



## **INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION**

### **REPORT 2022/043**

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#### **Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peace Operations**

**The Department needed to assess the continued relevance of the current skills set of seconded military personnel and enhance resources allocated to the recruitment process**

**22 September 2022**

**Assignment No. AP2021-600-01**

# **Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peace Operations**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) within the Department of Peace Operations (DPO). The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the recruitment of seconded military personnel in peace operations to provide the Secretariat with military expertise at Headquarters and in field missions. The audit covered the period from July 2018 to 31 March 2021 and focused on: (a) identification and management of evolving military skills set required in planning and managing peacekeeping operations; (b) management of seconded military personnel recruitment processes; (c) contribution and accountability of seconded military personnel in achieving OMA objectives; and (d) representation of Member States in seconded military personnel posts.

DPO needed to assess the continued relevance of the current skills set of seconded military personnel and enhance resources allocated to the recruitment process.

OIOS made nine recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, DPO needed to:

- Review the continued relevance of the current skills set of seconded military personnel to the evolving requirements of peace operations to identify and incorporate any gaps in the job profiles;
- Clarify the membership composition, duration and terms of reference of the assessment panel to be established to review the selection process;
- Expedite approval and adoption of the standard operating procedures on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Headquarters, and for Military Officers at the P-5 level and below in field missions;
- Review the capacity of the administrative team in OMA responsible for processing nominations against advertised campaign positions for seconded military officers and for sustaining the institutional memory in managing the recruitment process;
- Develop a portal between OMA and permanent missions to United Nations Headquarters whereby nominations of seconded military officers could be uploaded and status provided to the Member States on their nominated candidates thus reducing the manual nature of the recruitment process;
- Integrate the substantive role of seconded military personnel into the work plans of relevant organizational units of OMA to reflect the impact of their contributions on peace operations with identifiable deliverables;
- Develop mechanisms to effectively manage the selection of seconded military personnel to enable inclusivity and balanced representation, taking into consideration large troop contributing countries.
- Develop a strategy to assist smaller troop contributing countries to build capacity in their efforts to nominate suitable candidates for seconded military personnel positions; and
- Review the implemented and planned actions in the 2018-2028 uniformed gender parity strategy and take steps to increase gender representation of seconded military personnel, especially in field missions.

DPO accepted the recommendations and has initiated actions to implement them. Actions needed to close the recommendations are indicated in Annex I.

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# Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peace Operations

## I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) within the Department of Peace Operations (DPO).

2. DPO's mandate is to support the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security. Peace operations require specialized skills in: (a) planning new missions to assess threats and the operating environment; (b) determining and adjusting troop levels and associated assets after reassessment of threat levels, operating environments and progress in mandate implementation; and (c) supervising and supporting military logistics and communication and information technology in field missions. The Organization draws these skills from troop-contributing countries (TCCs) by recruiting seconded military personnel who serve concurrently in active duty in their countries. This presents a unique staffing arrangement in the Secretariat whereby the service of seconded military personnel is governed by the relevant regulations and rules of both the United Nations and the Member States from which they are recruited.

3. Within DPO, OMA functions include the provision of military advice to the Under-Secretary-General (USG) for peace operations and when requested, through him or her to the Security Council, Secretary-General and USGs of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and Operational Support (DOS). OMA also provides advice and support to heads of organizational units within DPO, DPPA and DOS. Its core mandated tasks also include capability definition and force generation, deployment and oversight of military components of missions, as well as responsibility for the recruitment of seconded military personnel at Headquarters and field missions. As at 31 March 2022, OMA was composed of 108 staff (83 seconded officers, 5 civilians and 20 general services) headed by a Military Adviser at the Assistant-Secretary-General (ASG) level.

4. As detailed in Table 1, there were 166 seconded military personnel posts as of 31 December 2021. Of these posts, 127 were deployed to Secretariat departments and offices at Headquarters and the remaining 39 served in field missions.

**Table 1: Seconded military posts at United Nations Headquarters and in field missions**

Level	Headquarters							Field Missions	Total
	DPO			DOS	DMSPC	OICT	DPPA-DPO		
	OMA	OROLSI	DPET				IOT		
ASG	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	10
D2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	10
D1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4
P5	6	-	1	1	-	-	3	10	21
P4	71	1	6	5	1	1	5	8	98
P3	9	-	5	8	-	1	-	-	23
Total	89	1	12	14	1	2	8	39	166

Abbreviations: Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI); Division of Policy Evaluation and Training (DPET); Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC); Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT); and Integrated Operational Teams (IOT).

Source: Data provided by OMA

5. In a memorandum dated 21 November 2012 to the USGs for the then Departments of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Field Support (DFS), the ASG for the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) delegated authority to the DPKO/DFS Executive Office to recruit seconded military personnel to posts up to the D-1 level. The memorandum outlined the principles that would govern the recruitment of seconded military personnel and the procedures for launching and administering such recruitment, setting a maximum limit of four years for the duration of service of seconded personnel. The procedures included: review of eligibility of selected candidates and issuance of appointment offers; human rights screening of candidates selected against senior military posts at the D-1 and above level; and establishment of a roster valid for one year. Clearance of the selection process by central review bodies and reference checks were suspended for these positions. Reference checks were substituted with certification by the relevant local authority of the Member State. Further, seconded military personnel who apply for regular Secretariat job openings are treated as external candidates.

6. Comments provided by DPO are incorporated in italics.

## **II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

7. The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the recruitment of seconded military personnel in peace operations to provide the Secretariat with military expertise at Headquarters and in field missions

8. This audit was included in the 2021 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the importance of recruiting relevant military skill set and the associated processes.

9. OIOS conducted this audit from May to December 2021. The audit covered the period from July 2018 to 31 March 2021, with relevant updates, where available. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risk areas in: (a) identification and management of evolving military skills set required in planning and managing peacekeeping operations; (b) management of seconded military personnel recruitment processes; (c) contribution and accountability of seconded military personnel in achieving OMA objectives; and (d) representation of Member States in seconded military personnel posts.

10. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews of key personnel at Headquarters, field missions and of military advisers at the permanent missions to United Nations Headquarters; (b) reviews of relevant documentation; and (c) analytical reviews of data.

11. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

## **III. AUDIT RESULTS**

### **A. Military skill sets in planning and managing peacekeeping operations**

Skills set of occupational positions needed review to support the Secretary-General's vision of the new agenda for peace and the Secretariat's global human resources strategy

12. Currently, OMA recruits seconded military personnel against three types of occupational positions at Headquarters and in field missions as detailed in Table 2: (a) leadership; (b) specialist; and (c) support.

