Sudan Mercenaries Linked to Business Partner of Top UAE Bureaucrat

As the war in Sudan rages on and the Rapid Support Forces' (RSF) killings of civilians in the western city El Fasher continues, reports have emerged of Colombian mercenaries—calling themselves the Desert Wolves—joining the fighting and training child soldiers for the brutal paramilitary group.[1, 2, 3] The Sentry has uncovered corporate records showing that the Emirati businessman supplying these mercenaries to the RSF is a business partner of a high-level government official in the United Arab Emirates.[4, 5, 6]

This connection to a senior Emirati government official—who holds a position equivalent to the White House chief of staff—is further evidence of the high-level linkages between the UAE and the RSF, which has been accused of committing genocide in Sudan.[7, 8, 9, 10, 11] To interrupt the flow of mercenaries to the RSF, authorities should investigate and, if appropriate, sanction the Colombian, Panamanian, and Emirati firms apparently involved in their supply.

Global Security Services Group*

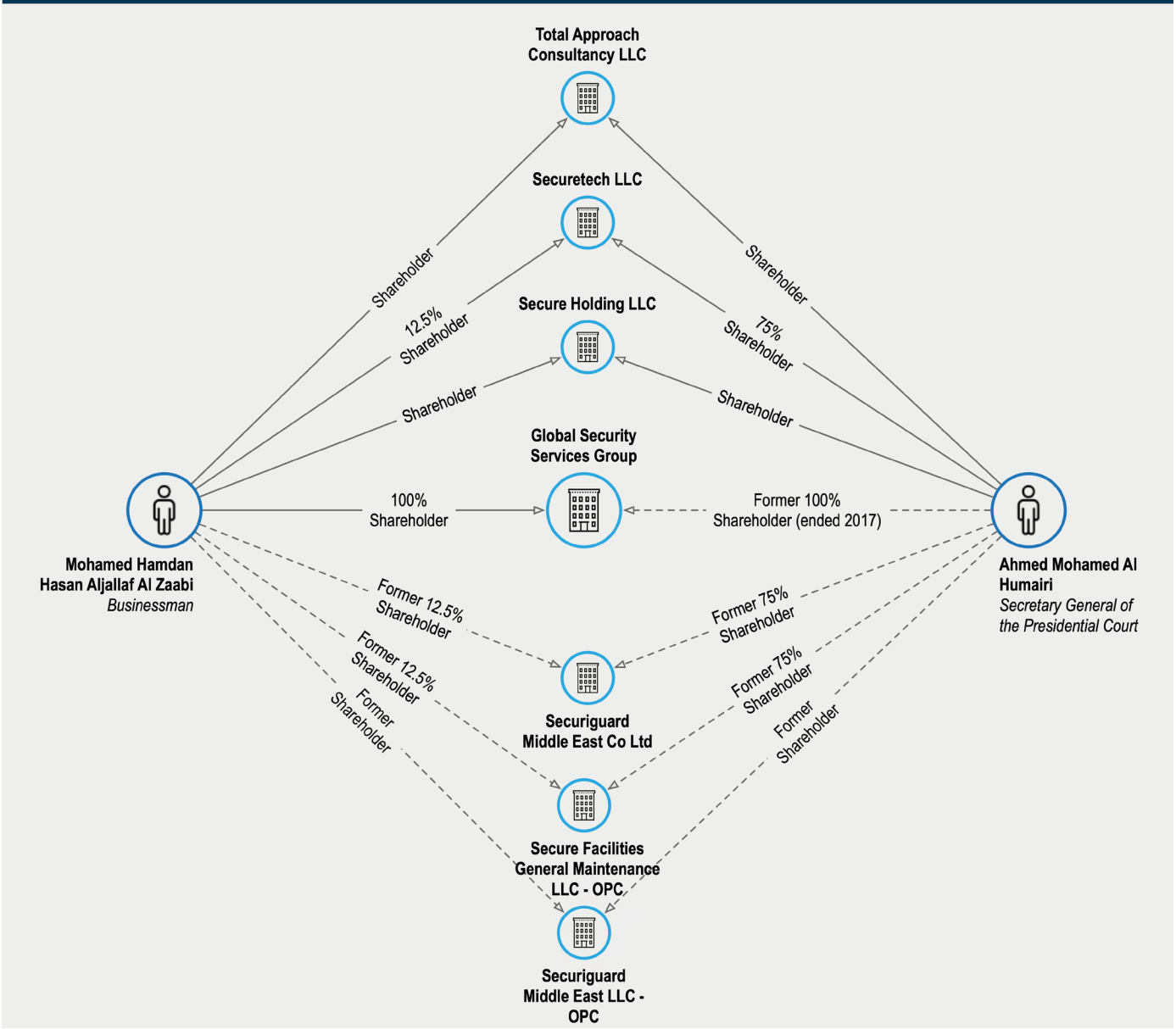
Global Security Services Group (GSSG), a UAE-registered company arranging for the deployment of the Colombian mercenaries to Sudan, describes itself as "the only armed private security services provider for the UAE government" and lists its clients as the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, and the Foreign Ministry.[12] It is wholly owned by Emirati businessman Mohamed Hamdan Alzaabi.[13]

