



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2017/046

Audit of recruitment of national staff in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

There was a need to implement an effective recruitment strategy, adequately staff the National Recruitment Cell and comply with existing recruitment policies, procedures and guidelines

9 June 2017

Assignment No. AP2015/637/03

Audit of recruitment of national staff in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes over the recruitment of national staff in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The audit covered the period from 14 September 2014 to 30 November 2016 and included a review of human resources targets and strategies, human resources policies and procedures, and retention of documentation of recruitment actions.

MINUSCA had widely circulated its job vacancies to attract potential applicants and generally achieved its overall target of 40 per cent vacancy rate. However, the Mission needed to ensure an effective recruitment strategy is implemented, the National Recruitment Cell is adequately staffed and existing recruitment policies, procedures and guidelines are complied with.

OIOS made eight recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, MINUSCA needed to:

- Address recruitment challenges and implement appropriate actions to expedite the recruitment of national staff and improve gender balance;
- Allocate additional staffing resources to the National Recruitment Cell to ensure that it performs its mandated tasks effectively;
- Conduct a capacity needs assessment to identify training needs of national staff and develop and implement a long-term capacity-building plan;
- Ensure interview panelists have completed the mandatory training in competency-based interviewing skills before participating in interview panels;
- Ensure a formal delegation of authority is issued to the Chief Human Resources Officer for the approval of candidates recommended to fill vacant national posts;
- Ensure selection decisions are made at the appropriate levels and in compliance with the Mission's delegation of recruitment authority;
- Ensure a competitive process is followed for all appointments of more than three months;
- Enforce the requirements for background and reference checks to independently verify the educational qualifications and work experiences for selected staff; and
- Develop and implement a filing system in the Human Resources Section to provide adequate documentation of all stages of the recruitment process.

MINUSCA accepted the recommendations and has initiated action to implement them.

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Audit of recruitment of national staff in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the recruitment of national staff in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).
2. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for MINUSCA had the delegation of authority for the recruitment of national staff. The SRSG sub-delegated this authority to the Director of Mission Support (DMS). The DMS retained the authority to approve the selection of candidates but sub-delegated the on-boarding of selected candidates to the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). In addition, the MINUSCA Human Resources Section was responsible for: (a) managing the Mission's recruitment; (b) administering and providing support on human resources policies, procedures and guidelines; and (c) managing vacancies in coordination with the respective hiring managers.
3. The Human Resources Section was headed by a CHRO at the P-5 level and had 27 posts comprising 16 international staff, 10 national staff and 1 United Nations volunteer. The 2015/16 and 2016/17 budgets for the salaries and entitlements of national staff were \$5.7 million and \$9.2 million respectively. The Mission had 664 and 696 authorized national posts for the 2015/16 and 2016/17 fiscal years respectively.
4. Comments provided by MINUSCA are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

5. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes over the recruitment of national staff in MINUSCA.
6. This audit was included in the 2016 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the high number of vacant national posts and the high operational risks associated with the recruitment process of national staff in the Mission.
7. OIOS conducted this audit from December 2016 to March 2017. The audit covered the period from 14 September 2014 to 30 November 2016. Based on the activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risks in key areas of the recruitment process including: (a) human resources targets and strategies; (b) human resources policies and procedures; and (c) retention of documentation of recruitment actions.
8. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews of key personnel; (b) review of relevant documentation; (c) analytical reviews of data; and (d) review of sample recruitment files.

III. OVERALL CONCLUSION

9. MINUSCA had widely circulated its job vacancies to attract potential applicants and generally achieved its overall target of 40 per cent vacancy rate. However, the Mission needed to: (a) expedite the recruitment of national staff and further improve gender balance; (b) adequately staff the National Recruitment Cell; (c) implement a long-term capacity-building plan for national staff; (d) ensure

interview panelists completed training in competency-based interviewing skills; (e) ensure that selection decisions were approved by duly authorized officials; (f) ensure that a formal delegation of authority is issued to the CHRO for the approval of candidates recommended to fill vacant national posts; (g) ensure that competitive recruitment process was consistently followed; and (h) conduct background and reference checks of selected candidates.

IV. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Human resources targets and strategies

There was a need to expedite the recruitment of national staff and further improve gender balance

10. In its 2015/16 budget, MINUSCA had planned to achieve a vacancy rate of 40 per cent and the General Assembly requires MINUSCA to achieve a gender balance of 50:50. The Department of Field Support (DFS) guidelines on the selection of locally recruited staff (the DFS Guidelines) require MINUSCA to maintain pre-approved rosters of qualified candidates. The General Assembly report on human resources management reform requires MINUSCA to fill vacancies within 120 days of the recruitment process being initiated.

