⁶² This situation, coupled with the escalating climate crisis, has led to mass migration to Sudan since the 1970s. The Bashir government subsequently expedited this migration, perceiving it as a means of Arabizing Darfur.

Psychologically, members of these minority groups often experience a simultaneous sense of superiority and inferiority. Their conviction of their own uniqueness and historical mission is accompanied by experiences of poverty and marginalization. This was often compensated for by a concomitant contempt for neighboring communities.

⁶⁰ Mohanad (@MohanadElbalal), X, 19 February 2025, <https://x.com/MohanadElbalal/status/1892271453346619871>.

⁶¹ Daniel VO (@daniel_van0), X, 16 March 2024, https://x.com/daniel_van0/status/1768879125702328755.

⁶² "The World's Poorest Regions 'in Countries You Wouldn't Expect', *University of Oxford*, 7 January 2015, at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2015-01-07-world%E2%80%99s-poorest-regions-countries-you-wouldn%E2%80%99t-expect>, 3 June 2026.

The RSF, like the Janjaweed before them, offered the prospect of resolving the prevailing circumstances. People enlisted in the military organization expecting recompense, namely the prospect of resettlement in Sudan. Recruiters with significant local influence and transnational ties, such as ex-Seleka and CAR army officer Saleh al Zabadi (who later died in battles near Khovey in May 2025)⁶³ encouraged this. Despite occasional setbacks, the process continued, as demonstrated by a video from December 2025 in which an RSF fighter welcomes groups of around 2,000 Baggara Arab kinsmen from the CAR, whom he refers to as 'African Sudanese', and invites others from Chad and Cameroon to immigrate and settle in Darfur.⁶⁴ This resettlement was envisaged as the establishment of a state (or para-state) ruled by and for nomads. As the RSF's power increased, substantial segments of Arab nomads from Sahelian states such as Chad and Niger, as well as the CAR and others, recognized the militant group as an entity that would provide them with spoils, material wealth and a new homeland – eventually 'their own'. This, of course, required the displacement and subjugation of the region's existing inhabitants.

As a consequence of such policies, the leader of the RSF came to be regarded as a folk hero from the early days of the war, with songs being composed about him and circulated on internet messengers from Chad to Niger. A significant proportion of these volunteers were subsequently killed in battles with government or auxiliary forces. Others expressed their discontent as the tides of war shifted. For example, in June 2024, during a live stream on the 'Zaghawa House' TikTok channel, Chadian volunteers, who had suffered heavy losses fighting in North Darfur, expressed their aspirations: *We dreamed of taking over the Sudanese state and bringing all the Baggara Arabs, even those from Niger, to settle in Sudan.*⁶⁵ While these fighters expressed disappointment concerning their plans about Northern Darfur (where anti-RSF Zaghawa fighters continued to confront them), others in different locations were more successful. This was the case with a group called Awlad Baraka and Mubarak (a branch of the Rizeigat-affiliated Salamat) from the Central African Republic (CAR). In October 2024, they celebrated the establishment of their own 'emirate' in Central Darfur (on Fur land), having been invited by the RSF. Speakers at the event's inauguration included the RSF Commander of the Second Division in Zalingei. Local Fur leaders decried the move not only because it represented a clear pattern of forced population change, but also because the RSF-appointed emir of the Arab tribes, Mahmoud Sosal, was given more power than the Fur leaders (*sharti*).⁶⁶

⁶³ Sudan Plus سودان بلس (@SudanPlusNews), X, 16 May 2025, <https://x.com/SudanPlusNews/status/1923391259621626151>.

⁶⁴ Sudanese Echo (@SudaneseEcho), X, 4 December 2025, <https://x.com/SudaneseEcho/status/1996584275601240165>.

⁶⁵ Mohanad (@MohanadElbalal), X, 15 June 2024, <https://x.com/MohanadElbalal/status/1802055145309540612>.