GSSG was first set up in 2016 by Ahmed Mohamed Al Humairi, the longstanding secretary general of the Presidential Court in the UAE.[14, 15] The Presidential Court is currently chaired by the vice president reportedly responsible for the UAE's support for the RSF, Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan.[16, 17, 18]

In 2017, Al Humairi transferred all of GSSG's shares to his longtime business associate Alzaabi.[19] Alzaabi and Al Humairi currently own the majority of shares in one security company, as well as shares in two others.[20, 21] They previously owned

*Reports by The Sentry are based on interviews, documentary research, and, where relevant, financial forensic analysis. In some cases, sources speak to The Sentry on the condition that their names not be revealed, out of concern for their safety or other potential retaliatory action. The Sentry establishes the authoritativeness and credibility of information derived from those interviews through independent sources, such as expert commentary, financial data, original documentation, and press reports. The Sentry endeavors to contact the persons and entities discussed in its reports and afford them an opportunity to comment and provide further information.

Business connections between Ahmed Mohamed Al Humairi, secretary general of the Presidential Court, and Mohamed Hamdan Al Zaabi.



shares in three other security firms together.[22, 23] Their firms have focused on providing physical and IT infrastructure security to clients based in the UAE, including government departments, and they are substantial in size.[24, 25] Securetech LLC, an IT security company, has more than 600 staff members, while another of the businessmen's former companies, Securiguard Middle East, which provided security guards, had over 10,000 staff members.[26] In 2023 Securiguard Middle East was bought for $82 million (AED 300 million) by Palm Sports, a sports management firm whose ultimate parent company is owned by the UAE's national security advisor, Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed Al Nahyan.[27, 28, 29] Al Humairi owned 75% of both Securetech and Securiguard Middle East, while Al Zaabi and Securetech's founder each owned 12.5% stakes in both companies.[30, 31, 32]



(Left) Mohamed Hamdan Alzaabi, CEO of Global Security Service Group. (Right) Ahmed Mohamed Al Humairi, secretary general of the Presidential Court.
Photos: UPDF; Diwan.gov.ae.