11. Interviews with key personnel in the Human Resources Section and reviews of the Mission's workforce dashboard and post management database for national staff, and 80 recruitment files indicated that the Mission had generally achieved its overall target of 40 per cent vacancy rate. As at 30 June 2016, the vacancy rate for national staff posts was 36 per cent and as at 30 November 2016, it increased to 42 per cent due to the approval of 73 additional posts in the 2016/17 budget. However:

- There were a high number of posts that had been vacant for prolonged periods as of 30 November 2016. For example, 156 of the 696 authorized posts had been vacant for over 883 days and another 27 posts had been vacant for periods ranging between 433 and 580 days;
- As of 30 November 2016, only 21 per cent of 422 national staff were women;
- The Mission had not established a roster even though its recruitment exercises had identified a number of qualified candidates and the hiring managers had recommended in many cases more than one candidate. For example, in 11 of 84 recruitment cases reviewed, the hiring managers had recommended 25 candidates to be placed on the roster; and
- For 70 of 80 reviewed recruitment cases, the National Recruitment Cell took on average 242 days to complete the recruitments including: (a) 207 days from announcing the job openings to selecting candidates in 44 recruitment cases; and (b) 58 days to on-board the selected candidates in 42 recruitment cases. On average, the Cell took: (a) 25 days to pre-screen applicants in 58 recruitment cases; (b) 19 days to approve the selection of recommended candidates in 48 recruitment cases; (c) 32 days to send job offer letters to selected candidates in 35 recruitment cases; (d) 25 days to conduct medical clearance of selected candidates in 59 recruitment cases; and (e) 33 days to on-board medically cleared selected candidates in 55 recruitment cases.

12. The above resulted because the Mission underestimated challenges related to the recruitment of national staff such as the low literacy rate among women and had not taken effective actions to overcome known challenges. Additionally, the Mission had not allocated adequate staffing resources to the National Recruitment Cell, which had only two staff including one international staff at the FS-5 level and one national staff at the GS-5 level out of the 27 authorized posts in the Human Resources Section.

13. The large number of vacant posts meant that staff had to be subjected to undue pressure in order to implement mandated activities. Interviews with hiring managers in sections such as Engineering, Public Information, and Justice and Corrections indicated that planned operational requirements could not be fulfilled due to the large number of vacant posts in their respective sections.

(1) MINUSCA should take effective actions to address the challenges related to the recruitment of national staff and implement appropriate actions to expedite the recruitment of national staff and improve gender balance.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 1 and stated that it had implemented additional measures to attract more candidates including women and ensured that all qualified candidates were short-listed for job openings that correspond to their profiles. In order to improve the gender ratio in the Mission, the human resources ex-officio member in interview panels always encouraged selection of female over male candidates, if they were equally qualified for the position, and the Mission copied local women associations on all national job openings. Moreover, a proposal to establish a mission review panel was underway. Recommendation 1 remains open pending verification of additional measures implemented to expedite the recruitment of national staff and to attract more female candidates.

(2) MINUSCA should allocate additional staffing resources to the National Recruitment Cell to ensure that it performs its mandated tasks effectively.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it would make a provision in the next budget period for additional staffing resources for the National Recruitment Cell. In the interim, the Mission would explore the possibility of assigning temporary resources to the Cell. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence of increased staffing resources in the National Recruitment Cell.

There was a need to develop a long-term capacity-building plan for national staff

14. In its 2015/16 budget, MINUSCA stated that it was in the process of establishing a long-term capacity-building plan, starting with soft skills training, which would be followed with a comprehensive technical training programme to develop the skills required to fill the requirements of the Mission.

15. The Integrated Mission Training Centre (IMTC) had been offering training to national staff in soft skills and career development in order to develop national staff capacity. A review of IMTC training records indicated that, out of 422 national staff on-boarded as of 30 June 2016, national staff had attended IMTC organized training including: 133 (32 per cent) in national staff induction, 63 (15 per cent) in language classes, 81 (19 per cent) in Microsoft Office package courses and 49 (12 per cent) in career development courses such as writing Personal History Profile and competency-based interview techniques.

16. However, interviews with the CHRO at the time of the audit indicated that the Mission had not yet initiated a formal long-term capacity-building plan for national staff starting with a capacity needs assessment to identify the training needs or capacity gaps of national staff. As a result, there was a risk that MINUSCA may not fully develop national staff to ensure cost-effective implementation of mandated activities.