**Table 2: Seconded military occupational post titles**

Post category	Headquarters		Field	
	Occupational post titles	Level	Occupational post titles	Level
Leadership	Military Adviser	ASG	Head of Mission, Force Commander, Chief of Staff	ASG
	Deputy Military Adviser	D-2	Force Commander	ASG, D-2
	Chief of Staff	D-1	Chair of Redeployment Coordination Committee	ASG
	Chiefs of Service	P-5	Deputy Force Commander	D-2, D-1
	Senior Military Liaison Officers	P-5	Chief Military Officer/Observer	D-2
			Deputy Chief Military Officer	D-1
Chief Military Liaison Officer			P-5	
Specialist	Policy and Doctrine Officers	P-5, P-4	Chief Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism	D-1
	Peacekeeping Affairs Officers	P-4	Monitoring and Verification Operations Coordination	P-5
			Chief Light Coordination Mechanism	P-5
	Planning Officers	P-4	Military Advisers	D-1, P-5, P-4, P-3
			Defense Security Reform Officer	P-5
			Operational Military Planner	P-4
Military Planning Officer			P-4	
Support	Training Officers	P-5, P-4, P-3	Deputy Chief of Service Delivery	P-5
	Military Assistants	P-4	Military Liaison Officer	P-4
	Military Liaison Officer	P-4	Military Logistics Planning Officer	P-4
	Legal Officer	P-4		
	Property Management Officer	P-4		
	Conduct and Discipline Officer	P-4		
	Military Telecommunications Engineer	P-4, P-3		
	Engineer Officer	P-3		
	Transport Officer (Aviation)	P-3		
	Supply Officer	P-3		

Source: Compiled from data provided by OMA, DPO

13. Military personnel, as in the United Nations civilian environment, have generic job profiles based on the stream/field of work such as intelligence, military planning, generation of military forces, reporting and liaison. Since the expansion of OMA in 2008, there have been two instances where very specific skills set have been required. First, in unmanned aerial surveillance, which also required experience for related procurement. Currently, this skills set is integrated in OMA’s assessment team, as an assessment officer (intelligence) with experience in analyzing and reading aerial images. Second, in gender affairs functions, which were incorporated into the post of capability development officer.

14. As militaries and United Nations missions have evolved so too have the required military personnel skills set. Initiatives such as the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P), launched in March 2018, aimed to: (a) refocus peacekeeping with more targeted mandates; (b) make operations stronger and safer; (c) mobilize support for political solutions; and (d) better equip and train forces. A4P+ priorities for 2021-2023 detailed seven commitment areas to move forward<sup>1</sup>. The data strategy of the Secretary-General aims to: (a) drive innovation; (b) maximize the potential of current and new technologies; (c) understand threats; and (d)

<sup>1</sup> Namely: (a) collective coherence behind a political strategy; (b) strategic and operational integration; (c) capabilities and mindsets; (d) accountability to peacekeepers; (e) accountability of peacekeepers; (f) strategic communications; and (g) cooperation with host countries.

ensure ethical use of digital technologies, while recognizing the needs of peacekeeping operations among others. The report of the Secretary-General, titled, ‘Our Common Agenda’, dated 5 August 2021, detailed key proposals across 12 commitments from the declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, including promotion of peace and prevention of conflicts and abiding by international law.

15. Seconded military personnel also serve as focal points or participate in working groups such as those established for the ‘leave no one behind’ and ‘protect our planet’ activities and digitalization strategies.

16. The changing environment of the Secretariat’s operations globally calls upon the United Nations workforce to be versatile in their skills to adapt to the risk landscape and responsibilities across the three pillars: peace and security, development, and human rights. Accordingly, the Secretariat’s Global Human Resources Strategy promulgated in 2018 aims to create an enabling policy environment for people management, catalyze proactive talent acquisition and management and contribute to a transformed organizational culture. It was to ensure that the Organization could retain and nurture staff with the skills set and dynamism required to address the complex and changing nature of global challenges.

17. In the context of the above, there was a need to review the continued relevance of the current skills set of seconded military personnel to the evolving requirements of peace operations to identify any gaps and to incorporate them in the required job profiles.

**(1) DPO should review the continued relevance of the current skills set of seconded military personnel to the evolving requirements of peace operations to identify and incorporate any gaps in the job profiles required to effectively support the Secretary-General’s vision of the new agenda for peace, the Secretariat’s global human resources strategy, as well as the Secretary-General’s data strategy**

*DPO accepted recommendation 1 and stated that OMA was, in coordination with the Executive Office, DPO and the Office of Human Resources, conducting an overall review of the educational and work experience requirements of the job descriptions aligned with current skill sets. Additionally, all job descriptions were undergoing a classification exercise to reflect the General Assembly mandate.*

## **B. Recruitment processes for the seconded military personnel**

### Oversight of the seconded military officer recruitment process needed to be strengthened

18. Although seconded military personnel are an integral part of the Secretariat’s staffing, there are differences between their recruitment process and that of other Secretariat staff. The administrative instruction on the staff selection system, ST/AI/2010/3 and related guidance govern the recruitment of staff in the Secretariat, whereas the draft standard operating procedures (SOP) on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers govern the recruitment of seconded military personnel. One key difference between both processes is the independent review and advice on recruitment actions, which is conducted by one of the central review bodies for civilian staff but by an assessment panel for seconded military officers. As per the draft SOP, an assessment panel is to be established, composed of at least three members, to provide a reasoned and documented assessment of the recruitment process. However, the composition of the panel, its tenure and terms of reference were not defined.

19. In OIOS’ opinion, the membership composition of the panel should have representation from DPO, DPPA, DOS and field missions to provide assurance on the objectivity of the recruitment process of the

seconded military personnel in the Secretariat. The draft SOP on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Secretariat required a revision to reflect this.

**(2) DPO should revise the draft standard operating procedures on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Secretariat to clarify the membership composition, duration and terms of reference of the assessment panel to be established to review the selection process.**

*DPO accepted recommendation 2 and stated that OMA would add the requirement in the SOP in consultation with the Police Division.*

DPO needed to expedite approving and adopting procedures to select some categories of seconded uniformed personnel

20. With the implementation of management reforms on 1 January 2019, the recruitment authority for seconded military personnel was transferred from DPKO/DFS Executive Office to OMA to run their own recruitment campaigns and take hiring decisions for positions up to P-5 level. D-1 level positions are approved by the USG/DPO and D-2 level and above by the Secretary-General.