⁶⁶ "Sudan's Fur tribe rejects new RSF-backed 'Emirate' in Central Darfur," *Sudan Tribune*, 16 October 2024, at <https://sudantribune.com/article/292129>, 3 June 2026.

DISPLACEMENT AND SETTLEMENT IN KHARTOUM

The aforementioned trends and concepts culminated in a settlement action that was meant to permanently alter the demographic composition of Sudan's center. Following the RSF occupation, around 3.5 million people left the greater Khartoum area. In their place came settlers with their families.⁶⁷ Most of these individuals traveled from East and South Darfur, although some came from Chad or other countries. The settlement zones within the Khartoum metropolitan area included the Kafouri district in Khartoum North (where Abderrahman Dagalo also owned a property), the East Nile suburb and Saliha, which is located south of Omdurman. According to the Arabic Post, approximately 80,000 people relocated to the area between October 2023 and February 2024. According to individuals who remained in the capital city of Khartoum, the settlers were confident enough to rename streets according to their preferences.⁶⁸ According to one activist, the family she was in contact with, who were the last to remain in their neighborhood occupied by the settlers, were *treated like sh...* by the newcomers. On leaving, a settler child threw a grenade at them.⁶⁹

The fate of the settlement project changed as the army recaptured areas occupied by the RSF in central Sudan at the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025. Those who had settled in the agricultural province of Gezira moved under pressure from government and auxiliary forces into the Khartoum metropolitan area. The onset of the major offensive, which culminated in the swift recapture of all districts on the east bank of the White Nile (including Khartoum and Khartoum North), prompted the settlers to retreat hastily towards East Darfur.⁷⁰ This resulted in congestion at the last available crossing: the bridge at the Jebel Awliya dam on the White Nile, approximately 30 kilometers south of Khartoum.

CONCLUSION

The RSF is a complex entity where military, business, political and tribal dimensions intersect and sometimes conflicting local agendas and state-wide or regional aspirations amalgamate. From an internal dynamics' perspective, ethnic discourse has played and continues to play a fundamental role. In order to adequately define the RSF, it is necessary to interpret its operational modalities through the lens of the prevailing

⁶⁷ M. Ibrahim, S. Al-Dahni, "استيطان الخرطوم.. بالخرائط وشهادات المواطنين، كيف تُغيّر قوات الدعم السريع العاصمة؟"، *Arabic Post*, 23 February 2024, at <https://arabicpost.net/02/20/4202/تحقيقات/3-استيطان-الخرطوم/>, June 2026.

⁶⁸ Roza (@missinchident), X, 26 March 2025, <https://x.com/missinchident/status/1904866872668922339>.

⁶⁹ Roza (@missinchident), X, 10 January 2025, <https://x.com/missinchident/status/1877746447900086293>.

⁷⁰ "فارون" من الخرطوم يصلون 'الضعين' في رحلات نزوح قاسية *Darfur24*, 4 March 2025, at <https://darfur24.com/2025/03/04/3-فارون-من-الخرطوم-يصلون-الضعين-في-رحلات-نزوح-قاسية/>, June 2026.

perceptions, myths, prejudices and projections of the Arab nomadic communities that make up the broader *Baggara belt*. Together, these elements constitute the RSF's ethnic ideology. The movement under discussion has two salient features. Firstly, there is a strong conviction that the nomadic Arabs are destined to assume a dominant position in the region. Secondly, the imperative to dismantle the institutions of the Sudanese state and defeat the communities that constitute its historical core is strong, as these are believed to impede the group's aspirations. Despite the fluid nature of racial categories in Sudan, RSF membership and socialization has resulted in a significant solidification of the understanding of race and ethnicity as determining factors in attitudes and relations with other communities.

Propagating these ideologies within a militant organization representing a small minority that seeks to impose its will on the majority inevitably results in the utilization and legitimization of extreme violence. This has contributed greatly to the creation of one of the greatest contemporary humanitarian crises. Concurrently, it casts a shadow over the prospects for post-war reconciliation and the possibility of renewing a sense of an all-Sudanese community among its conflicted communities.

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