(3) MINUSCA should take appropriate steps to: (a) conduct a capacity needs assessment to identify the training needs of national staff; and (b) develop and implement a long-term

capacity-building plan to increase the capacity of national staff.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the IMTC had begun preliminary training needs assessment for national staff in Bangui, Bouar and Kaga Bandoro; was compiling results of recently conducted survey of section chiefs as regards prioritizing national staff capacity-building needs; and was preparing a detailed two-year programme on MINUSCA national staff capacity-building to be discussed with senior management in September 2017. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of the results of capacity needs assessment and national staff capacity-building programme.

B. Human resources policies and procedures

Job vacancy announcements were widely circulated

17. The DFS Guidelines require MINUSCA to: (a) widely circulate vacancy announcements to attract sufficient number of qualified candidates; and (b) advertise position-specific job openings for 30 calendar days or exceptionally for 15 days to meet immediate operational requirements.

18. A review of the recruitment process indicated that, during the audit period, the Mission had advertised vacant positions using the: (a) MINUSCA website; (b) local radio stations through the Mission's Public Information Office; and (c) billboard outside of the Mission's Log Base in Bangui. For vacant positions located in the sectors, the Mission also used billboards located at the respective sector headquarters. In the past, the Mission also advertised vacant posts in the local newspapers but due to lack of funding, this practice had been discontinued.

19. A review of 80 recruitment files indicated that, in 72 recruitment cases, the average posting period for vacant positions was 13 days including: 10 vacant posts advertised for 7 to 9 days and 62 vacant posts advertised for 13 to 15 days. The Mission indicated that, as a start-up Mission, it had advertised job vacancies for less than 30 days to shorten the duration of recruiting staff so as to meet operational requirements. Additionally, the short duration for posting vacancies did not have a major effect in the number of applications received since the Mission received 52 applications on average for the 72 recruitment cases reviewed.

20. OIOS concluded that the Mission had implemented appropriate procedures to widely circulate job vacancies to attract potential applicants.

There was a need to verify that interview panelists have completed the mandatory training in competency-based interviewing skills

21. The DFS Guidelines require MINUSCA to: (a) conduct competency-based interviews with at least three panelists that are at the same or higher level as the post being recruited; (b) ensure that all panelists have completed the mandatory training in competency-based interviewing skills; and (c) attest that proper selection process was followed.

22. A review of 67 recruitment cases and interviews with personnel in the Human Resources Section indicated that each interview panel comprised three to four panelists at the same or higher level as the post being recruited. However, the panelists had not completed the mandatory training in competency-based interviewing skills and, in 17 cases, the CHRO did not sign the comparative evaluation reports prepared by the panels to confirm that proper selection processes were followed.

23. The above resulted because the Human Resources Section did not take steps to: (a) enforce the requirement for all interview panelists to have completed the mandatory training on competency-based interviewing skills even though IMTC had been offering this training since December 2015; and (b) ensure that the comparative evaluation reports prepared by the panels were reviewed by duly authorized staff of the Human Resources Section to confirm that the selection process was followed. Consequently, there was no assurance that the recruitment process was fair and ensured the most qualified candidates were recruited.

(4) MINUSCA should take appropriate steps to ensure that: (a) interview panelists have completed the mandatory training in competency-based interviewing skills before participating in interview panels; and (b) a duly authorized personnel of the Human Resources Section reviews the comparative evaluation reports prepared by panels to confirm that proper selection process was followed.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 4 and stated that interview panel members had completed the competency-based interview training and that the Human Resources Section reviewed the comparative evaluation reports prepared by the interview panels. Recommendation 4 remains open pending verification over a period of six months that the controls now implemented by MINUSCA has been consistently followed and has worked throughout the period.

Delegation of recruitment authority needed to be monitored

24. The DFS Guidelines require the Head of Mission to make selection decisions, in consultation with the hiring manager concerned, taking into account the human resources objectives and targets as set out in the human resources scorecard. The Head of Mission has sub-delegated this authority to the DMS.

25. A review of 67 recruitment cases indicated that 41 selections were duly approved by the DMS. However, five were approved by the CHRO between April and June 2015 without having the required delegation of authority to approve them. The DMS through an instruction dated 11 January 2017 authorized the CHRO to start approving all national recruitments but a formal delegation of authority to support this instruction was not issued. Moreover, the selection memoranda for the remaining 21 selections were not approved although the selected candidates were on-boarded.