21. At the time of the audit, the SOP on Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Headquarters was in draft form, awaiting the formal USG/DPO approval as its development required consultations with concerned stakeholders.

22. In addition, while the SOP on the Selection and Extension of Military Senior Appointments in Field Missions was issued in July 2020 and is applicable to field positions at the D-1 level and above, OMA had not established similar procedures for the P-5 level and below positions. OMA stated that it was in the process of establishing these procedures as an annex to the SOP on senior leadership appointments in field missions. A tentative date for formally establishing these procedures had been set for March 2022, followed by the administrative approval process with a target date of April 2022 but these had not been achieved.

**(3) DPO should expedite approval and adoption of the standard operating procedures on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Headquarters, and for Military Officers at the P-5 level and below in field missions.**

*DPO accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the SOP on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Headquarters would be revised to include the components required in recommendation 2. The final draft of the SOP on the Selection and Extension of Military Personnel in United Nations Contracted Posts in Field Missions was under consultation with stakeholders.*

Resources for conducting recruitment campaigns needed to be enhanced

23. To facilitate the recruitment process, OMA organized periodic recruitment campaigns. Table 3 provides a summary of recent recruitment campaigns, number of job openings and nominations for Headquarters positions in 2019 and 2020.



**Table 3: Seconded military officer campaign nominations**

Campaign	Posting period	Number of job openings	Nominations		
			Female	Male	Total
2019 Phase I	May to August 2019	16	42	1,180	1,222
2019 Phase II	January to April 2020. Extended to March 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic	14	139	1,988	2,127
2020 Phase I	August to November 2020	14	152	1,495	1,647
<b>Total:</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>4,663</b>	<b>4,996</b>

Source: Data provided by OMA

24. The Phase I campaign in 2019 had 16 job openings, which elicited 1,222 nominations of which 42 or approximately 3.5 per cent were female nominations. Twenty-one candidates were recommended for selection and/or for inclusion in the roster. Similarly, for the Phase II 2019 campaign, 14 job openings were advertised and 2,127 nominations were received, of which 139, or approximately 7 per cent were female nominations. Thirty-seven candidates were recommended for selection and/or for inclusion in the roster. Phase I campaign in 2020 received 1,647 nominations, of which 152 or 9 per cent were female nominations. Thirty-four candidates were recommended for selection and/or for inclusion in the roster. The 2020 Phase II campaign was cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Table 4 details the number of seconded officers selected and rostered during the 2019 and 2020 recruitment campaigns.

**Table 4: Seconded officer campaign selections**

Campaign	Selected		Rostered
	Male	Female	
2019 Phase I	16	2	3
2019 Phase II	17	5	15
2020 Phase I	13	3	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>77</b>

Source: Data provided by OMA

25. OMA received nominations from 65 Member States against the 13 positions advertised in the 2020 Phase I campaign. As detailed in Table 5, 779 or approximately 50 per cent of nominations were made by six Member States, namely: Sri Lanka (211); Nigeria (190); Ghana (167); South Africa (88); Spain (62); and Peru (61). There were instances where Member States nominated multiple officers for the same position, e.g., Sri Lanka nominated 36 officers for the P3/11 position and Nigeria and Ghana nominated 34 and 30 officers, respectively for the P4/6 positions. However, OMA cannot set a limit on the number of nominations each Member State could make against a particular position.

**Table 5: Excerpt of the results of the 2020 Phase 1 campaign**

Member State/grade of position	D2	D1	P5/3	P5/12	P4/4	P4/5	P4/6	P4/7	P4/8	P4/9	P4/10	P4/13	P3/11	Total
Sri Lanka		8	7	1	17	19	33	29	20	30	10	1	36	211
Nigeria	4	10	7	5	22	15	34	21	19	27	13	1	12	190
Ghana		3	4		13	16	29	23	21	30	18	2	8	167
South Africa	1	3	2	3	12	9	12	11	11	10	6	1	7	88
Spain			1		8	7	9	9	9	9	4	2	4	62
Peru		2	5	1	4	7	7	5	7	10	4	1	8	61
<b>Total</b>														<b>779</b>

Source: Data provided by OMA, DPO

26. OMA managed its campaigns and the recruitment process with a small administrative team of one P-3 and one G-5 staff, with temporary support of an additional staff from the Current Military Operations

Section in OMA. The number of nominations strained the ability of the administrative team to perform its responsibilities effectively and sustain institutional memory.

27. In addition, the information technology (IT) system supporting OMA's human resources activities, NOVA, called for many manual processes. NOVA was implemented in 2011 when the authority to recruit seconded military personnel was delegated from the former OHRM to the Executive Office in the erstwhile DPKO. Initially the system was expected to generate information on nominated applicants, record screening of applicants, document competency-based interview results for short-listed candidates and inform Member States and candidates of the status of recruitment campaigns. However, NOVA was not functioning as intended and currently served only to distribute recruitment campaigns to Member States. Details of nominated candidates are hand delivered or submitted in electronic format via email to designated OMA email accounts and manually uploaded to the respective job openings. Candidates are screened, evaluated, and recommended for selection and onboarded outside the system. Reporting from NOVA was also limited.

28. Noting that the number of nominations for seconded military posts have almost doubled since the campaigns were transferred to OMA in 2011, there would be benefits to further automate the system whereby Member States and their permanent missions to United Nations Headquarters are able to upload nominations directly via an interface to minimize manual interventions. Additionally, the portal should provide Member States with the ability to download forms and monitor the progress and/or the status of their nominations throughout the campaign process. This was important as it was not feasible for the OMA administrative team conducting the campaigns to continuously brief the approximately 70 Member States nominating hundreds of candidates on the status of each applicant.

29. It was therefore necessary for OMA to explore other in-house resources, e.g., HERMES, which is used for recruiting United Nations Military Experts on Mission and Individual Police Officers to assess if this system would meet the requirements for recruiting seconded officers. If in-house resources were not suitable, then alternatives should be explored to further automate the recruitment process.

