Al Jundi al Mazlum (‘The Neglected Soldiers’)

The emergence of the Jundi al Mazlum in 2007 highlighted the slowly bubbling mutiny among the government’s Arab proxies that spiked with the rebellion of the South Darfur paramilitary leader Mohamed Hamdan Dogolo, ‘Hemeti’, in October 2007. The Jundi were not a single organized group; they were a spontaneous, uncoordinated movement of dissatisfied paramilitaries who accused the government of not making good on promises of financial compensation.

The initial strength of the Jundi was estimated at 3,000 men, the vast majority of them Northern Rizeigat fighters from Musa Hilal’s Misteriha barracks in North Darfur. By the end of the year, Jundi unrest had spread to West and South Darfur. In the Zalingei area, Jundi staged a series of attacks on government security forces and convoys. State authorities were forced to withdraw police and military detachments from rural areas in order to defend Zalingei.

The government attempted to control the mutinies by incorporating the Jundi into the Sudan Armed Forces, with full army benefits. By 2010, Arab leaders said the problem was over and more than 1,000 former Jundi were billeted in the village of Gubba, with army rank. Sources close to the armed movements, however, said discontent among paramilitaries was rising once more and predicted a new wave of Arab unrest.

Updated November 2010