Recruiting the Mercenaries

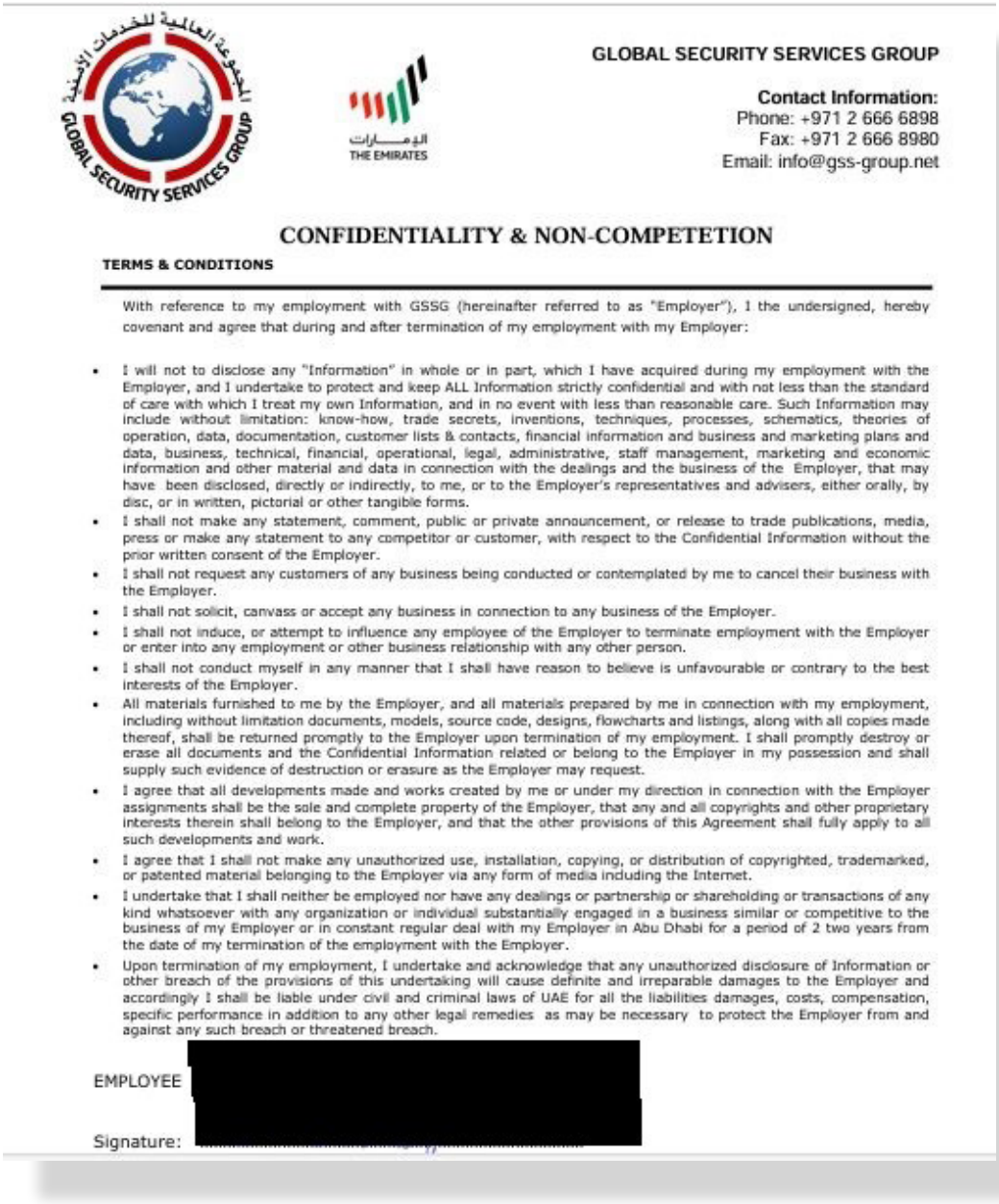
From at least 2024, GSSG contracted with a Colombian security recruitment agency, International Services Agency (also known as the Academy for Security Instruction, or A4SI), to supply hundreds of former soldiers to work in Sudan, according to leaked documents obtained by Colombian media outlet La Silla Vacía.[33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38] A4SI is reportedly controlled by Álvaro Quijano, a retired Colombian colonel based in the UAE, although it is owned by his wife, Claudia Oliveros.[39, 40, 41, 42, 43]



Álvaro Quijano reportedly controls the Colombian security recruitment agency International Services Agency (also known as the Academy for Security Instruction, or A4SI). Photo: La Silla Vacia.

Contracts signed by Colombian mercenaries authorize GSSG to transfer their salaries to Panama registered company Global Staffing, which pays the soldiers via an offshore account.[44] Oliveros is also a director of the Panamanian firm, and the websites for both A4SI and Global Staffing share hosting infrastructure.[45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50]

Quijano and GSSG appear to have close ties beyond this agreement, as a lobbying register in Chile records Quijano approaching the Chilean Copper Commission in 2024 on behalf of GSSG.[51]



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CONFIDENTIALITY & NON-COMPETETION

TERMS & CONDITIONS

With reference to my employment with GSSG (hereinafter referred to as "Employer"), I the undersigned, hereby covenant and agree that during and after termination of my employment with my Employer:

- I will not to disclose any "Information" in whole or in part, which I have acquired during my employment with the Employer, and I undertake to protect and keep ALL Information strictly confidential and with not less than the standard of care with which I treat my own Information, and in no event with less than reasonable care. Such Information may include without limitation: know-how, trade secrets, inventions, techniques, processes, schematics, theories of operation, data, documentation, customer lists & contacts, financial information and business and marketing plans and data, business, technical, financial, operational, legal, administrative, staff management, marketing and economic information and other material and data in connection with the dealings and the business of the Employer, that may have been disclosed, directly or indirectly, to me, or to the Employer's representatives and advisers, either orally, by disc, or in written, pictorial or other tangible forms.
- I shall not make any statement, comment, public or private announcement, or release to trade publications, media, press or make any statement to any competitor or customer, with respect to the Confidential Information without the prior written consent of the Employer.
- I shall not request any customers of any business being conducted or contemplated by me to cancel their business with the Employer.
- I shall not solicit, canvass or accept any business in connection to any business of the Employer.
- I shall not induce, or attempt to influence any employee of the Employer to terminate employment with the Employer or enter into any employment or other business relationship with any other person.
- I shall not conduct myself in any manner that I shall have reason to believe is unfavourable or contrary to the best interests of the Employer.
- All materials furnished to me by the Employer, and all materials prepared by me in connection with my employment, including without limitation documents, models, source code, designs, flowcharts and listings, along with all copies made thereof, shall be returned promptly to the Employer upon termination of my employment. I shall promptly destroy or erase all documents and the Confidential Information related or belong to the Employer in my possession and shall supply such evidence of destruction or erasure as the Employer may request.
- I agree that all developments made and works created by me or under my direction in connection with the Employer assignments shall be the sole and complete property of the Employer, that any and all copyrights and other proprietary interests therein shall belong to the Employer, and that the other provisions of this Agreement shall fully apply to all such developments and work.
- I agree that I shall not make any unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material belonging to the Employer via any form of media including the Internet.
- I undertake that I shall neither be employed nor have any dealings or partnership or shareholding or transactions of any kind whatsoever with any organization or individual substantially engaged in a business similar or competitive to the business of my Employer or in constant regular deal with my Employer in Abu Dhabi for a period of 2 two years from the date of my termination of the employment with the Employer.
- Upon termination of my employment, I undertake and acknowledge that any unauthorized disclosure of Information or other breach of the provisions of this undertaking will cause definite and irreparable damages to the Employer and accordingly I shall be liable under civil and criminal laws of UAE for all the liabilities damages, costs, compensation, specific performance in addition to any other legal remedies as may be necessary to protect the Employer from and against any such breach or threatened breach.

EMPLOYEE [redacted]

Signature:

Contract between a Colombian mercenary and Global Security Services Group. Photo: La Silla Vacia.

UAE Engagement With Mercenaries

GSSG's role in providing Colombian fighters to serve in Darfur is part of a wider trend in the UAE, where foreign soldiers play significant roles. First, like the French Foreign Legion, the UAE recruits foreigners into its own armed forces.[52] Quijano's former business partner at A4SI claims that both he and Quijano worked in the Seventh Special Forces Brigade of the UAE army; by 2014, Quijano had risen to command one of the brigade's three battalions.[53]

In addition, the UAE has been known to deploy fully formed mercenary units to fight overseas on its behalf. For instance, the RSF militia sent its fighters to Yemen at the behest of the UAE and Saudi Arabia.[54] The UAE also deployed Colombian mercenaries to Yemen.[55] Homegrown private military companies and security guard firms have sprung up

in the Emirates. One firm recruited Sudanese security personnel to serve in Libya, for example.[56] Former and current Colombian mercenaries deployed to Sudan have reported being trained in drone warfare in Abu Dhabi and rotated through a UAE-controlled military base at Bosaso in Puntland, Somalia.[57]

In September 2025, the Sudanese government submitted a complaint to the United Nations Security Council naming both GSSG and A4SI and accusing the UAE of meddling in its ongoing war.[58] Colombia's President Gustavo Petro has denounced "mercenarismo" and apologized to Sudan's government.[59, 60]

The UAE has denied providing supplies or support to the RSF and says claims that the country supplies mercenaries are based on fabricated evidence.[61, 62] The Sentry has already detailed how the UAE permits its commercial legal structures and banks to be used by RSF front companies.[63] The use of Alzaabi, a man trusted enough to be a longtime business partner to Al Humairi, to supply mercenaries to the RSF, though not conclusive on its own, could be an indicator of support for the militia at the highest levels of the UAE government.

The UAE's carefully cultivated reputation—built in part on security, trade, and energy ties with UN Security Council permanent members and European states—is at risk from its support of the brutal RSF in a war that is drawing in fighters from an ever-increasing number of countries.

Alzaabi, Al Humairi, Quijano, Oliveros, Sheikh Tahnoun, and Sheikh Mansour did not respond to requests for comment.

Recommendations

The United States, European Union, and United Kingdom should investigate and, if appropriate, sanction Mohamed Hamdan Alzaabi, Global Security Services Group, Álvaro Quijano, Claudia Oliveros, International Services Agency (A4SI), and Global Staffing SA under authorities related to Sudan or other applicable programs for activities related to undermining the peace, security, and stability of Sudan and providing material support to sanctioned members of the RSF.

Financial institutions should conduct enhanced due diligence on customers and transactions involving UAE private security providers, their owners, and their suppliers—particularly transactions involving Mohamed Hamdan Alzaabi, Global Security Services Group, Álvaro Quijano, Claudia Oliveros, International Services Agency (A4SI), and Global Staffing SA.

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