**(4) DPO should review the capacity of the administrative team in the Office of Military Affairs responsible for processing nominations against advertised campaign positions for seconded military officers and sustaining the institutional memory in managing the recruitment process.**

*DPO accepted recommendation 4 and stated that OMA would analyze and justify its administrative team's capacity with a view to seek the establishment of additional resources.*

**(5) DPO should review options to develop a portal between the Office of Military Affairs and permanent missions to United Nations Headquarters whereby nominations of seconded military officers could be uploaded and status provided to Member States on their nominated candidates thus reducing the manual nature of the recruitment process.**

*DPO accepted recommendation 5 and stated that OMA would review options to develop the portal for the recruitment of seconded personnel in coordination with the Police Division and with support from the Office of Information and Communications Technology.*

#### Extension of seconded military officers were properly supported and justified

30. According to the draft SOP for the Selection and Extension of Seconded Uniformed Personnel in the United Nations Headquarters, the Military Adviser has delegated authority to extend the appointments of seconded active-duty military officers up to the P-5 level for a third year, based on satisfactory performance and operational requirements. The USG/DPO retained the authority for third-year extensions

for positions at the D-1 and above level with recommendations from the Military Adviser. The USG also retained the authority to approve exceptional and final extensions for a fourth year, solely for operational requirements.

31. The audit identified five contracts during 2017 to 2021 that were extended up to five years. This was because seconded military personnel selected from a Member State were not granted visas in a timely manner. Consequently, OMA extended the contracts of seconded military personnel who were being replaced by the incoming personnel to bridge the gap. These extensions were appropriately approved.

32. There was also a request in September 2021 for the contract extension of a medical officer at the P-5 level in DOS for a fifth year. The post had been advertised in previous campaigns to minimize an operational gap; however, a selection had not been made and the job opening was being revised at the time of the audit. As this was a one-off case, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

### **C. Contribution and accountability of seconded military personnel**

#### DPO needs to integrate the contributions of seconded military personnel into its programme objectives

33. The General Assembly, in creating posts earmarked for active-duty seconded officers, intended to provide the Secretariat with current knowledge, technology and skills in military fields needed to plan and manage peacekeeping operations and as replacement for gratis personnel under resolutions 51/243 dated 15 September 1997 and 52/248 dated 23 September 1998. OMA supports field missions in: (a) assessing the operational environment in which they are deployed; (b) developing long-standing and overarching planning reflected in missions' military concept of operations and operational orders; (c) assessing whether military capabilities deployed to missions meet their requirements to deliver mandated tasks and suggests modifications when needed; and (d) translating their requirements and advising on TCCs' capabilities to generate and deploy the appropriate military units within the expected timelines

34. The deployment of troops into higher threat environments places significant additional demands on military planning, including the specialists involved. It also increases the coordination required between DPO, DOS, field missions and TCCs, and necessitates greater strategic oversight and guidance of military operations. In an increasingly complex and challenging peacekeeping environment, a much greater degree of military strategic assessment, oversight, guidance, and technical direction including crisis response, is required. In many nations, this function is carried out by a military strategic headquarters in addition to the national ministry of defense. OMA currently attempts to combine these functions with its staff. In addition, unlike national military headquarters, OMA must maintain regular and interactive dialogue with approximately 125 active and prospective TCCs. OMA heavily depends on the services of the seconded military personnel for supporting peace operations globally.

35. However, this substantive role of seconded military personnel and the impact of their contributions on peace operations is not visible in DPO's programme budget with identifiable deliverables. Consequently, it was not immediately possible for OMA to demonstrate the substantive contribution of seconded military personnel to the achievement of its objectives. Additionally, the work plans of various organizational units in OMA had not been finalized due to turnover of the Chief of Staff in August 2021.

**(6) DPO should integrate the substantive role of seconded military personnel in the work plans of relevant organizational units of the Office of Military Affairs to reflect impact of their contributions on peace operations with identifiable deliverables.**

*DPO accepted recommendation 6 and stated that OMA had completed the strategic plan (work plans) for its service/teams for the current fiscal year, June 2022 to July 2023 and would provide the second annual strategic plan (action plan)/set of service's plans for the next fiscal year.*

Efforts were underway to avoid duplication of remuneration or benefits to seconded active-duty personnel

36. In his report A/67/723 dated 31 January 2013, the Secretary-General indicated that the financial disclosure programme had revealed that some staff members were receiving remuneration from their governments, which presented a conflict with staff regulation 1.2 (j), which prohibited staff from accepting any honour, decoration, favour, gift, or remuneration from any government. In addition, the legislation of some Member States prohibited their government personnel on secondment to an outside organization from accepting financial remuneration and benefits directly from that organization. The General Assembly, in resolution 67/287, noted the difficulties related to reconciling the national legislation of some countries with the Staff Regulations and Rules and requested the Secretary-General to report during its sixty-eighth session on proposals to resolve the conflict. As an exceptional measure, the Assembly agreed to waive the requirement for seconded active-duty military and police personnel to comply with staff regulation 1.2 (j) through 31 December 2013

37. The Secretary-General, in his reports on seconded active-duty military and police personnel (A/68/495, A71/257, A74/546, A74/700 and A75/646), indicated outreach and engagement that the Secretariat had undertaken with Member States on the issue and presented options to resolve the conflicts. In its resolution 75/292 dated 30 June 2021, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the practical impact, including on Member States, of the different options and possible combinations of the options, taking into consideration lessons learned from the implementation of existing agreements and the need to secure continuous protection of the pension rights of the seconded personnel. The assessment was to be provided to the General Assembly for its consideration at its seventy-eighth session. It also decided to extend the exceptional measures regarding seconded active-duty military and police personnel until 1 July 2024.

38. As this matter was being actively considered with options being developed by the Secretary-General for the consideration of the General Assembly, OIOS is not making a recommendation at this time.