26. The above resulted because the DMS did not (a) issue a formal delegation of authority to the CHRO for the approval of recommended candidates; and (b) take effective steps to ensure compliance with the delegation of recruitment authority. As a result, there was an unmitigated risk of irregularities in the recruitment process.

(5) MINUSCA should: (a) issue a formal delegation of authority to the Chief Human Resources Officer for the approval of candidates recommended to fill vacant national posts; and (b) take effective steps to ensure that selection decisions are made at the appropriate levels and in compliance with the Mission's delegation of recruitment authority.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 5 and stated a formal delegation of authority for the approval of candidates recommended to fill vacant national posts had been issued to the CHRO. Recommendation 5 remains open pending verification over a period of six months that all appointments of national staff are consistently approved by officials with the relevant delegation of authority, given that the control has just been put in place.

There was a need to recruit national staff based on a competitive selection process

27. United Nations staff rules require MINUSCA to recruit staff on a competitive basis.
28. A review of 80 recruitment files indicated that, in the following three cases, the DMS selected candidates who were not assessed during the relevant recruitment exercises or did not have the relevant experiences:
- A candidate was selected as Procurement Assistant at the GS-5 level on a one-year fixed-term appointment even though the candidate was not assessed during the recruitment process and did not have the relevant educational qualification and work experience;
 - A candidate was selected as Assistant Administrative Officer at the National Professional Officer level A on a one-year fixed-term appointment without the relevant educational qualification; and
 - A candidate was selected as a driver at the GS-2 level initially for a three-month fixed-term appointment, which was regularized to a one year fixed-term period upon expiry date without following a competitive recruitment process.
29. MINUSCA advised that the DMS has the authority to recruit staff that has not undergone a competitive selection process under the administrative instruction on the administration of temporary appointments. However, a review of the administrative instruction indicated that the Mission only has the authority to recruit staff without a competitive selection process for temporary appointments of three months or less. Any extension beyond three months requires the issuance of a vacancy announcement.
30. As a result, the recruitment process was not transparent and fair, and there was no assurance that it resulted in the selection of the most qualified staff.

(6) MINUSCA should take steps to ensure that a competitive recruitment process is followed for all appointments of more than three months.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 6 and stated that: it had consistently followed a competitive process for all national staff appointments for more than three months; and the Human Resources Section would provide regular briefings on the recruitment process to senior management highlighting the requirement for competitive recruitment process for all appointments of more than three months. Recommendation 6 remains open pending verification over a period of six months that MINUSCA has consistently followed a competitive process for all national staff appointments for more than three months, given that the control has just been put in place.

Background and reference checks of selected candidates needed to be conducted

31. The DFS Guidelines require MINUSCA to conduct background and reference checks and independently verify the educational qualifications and work experiences for selected candidates or document its efforts in these regards if the prevailing situation prevented the completion of reference and background checks through no fault of the candidate.
32. A review of 80 recruitment files indicated that the National Recruitment Cell did not conduct reference and background checks. The Cell did not contact the relevant educational institutions and

employers to authenticate the academic credentials and verify the current and past work experiences of candidates.

33. The Mission advised that conducting reference and background checks before on-boarding the selected candidates would further slow the recruitment process. As a result, there was a risk that MINUSCA may recruit unqualified candidates.

(7) MINUSCA should implement effective procedures to enforce the requirements for background and reference checks to independently verify the educational qualifications and work experiences of selected staff.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 7 and stated that it had conducted background and reference checks of selected staff. Recommendation 7 remains open pending verification that the Mission is consistently conducting background and reference checks.

C. Retention of recruitment documentation

Recruitment files were incomplete

34. The administrative instructions on staff selection system require MINUSCA to maintain adequate documentation of the recruitment process to support selection decisions by hiring managers.

35. A review of 80 recruitment files indicated that they were incomplete as: (a) 25 files did not include vacancy announcements for job openings; (b) 22 files did not include records of pre-screening of applicants; (c) 35 files did not contain interview records and comparative evaluation reports of candidates; (d) 14 files did not include the selection memorandum; (e) 2 files did not include offer letters and 18 files did not contain letters of appointment; (f) 76 files did not include signed records of candidates' declaration of loyalty to the United Nations and Standards of Conduct; and (g) 8 files did not contain medical clearance certificates of candidates. Further, personnel in the National Recruitment Cell could not provide recruitment files for the 17 national staff recruited in 2014.

