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UAE deceive Sudanese youth to fight as mercenaries in Libya and Yemen

**UAE establish a company to recruit guards to work in civil facilities in the
UAE**

On arrival they are sent to Al-Ghayathi military training camp

Recruits have had belongings confiscated and are unable to contact family

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK reports that the United Arab Emirates is exploiting Sudanese workers, lured on false pretences, to fight as mercenaries in Libya and Yemen.

AOHR UK notes that an Emirati company ominously called “Black Shield Security Services” had advertised in Sudan for security guards to work within the United Arab Emirates as guards at events and shopping centres. The recruitment drive has specifically targeted young Sudanese men, many of whom have been effected by conflict in Sudan, dictatorship and economic hardship.

AOHR UK has found that on arrival to the UAE the recruits expecting to work in the security field within the state, have in fact been sent to military training facilities, in particular the Al-Ghayathi training camp. Within the Al-Ghayathi training camp the coerced workers have received heavy weapons training. It is thought that an estimated 3,000 Sudanese men have signed contracts with Black Shield.

AOHR UK said that leaked copies of Black Shield contracts appear to show that they have been stamped by the Emirati Embassy in Sudan. Moreover the contracts do not give any details about being posted in Libya or Yemen.



AOHR UK notes that protesters have gathered in recent days outside the United Arab Emirates Embassy in Khartoum, calling for the return of workers lured under false pretences. Many of those protesting are family of the young men who have travelled to the UAE to work for supposed security company Black Shield, who are demanding the return of their sons, many of whom they have lost contact with. Holding placards that read “No to mercenaries”, “No to deception”, and “No to fraud”, the Protesters also called on the transitional government in Sudan to pressure the UAE to return any youth recruited under false pretences.

AOHR UK notes that recruits of Black Shield claim to have been posted to Ras Lunuf oil terminal in Libya, after undertaking 3 months of military training against their will according to accounts of those employed by Black Shield.

AOHR UK notes that a recent UN report highlighted that Sudanese paramilitaries were being sent by the protect oil infrastructure in Libya, while around 1,000 Sudanese paramilitaries are thought to be posted in Benghazi.

Furthermore AOHR UK notes that the United Arab Emiratis has close ties with top military personnel in Sudan, having provided financial support for the Transitional Military Counsel following the ousting of former President Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

AOHR UK furthermore notes that leaked documents published by Al Jazeera last year showed that the Emirati government previously signed an agreement with Khartoum to use its air space and ports for the transportation of mercenaries to Libya and Yemen.

AOHR UK furthermore notes that the General Haftar’s forces, have been accused of abducting UNHRC registered migrants from detention centres in Tripoli, forcing them to fight or supply manual labour to his troops. Many of those taken for forced labour are from Eritrea, Somalia and the Darfur region of Sudan. This outright exploitation of refugees equates to forced labour and is becoming more common place as Libya continues to destabilise as the result of Haftar’s advances.

AOHR UK notes that the company Black Shield is acting fraudulently and is deceiving young workers, many of whom are vulnerable, on false promises, while



coercing and exploiting Sudanese men into becoming mercenaries to fight its illegal destabilising conflicts.

AORH UK further notes that the UAE is not only sending mercenaries to support renegade General Haftar's forces in Libya, but has also supplied the rogue general with arms, in violation of the UN Arms Embargo and international law. The conflict which has seen Haftar's forces lead an offensive to oust the internationally recognised Prime Minister of the Government of National Accord, Fayez al-Surrag.

AOHR UK declares that the UAE is a destabilising force in the region, in its support of rogue General Haftar in Libya and its role in the war on Yemen, which has created a humanitarian catastrophe in which war crimes are common place and civilians continue to pay the heaviest price. The UAE has no regard for international law or human rights and is happy to exploit vulnerable youth to fight its unjust expansionist conflicts across North Africa and the Middle East.

The UAE must be held to account for its illegal coercing of workers under false pretences. The UAE must allow any workers who have been groomed into forcefully becoming mercenaries to return to Sudan.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)