#### **D. Representation of Member States by seconded military personnel**

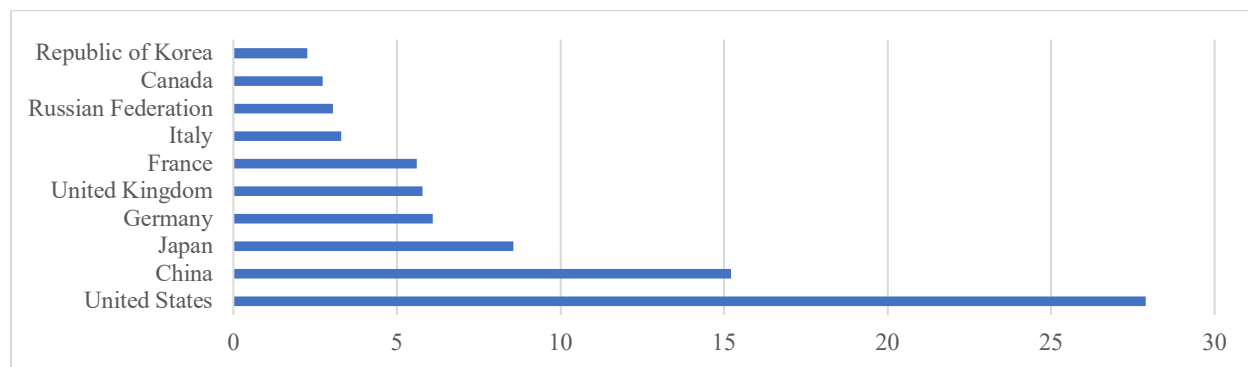
OMA needed to develop mechanisms to ensure seconded military personnel from all Member States are fairly represented at Headquarters and in field missions

39. By resolution 71/263 dated 23 December 2016, the General Assembly recalled previous resolutions in which it had requested the Secretary-General to “intensify his efforts to ensure the proper representation of troop-contributing countries in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support of the Secretariat, taking into account their contribution to United Nations peacekeeping, and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon in his proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018”. In addition, by its resolution 75/292 dated 30 June 2021, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to ensure equal opportunities for seconded active-duty military and police personnel from all Member States. Accordingly, DPO is expected to develop mechanisms to implement these resolutions

40. The approved budget of peacekeeping operations for the fiscal year 2020/21 was \$6.58 billion, whereas the 2021 annual budget of special political missions was over \$600 million. As with the

Secretariat’s regular budget, peacekeeping budgets are assessed to Member States. The top 10 contributors to the peacekeeping budgets for 2020/21 as a percentage of total contributions are as illustrated in Chart 1.

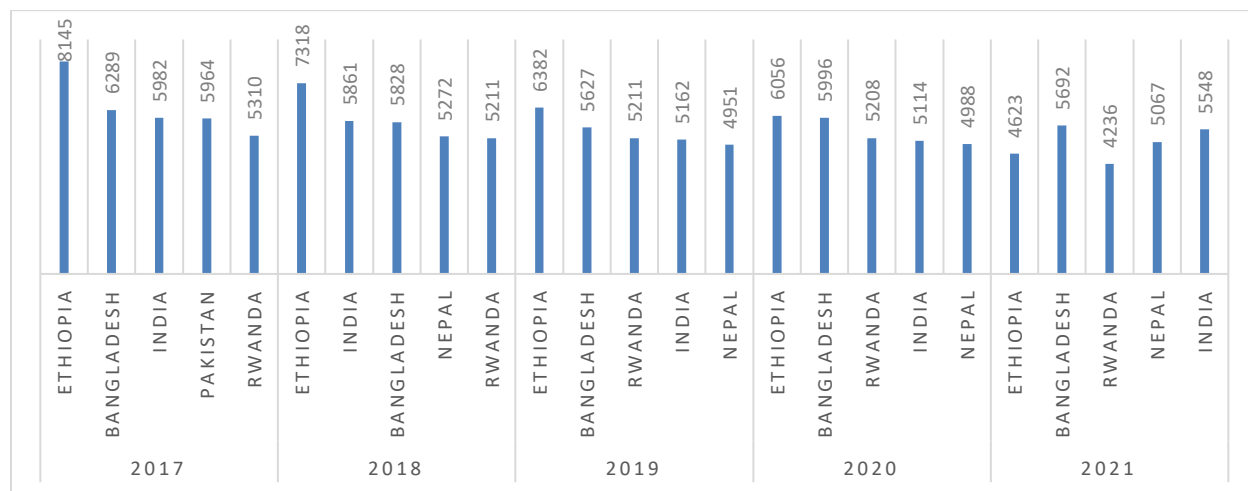
**Chart 1: Top 10 Member States assessed for contributions to the peacekeeping budget**



Source: Peacekeeping.un.org

41. Since the inception of peacekeeping operations, 125 Member States have contributed troops. As of 31 October 2021, of the 63,491 troops deployed in field missions, 37,031 or 58 per cent of the troops were from 10 Member States (Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Egypt, Ghana, and China). Chart 2 provides the troop levels contributed by the top five TCCs during the period from 2017 to 2021.

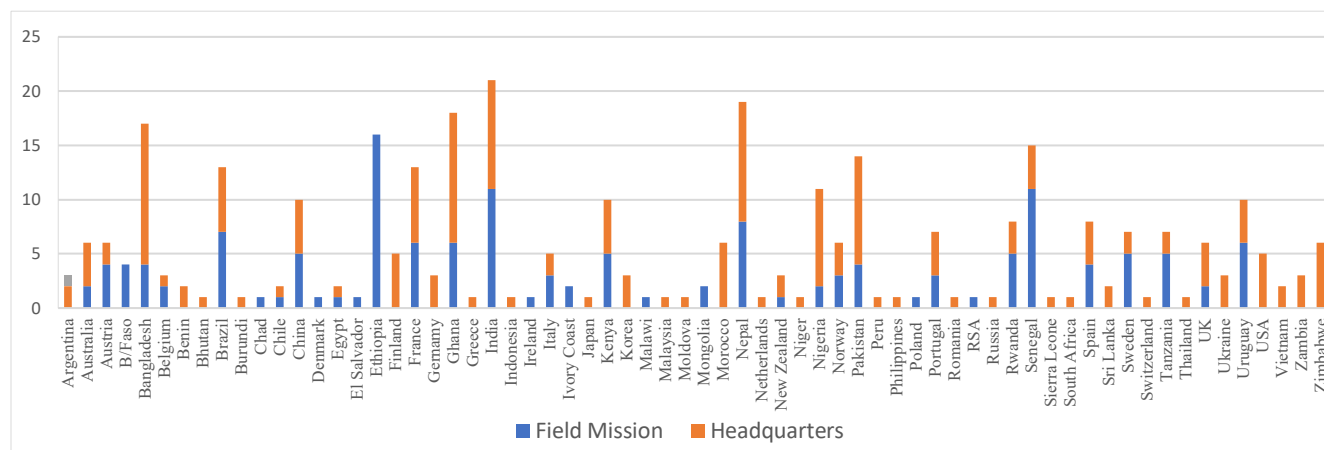
**Chart 2: Top five TCCs to United Nations peacekeeping operations, 2017-2021**



Source: Data compiled by OMA - military experts on mission, staff officers and troop strength

42. As illustrated in Chart 3, candidates from 66 Member States had been selected against seconded military personnel posts during the period from 2017 to 2021.