36. The above resulted because the National Recruitment Cell had not developed and implemented a filing system to provide adequate documentation of all phases of the recruitment and selection processes. For example, the staff members in the Cell had to search for recruitment documents of selected national staff from various repository locations such as email records and staff personnel files to be included in the recruitment files. Consequently, MINUSCA did not have documentation to support candidates' selection decisions and this had diminished the Mission's transparency, fairness and competitiveness of its recruitment and selection of national staff.

(8) MINUSCA should develop and implement a filing system in the Human Resources Section to provide adequate documentation of all stages of the recruitment process.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 8 and stated that the Human Resources Section would migrate from existing method of filing electronic documents in shared network drives to the COSMOS document management system and establish proper document handling policies and practices. Recommendation 8 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has implemented an adequate and effective filing system.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

(Signed) Eleanor T. Burns
Director, Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Audit of recruitment of national staff in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1	MINUSCA should take effective actions to address the challenges related to the recruitment of national staff and implement appropriate actions to expedite the recruitment of national staff and improve gender balance.	Important	O	Verification of additional measures implemented to expedite the recruitment of national staff and to attract more female candidates.	31 December 2017
2	MINUSCA should allocate additional staffing resources to the National Recruitment Cell to ensure that it performs its mandated tasks effectively.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of increased staffing resources in the National Recruitment Cell.	31 December 2017
3	MINUSCA should take appropriate steps to: (a) conduct a capacity needs assessment to identify the training needs of national staff; and (b) develop and implement a long-term capacity-building plan to increase the capacity of national staff.	Important	O	Receipt of the results of capacity needs assessment and national staff capacity-building programme.	31 December 2017
4	MINUSCA should take appropriate steps to ensure that: (a) interview panelists have completed the mandatory training in competency-based interviewing skills before participating in interview panels; and (b) a duly authorized personnel of the Human Resources Section reviews the comparative evaluation reports prepared by panels to confirm that proper selection process was followed.	Important	O	Verification over a period of six months that the controls now implemented by MINUSCA has been consistently followed and has worked throughout the period.	30 June 2017
5	MINUSCA should: (a) issue a formal delegation of authority to the Chief Human Resources Officer for the approval of candidates recommended to fill vacant national posts; and (b) take effective steps to	Important	O	Verification over a period of six months that all appointments of national staff are consistently approved by officials with the relevant delegation of authority.	30 June 2017

¹ Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

³ C = closed, O = open

⁴ Date provided by MINUSCA in response to recommendations.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Audit of recruitment of national staff in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
	ensure that selection decisions are made at the appropriate levels and in compliance with the Mission's delegation of recruitment authority.				
6	MINUSCA should take steps to ensure that a competitive recruitment process is followed for all appointments of more than three months.	Important	O	Verification over a period of six months that MINUSCA has consistently followed a competitive process for all national staff appointments for more than three months.	30 June 2017
7	MINUSCA should implement effective procedures to enforce the requirements for background and reference checks to independently verify the educational qualifications and work experiences of selected staff.	Important	O	Verification that the Mission is consistently conducting background and reference checks.	31 December 2017
8	MINUSCA should develop and implement a filing system in the Human Resources Section to provide adequate documentation of all stages of the recruitment process.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has implemented an adequate and effective filing system.	31 December 2017

APPENDIX I

Management Response

United Nations

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated
Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic



MINUSCA

Nations Unies

Mission Multidimensionnelle Intégrée des Nations Unies
pour la Stabilisation en République centrafricaine

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

TO: Mr. Bolton Tarleh Nyema , Peacekeeping Audit Service
A: Internal Audit Division, OIOS

DATE: 30 May 2017

REFERENCE: SRSG/012/2017

FROM: Parfait Onanga-Anyanga
Special Representative of the Secretary General

Diane Corner
Risk's Political's Protection
MINUSCA / BANOU

SUBJECT: **Draft report on an audit of recruitment of national staff in the United Nations**
OBJET: **Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**
(Assignment No. AP2016/637/03)

1. With reference to your memorandum dated 17th of May 2017, on the captioned-subject matter, please find attached MINUSCA's response (Appendix I) to the draft report for your consideration and records.
2. The supporting evidence related to our response will be physically handed over to the Chief Resident Auditor in the Mission.

