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Sudan

France arms the war in Sudan

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A sophisticated French weapons system is being used in the conflict in Sudan, exposing the French government's violations of arms sales conventions.

The war in Sudan continues and is causing the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The figures are appalling: between 150,000 and 400,000 deaths; the systematic destruction of hospitals; 15 million displaced people, or nearly one in three Sudanese, not to mention the food crisis that affects half of the population.

Galix system

This deadly confrontation continues between the two generals, Burhan for the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Hemedti for the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), because they are supported financially and militarily by Egypt and Turkey for the SAF, and by the United Arab Emirates for the RSF.

The RSF has been known for large-scale ethnic cleansing during the conquest of the towns of Al-Geneina and El Fasher, which may amount to genocidal acts. Among their armament is the Galix system, produced by two French companies, Lacroix Défense and KNDS France. This system is installed on various vehicles such as self-propelled howitzers, infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) or personnel carriers. As the Lacroix Défense company states: "The Galix system conceals combat vehicles from an imminent threat and protects vehicles, main battle tanks and IFVs", using smoke gas or decoys. Amnesty International has spotted this system on Emirati Nimr Ajban vehicles used by the RSF, particularly in Darfur, a region that has been subject to an arms embargo since 2004.

Contacted by journalists, France's General Secretariat for Defence and National Security, which is responsible for controlling arms exports abroad, said it was not aware of this. Questions were asked by the deputies of La France Insoumise and the Ecologist and Social group, without any answer being given.

This silence reveals the embarrassment of the government and its refusal to apply the Arms Trade Treaty, to which France is a party. Article 11 of this treaty introduces the end-user certificate (CUF), so that weapons sold to one country do not end up in the hands of another power. This protection is reinforced by the European Union's Common Position, which advocates a precautionary principle towards countries that do not comply with the CUF. This is the case of the United Arab Emirates. Indeed, purchased weapons have been transferred to militias in Yemen as well as to Marshal Haftar's Libyan National Army.

Business is business

But the French authorities prefer to turn a blind eye for commercial reasons: France is the second largest supplier of arms to the United Arab Emirates. A contract worth 17 billion euros has been concluded for the sale of 80 Rafale and 12 Caracal helicopters, but also for strategic reasons. French military bases have been set up in Mina Zayed, Al Dhafra and Zayed Military City.

Given the amount of military equipment sold to the UAE and the escalation of the conflict in Sudan, there is a real risk that more French weapons will be in the hands of the RSF. This does not prevent Paris from organising an

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international humanitarian conference for Sudan in 2024 and demanding a halt to interventions by foreign countries, while carefully avoiding mentioning the name of the United Arab Emirates.

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Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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