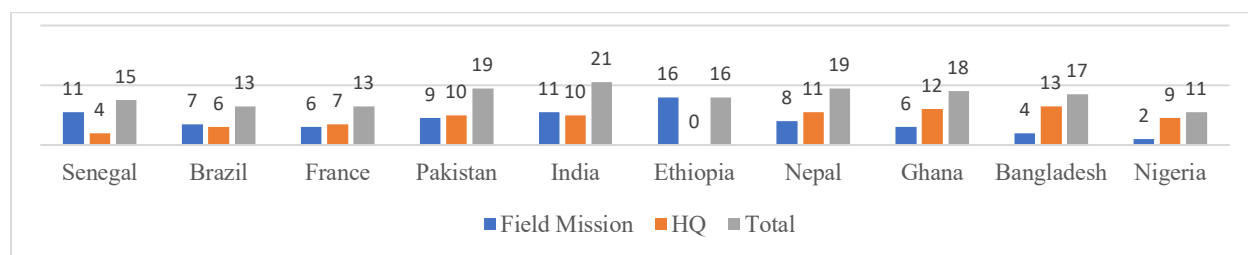
**Chart 3: Seconded military personnel selected in Headquarters and field mission representing 66 Member States: 2017-2021**



Source: Compiled from data provided by OMA, DPO and the Executive Office, DPPA-DPO

43. Chart 4 shows the breakdown of the top holders of seconded military posts by country of origin.

**Chart 4: Holders of the most seconded military posts at Headquarters and in field missions by country of origin: 2017-2021**



Source: Compiled using data provided by OMA, DPO

44. The audit noted that officers from Ghana, Nigeria, France, Brazil and Senegal are among the Member States occupying the higher numbers of seconded military positions both at Headquarters and in field missions despite not being among the largest TCCs.

45. In addition, between 2017 and 2021, seconded officers had been selected from 60 Member States at both Headquarters and in field missions but as of October 2021, none were from smaller TCCs including, Togo (with 915 troops deployed in field missions), Cameroon (750), Cambodia (784), Burundi (736), Mauritania (444), Guinea (649), Liberia (148), Uganda (625), Benin (25), Fiji (311) and Slovakia (232). For the 2020 Phase I campaign (see Table 5), Togo had nominated eight officers against six positions, Cambodia had nominated seven officers against five positions and Uganda had nominated two officers against two positions, but they were not successful. OMA needed to conduct an outreach programme to bring awareness, encourage and help develop smaller TCCs capacity in participating in peace operations

46. Member State military advisers emphasized, during interviews, the need for their military officers to be represented at Headquarters in a strategic capacity while their troops were on the ground in an operational capacity. OMA stated that each candidate was selected on merit and taking into consideration as wide a geographical representation as possible; however, this was not always the case. For example, among senior seconded military officers at Headquarters, the incumbents of two posts: Chief of Force Generation Service (P-5) and the Chief of Staff of the Military Adviser (D-1) were of the same nationality. Additionally, in 2021, the outgoing incumbent of the post of Chief of Staff of the Military Adviser, and the incoming Military Adviser (ASG), OMA, were the same nationality. OMA needed a policy framework to

effectively manage the selection of seconded military personnel to ensure inclusivity of all key stakeholders in peace operations with a fair representation both at Headquarters and in field missions.

**(7) DPO should develop mechanisms to effectively manage the selection of seconded military personnel both at Headquarters and in field missions to ensure inclusivity and balanced representation, taking into consideration large troop contributing countries.**

*DPO accepted recommendation 7 and stated that the recruitment of seconded military personnel adhered to the United Nations Charter, which states that the paramount consideration was to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. OMA was one of the most diverse offices in the Secretariat with 40 nationalities represented. It would seek to improve its selection processes, including its outreach to TCCs for the nominations of qualified seconded military personnel, to “ensure equal opportunities for seconded active-duty military and police personnel from all Member States” as requested by the General Assembly in A/RES/75/292.*

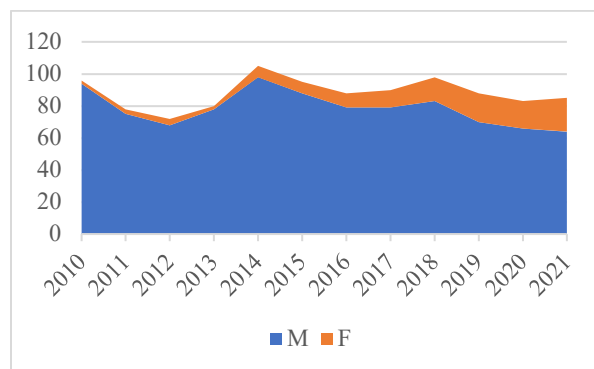
**(8) DPO should develop a strategy to assist smaller troop contributing countries to build capacity in their efforts to nominate suitable candidates for seconded military personnel positions.**

*DPO accepted recommendation 8 and stated that it had partnered with the “Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie” for the development of “Guidelines on how to prepare candidates for seconded military posts at the United Nations”, aimed at supporting smaller troop contributing countries. Subject to obtaining funding, OMA would translate these guidelines into English for distribution to non-francophone TCCs.*

Gender representation in field missions needed to be enhanced

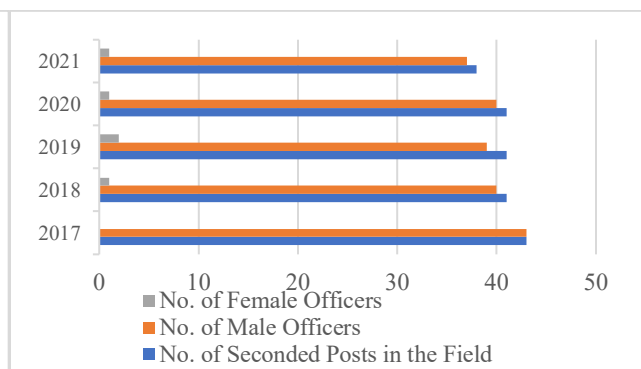
47. DPO established a 2018-2028 uniformed gender parity strategy to ensure that the uniformed component of United Nations peacekeeping is diverse and inclusive of women, reflecting the communities the United Nations serves. Charts 5 and 6 illustrate the gender representation of seconded military personnel at Headquarters and in the field.