Attachments: 1

cc: Mr. Milan Trojanović, Director of Mission Support, MINUSCA
Ms. Arthi Gounder, Chief Human Resources Officer, MINUSCA
Mr. Zacky-Iyane Sy, Chief Recruitment Unit, MINUSCA\
Ms. Marie-Michelle Aurelus, Head of National Recruitment Cell, MINUSCA
Mr. Daniel Liviu Curea, Audit Focal Point, MINUSCA
Ms. Eleanor T. Burns, Director, Internal Audit Division, OIOS
Mr. Laud Botchwey, Chief Resident Auditor, MINUSCA, IAD, OIOS
Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Professional Practices Section, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Management Response

**Audit of recruitment of national staff in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	MINUSCA should take effective actions to address the challenges related to the recruitment of national staff and implement appropriate actions to expedite the recruitment of national staff and improve gender balance.	Important	Yes	CHRO	31/12/2017	MINUSCA has implemented additional measures to attract more candidates including women. We also ensure that all qualified candidates are short-listed for job openings that correspond to their profiles. As a result, there has been a significant increase of national staff candidates applying to MINUSCA job openings. In order to improve the gender ratio in the mission, the HR ex-officio member in interview panels always encourages the selection of female over male candidates, if they are equally qualified for the position. We also continue to copy the local women associations on all job openings for national positions in order to identify qualified women candidates. A proposal for the establishment of a Mission Review Panel (MRP) has been prepared and will be reviewed for endorsement and implementation.
2	MINUSCA should allocate additional staffing resources to the National	Important	Yes	DMS/CHRO	31/12/2017	A provision for additional staffing resources will be made in the

¹ Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

Management Response

**Audit of recruitment of national staff in the
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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	Recruitment Cell to ensure that it performs its mandated tasks effectively.					submission for the next budget period. As an interim solution, the mission will explore the possibility of assigning temporary resources to the National Recruitment Cell.
3	MINUSCA should take appropriate steps to: (a) conduct a capacity needs assessment to identify the training needs of national staff; and (b) develop and implement a long-term capacity building plan to increase the capacity of national staff.	Important	Yes	CHRO	31/12/2017	MINUSCA IMTC had begun preliminary Training Needs for National Staff respectively in Bangui, Bouar and Kaga Bandoro. In parallel, IMTC has recently developed a questionnaire to MINUSCA Section Chiefs with regard to their priority to meet national staff capacity building needs, since this is a shared responsibility. IMTC is currently visiting Managers to compile sections' inputs while a two-year detailed program on MINUSCA National Staff Capacity Building is being prepared by IMTC. The draft to be discussed with Senior Management by coming September.
4	MINUSCA should take appropriate steps to ensure that: (a) interview panelists have completed the mandatory training in competency-based interviewing skills before participating in interview panels; and (b) a duly authorized personnel of the Human Resources Section signs the comparative evaluation reports prepared by panels to confirm that proper selection	Important	Yes	CHRO	Implemented	MINUSCA interview panel members have completed the competency-based interview (CBI) training and the Human Resources reviews the comparative evaluation reports prepared by the interview panels.

Management Response

**Audit of recruitment of national staff in the
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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	process was followed.					
5	MINUSCA should: (a) issue a formal delegation of authority to the CHRO for the approval of candidates recommended to fill out vacant national posts and (b) take effective steps to ensure that selection decisions are made at the appropriate levels and in compliance with the Mission's delegation of recruitment authority.	Important	Yes	DMS/CHRO	Implemented	A formal delegation of authority is issued to the CHRO for the approval of candidates recommended to fill out vacant national posts.
6	MINUSCA should take steps to ensure that a competitive recruitment process is followed for all appointments of more than three months.	Important	Yes	CHRO	Implemented	MINUSCA has consistently followed a competitive process for all national staff appointments for more than three months. HR Section will provide regular briefings on the recruitment process to Senior Management and Hiring Managers. HR Section will highlight in particular the requirement to undertake a competitive recruitment process for all appointments exceeding three months.
7	MINUSCA should implement effective procedures to enforce the requirements for background and reference checks to independently verify the educational qualifications and work experiences for selected staff.	Important	Yes	CHRO	31/12/2017	MINUSCA has conducted background and reference checks to independently verify the educational qualifications and work experiences of selected staff.
8	MINUSCA should develop and implement	Important	Yes	CHRO	31/12/2017	HR Section to request professional

Management Response

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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	a filing system in the Human Resources Section to provide adequate documentation of all stages in the recruitment process.					expertise from in-mission document management experts in order to fully migrate from existing method of filing electronic documents in network shared drives to the COSMOS document management system. Moreover, HR Section to request expert advice and assistance to establish proper document handling policies and practices that will address the section's needs for document security, indexing, searching, and retention. At the same time, the HR Section is to obtain sufficient physical storage space for archival purposes.