**Chart 5: Gender distribution of seconded military personnel Headquarters: 2010 – 2021**



Source: Data provided by OMA

**Chart 6: Gender distribution of seconded military personnel Field Missions: 2017 – 2021**



Source: Data provided by OMA

48. According to the strategy, women made up 9.67 per cent of military officers contracted by OMA in 2018 and encumbered 3 per cent of seconded positions in field missions and approximately 24 per cent of the positions at Headquarters. The number of women serving in contingents remained extremely low at

4 per cent of the then 76,677 member-strong force. Women officers were also under-represented in senior contracted posts, at under 1 per cent. OMA identified several reasons, both internal and external, for this imbalance including: (a) women may be worried about being isolated and vulnerable to sexual harassment and exploitation when deployed; and (b) military components were largely composed of combat related capabilities - for some TCCs these positions were only available to men.

49. OMA had planned to double the number of women in uniform components overall by 2020 and to reach a target of 25 per cent of seconded military officers by 2028. To meet these targets the uniformed components were to take action in the following areas: (a) creating an enabling environment; (b) recruiting and enabling; (c) communications and outreach; and (d) leadership and accountability. To facilitate these measures, the strategy laid out Tier I, II and III actions. Tier I included actions being implemented at the time of the strategy's promulgation, Tier II included actions to be implemented by June 2020 and Tier III, actions required additional resources.

50. The audit analyzed the progress on actions to be implemented by June 2020. While the analysis shows that OMA had implemented the selected actions, they did not result in achieving the target of doubling the representation women in uniform by 2020 from about 4 per cent in 2018. As of 31 March 2021, the representation of female officers remained at less than 4 per cent in field missions. This was because the selected actions were mostly at the process level such as developing and implementing strategies to prevent sexual and other harassment and implementing mentorship programme by P-5 and above officers for women officers. On recruitment and training, the action was on updating OMA recruitment processes to ensure gender sensitive recruitment procedures. For this, the implemented action was shown as "OMA administration reviewed all the female applicants in the seconded campaign to ensure that applicants that meet the requirements are considered for the posts." and "OMA administration up-dated the gender questions for the competency-based interviews in the recruitment campaigns, in liaison with the gender focal point for the USG, DPO and United Nations Women." There were no details regarding the actions contemplated or an estimation of resources required for implementing the Tier III actions.

51. Therefore, it is important for OMA to review the implemented and planned actions identified in the 2018-2028 uniformed gender parity strategy to increase gender representation of the seconded military personnel.

**(9) DPO should review the implemented and planned actions identified in the 2018-2028 uniformed gender parity strategy and take steps to increase gender representation of the seconded military personnel, especially in field missions.**

*DPO accepted recommendation 9 and stated that the OMA gender adviser would review the implemented and planned actions identified in the gender parity strategy as well as assess whether current targets set for various categories of personnel and units as well as recommended actions within the strategy have been implemented or should be modified or updated.*

#### **IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

52. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of DPO for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

Internal Audit Division  
Office of Internal Oversight Services



## STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the  
Department of Peace Operations**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>2</sup> / Important <sup>3</sup>	C/ O <sup>4</sup>	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date <sup>5</sup>
1	DPO should review the continued relevance of the current skills set of seconded military personnel to the evolving requirements of peace operations to identify and incorporate any gaps in the job profiles required to effectively support the Secretary-General's vision of the new agenda for peace, the Secretariat's global human resources strategy, as well as the Secretary-General's data strategy.	Important	O	Receipt of the results of the review of educational and work experience requirements of job descriptions and evidence of actions taken to align skill sets of seconded military personnel to the evolving requirements of peace operations.	31 March 2023
2	DPO should revise the draft standard operating procedures on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Secretariat to clarify the membership composition, duration and terms of reference of the assessment panel to be established to review the selection process.	Important	O	Receipt of the revised SOP clarifying the membership composition, duration and terms of reference of the assessment panel to be established to review the selection process.	31 March 2023
3	DPO should expedite approval and adoption of the standard operating procedures on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Headquarters, and for Military Officers at the P-5 level and below in field missions.	Important	O	Receipt of the finalized and approved SOPs on the Recruitment of Seconded Personnel in the United Nations Secretariat and Selection and Extension of Military Personnel in United Nations Contracted Posts (Professional Level) in Field Missions.	31 December 2023
4	DPO should review the capacity of the administrative team of the Office of Military Affairs for processing nominations against advertised campaign positions for seconded military officers and sustaining the institutional memory in managing the recruitment process.	Important	O	Receipt of the results of the analysis of the capacity of the OMA administrative team and evidence of remedial actions taken.	31 December 2023
5	DPO should review options to develop a portal between the Office of Military Affairs and permanent missions to United Nations Headquarters whereby nominations of seconded military officers could be uploaded, and status provided to Member	Important	O	Receipt of the results of the review of options to develop a portal for the recruitment of seconded personnel and evidence of actions taken.	31 December 2023

## STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the  
Department of Peace Operations**

	States on their nominated candidates thus reducing the manual nature of the recruitment process.				
6	DPO should integrate the substantive role of seconded military personnel in the work plans of relevant organizational units of the Office of Military Affairs to reflect impact of their contributions on peace operations with identifiable deliverables.	Important	O	Receipt of strategic plans (work plans) for the fiscal years 2022/23 and 2023/24.	31 September 2023
7	DPO should develop mechanisms to effectively manage the selection of seconded military personnel both at Headquarters and in field missions to ensure inclusivity and balanced representation, taking into consideration large troop contributing countries.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that DPO had developed mechanisms to ensure seconded military personnel from all Member States are fairly represented at Headquarters and in field missions.	31 December 2023
8	DPO should develop a strategy to assist smaller troop contributing countries to build capacity in their efforts to nominate suitable candidates for seconded military personnel positions.	Important	O	Receipt of the English version of the “Guidelines on how to prepare candidates for seconded military posts at the United Nations” and evidence of its distribution to smaller TCCs.	31 December 2023
9	OMA should review the implemented and planned actions identified in the 2018-2028 uniformed gender parity strategy and take steps to increase gender representation of the seconded military personnel, especially in field missions.	Important	O	Receipt of the results of the review of the implemented and planned actions identified in the 2018-2028 uniformed gender parity strategy and evidence of any corrective actions taken.	31 December 2023

<sup>2</sup> Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

<sup>3</sup> Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.

<sup>4</sup> Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

<sup>5</sup> Date provided by DPO in response to recommendations.

# **APPENDIX I**

## **Management Response**

TO: Ms. Fatoumata Ndiaye, Under-Secretary-General,  
A: Office of Internal Oversight Services

DATE: 2 September 2022

REFERENCE: DPO-2022-02666  
CLASSIFICATION: Confidential

THROUGH:  
S/C DE:

FROM: Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General,  
DE: Department of Peace Operations



SUBJECT: **Draft report on an audit of the of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs**  
OBJET: **in the Department of Peace Operations (Assignment No. AP2021-600-01)**

1. I refer to your memorandum OIOS-2022-00804, dated 2 June 2022, regarding the above-mentioned audit. We accept your recommendations and have initiated action to implement them. Please find attached the action plan with target dates for the implementation of the recommendations of the report along with our comments.
2. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We stand ready to provide any further information that may be required.

cc: Gen Birame Diop  
Ms. Eleanor T. Burns  
Ms. Fatemeh Ziai

## Management Response

## Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peace Operations

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	DPO should review the continued relevance of the current skills set of seconded military personnel to the evolving requirements of peace operations to identify and incorporate any gaps in the job profiles required to effectively support the Secretary-General's vision of the new agenda for peace, the Secretariat's global human resources strategy, as well as the Secretary-General's data strategy.	Important	Yes	OMA COS	31 March 2023	OMA is conducting the overall review of the educational and work experience requirements of the Job Descriptions aligned with current skill sets in coordination with the Executive Office of DPO and the Office of Human Resources Management. All the Job Descriptions are undergoing a classification exercise to reflect the GA mandates.
2	DPO should revise the draft standard operating procedures on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Secretariat to clarify the membership composition, duration, and terms of reference of the assessment panel to be established to review the selection process.	Important	Yes	OMA COS	31 March 2023	This requirement will be added in the SOP in consultation with Police Division.
3	DPO should expedite approval and adoption of the standard operating procedures on the Selection and Extension of Seconded Military and Police Officers in the United Nations Headquarters, and for Military Officers at the P-5 level and below in field missions.	Important	Yes	DPO USG	31 December 2023	OMA has 2 SOPs in progress. The overall SOP for the Recruitment of Seconded Personnel in the UN Secretariat will be revised to include recommendation number 2. The final draft of the "Standard Operating Procedure Selection and Extension of Military personnel in UN Contracted

<sup>1</sup> Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

<sup>2</sup> Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.

## Management Response

## Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peace Operations

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						Posts (Professional Level) in Field Missions” is under consultation with stakeholders.
4	DPO should review the capacity of the administrative team of the Office of Military Affairs to process nominations against advertised campaign positions for seconded military officers and sustain the institutional memory in managing the recruitment process.	Important	Yes	OMA COS	31 December 2023	OMA will conduct a review of the team’s capacity with the analysis/justification, with a view to seeking the establishment of additional resources.
5	DPO should review options to develop a portal between the Office of Military Affairs and permanent missions whereby nominations of seconded military officers could be uploaded, and status provided to Member States on their nominated candidates thus reducing the manual nature of the recruitment process.	Important	Yes	OMA COS	31 December 2023	OMA will conduct the review of options to develop the portal for the recruitment of seconded personnel in coordination with the Police Division and with support from the Office of Information and Communications Technology.
6	DPO should integrate the substantive role of seconded military personnel in the work plans of relevant organizational units of the Office of Military Affairs to reflect impact of their contributions on peace operations with identifiable deliverables	Important	Yes	OMA COS	31 September 2023	OMA completed the strategic plan (work plans) for its Service/ Teams for the current fiscal year June 2022 to July 2023. The integrated strategic plan will be share with the auditors. OMA will be able to provide the second annual strategic plan (action plan) / set of services’ plans for the next fiscal year.
7	DPO should develop mechanisms to effectively manage the selection of seconded military personnel both at Headquarters and in field missions to ensure inclusivity and balanced	Important	Yes	OMA COS	31 December 2023	The recruitment of seconded military personnel adheres to the UN Charter Article 101, paragraph 3 which states that “the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of

## Management Response

## Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peace Operations

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	representation, taking into consideration large troop contributing countries.					service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity”. OMA is one of the most diverse Office in the UN Secretariat with 40 nationalities represented. DPO seeks to recruit personnel on as wide a geographical basis as possible, in particular to ensure a proper representation of troop-contributing countries (TCCs), as requested by the General Assembly in A/RES/71/263. OMA will seek to improve its processes for selection, including its outreach to TCCs for the nominations of qualified seconded military personnel, to “ensure equal opportunities for seconded active-duty military and police personnel from all Member States” as requested by the General Assembly in A/RES/75/292. .
8	DPO should develop a strategy to assist smaller troop contributing countries to build capacity in their efforts to nominate suitable candidates for seconded military personnel positions.	Important	Yes	OMA COS	31 December 2023	OMA continuously engages with smaller TCCs to support them in the submission of nominations of seconded personnel for seconded posts at Headquarters and in field operations, within the limitations of the resources available to the office to do so. OMA has partnered with the “Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie” for the development of

## Management Response

## Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peace Operations

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						“Guidelines on how to prepare candidates for seconded military posts at the United Nations”, aimed at supporting smaller TCCs. Subject to the obtention of funding, OMA will translate these guidelines into English for distribution to non-francophone TCCs.
9	OMA should review the implemented and planned actions identified in the 2018-2028 uniformed gender parity strategy and take steps to increase gender representation of the seconded military personnel, especially in field missions.	Important	Yes	OMA COS	31 December 2023	<p>OMA Gender Adviser, supporting OMA in achieving gender parity and implementing the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy (UGPS), will review the implemented and planned actions identified in the 2018-2028 uniformed gender parity strategy, related to military personnel, in liaison with Service / Team Chiefs, Service / Team Gender Focal Points and OMA Administrative Team.</p> <p>OMA Gender Adviser will work closely with ODCSS (as coordinator of the UGPS) to assess whether current targets set for various categories of personnel and units as well as recommended actions within the UGPS have been implemented or should be modified or updated. An important consideration in the assessment will be the ability to reach out to TCCs for accurate data related to their respective uniformed strength and ability to deploy/release qualified</p>



Management Response

Audit of the recruitment of seconded military personnel by the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peace Operations

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						female military personnel at UN Headquarters and in field operations.

