



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2021/032

Audit of the checkout of personnel in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

**The Mission developed and implemented an
adequate personnel drawdown plan but
needed to ensure timely deprovisioning of
Umoja roles for all separating personnel**

29 July 2021

Assignment No. AP2021-634-04

Audit of the checkout of personnel in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the checkout of personnel in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the personnel checkout process in UNAMID. The audit covered the period from 1 January to 30 April 2021 and focused on the checkout process of civilian and uniformed personnel (excluding contingent personnel).

The Mission had successfully developed and implemented a personnel drawdown plan and had already separated 1,356 out of the planned 1,911 personnel. However, improvement was required to ensure timely deprovisioning of Umoja roles for separated personnel.

OIOS made one recommendation for UNAMID to enhance its checkout procedures to include deprovisioning of those Umoja roles for all separating personnel. UNAMID accepted the recommendation and has already acted to implement it.

CONTENTS

I. BACKGROUND	1
II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY	2
III. AUDIT RESULTS	2-4
A. Planning for personnel checkout	2-3
B. Checkout procedures	3-4
IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	5
ANNEX I	Status of audit recommendations
APPENDIX I	Management response

Audit of the checkout of personnel in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the checkout of personnel in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).
2. By its resolution 2559 (2020), the Security Council decided to terminate the mandate of UNAMID as of 31 December 2020 and complete its drawdown, including the withdrawal of all uniformed and civilian personnel by 30 June 2021 followed by the Mission liquidation on 1 July 2021.
3. The separation and retrenchment of Mission personnel are governed by the United Nations staff regulations and rules, the United Nations financial regulations and rules, the Department of Operational Support (DOS) Liquidation Manual, DOS Guidance on the drawdown of UNAMID, and UNAMID guidelines on personnel separation.
4. The Mission had established an Administrative Task Force (ATF), chaired by Chief, Operations and Resource Management, to provide guidance and ensure effective drawdown and liquidation of administrative functions, including human resources management. The ATF reported to the Mission Support Planning Team on the implementation of the administrative drawdown and liquidation activities against established targets and milestones.
5. The Human Resources Management Unit (HRMU) is responsible for the planning, coordinating, and executing of the checkout process of all Mission personnel, including preparation of final separation documents. Mission personnel comprise civilian personnel (international, national and United Nations volunteers (UNVs)) and uniformed personnel such as individual police officers (IPOs) and staff officers. The Unit was headed by a Chief at the P-4 level, supported by 12 international and 15 national staff.
6. The Mission had developed a drawdown plan for 2,201 civilian and uniformed personnel, which included the checkout of 740 uniformed personnel by 10 June 2021 and 1,171 civilian personnel by 30 June 2021 as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Personnel drawdown plan from January to June 2021

Personnel type	Personnel strength as of January 2021	Liquidation team	Separations as of 31 March 2021	Planned separations to 30 June 2021
International	467	117	118	232
National	932	156	182	594
UNVs	60	15	10	35
IPOs and staff officers	742	2	605	135
Total	2,201	290	915	996

Source: UNAMID drawdown plan

7. Comments provided by UNAMID are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

8. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the personnel checkout process in UNAMID.

9. This audit was included in the 2021 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to financial and operational risks related to non-recovery of assets and advances issued to separating personnel, and unresolved claims prior to personnel separation during a tight timeline for the Mission drawdown, as well as potential gaps in reassignment of duties of separating personnel to ensure business continuity.

10. OIOS conducted this audit in April and May 2021. The audit covered the period from 1 January to 30 April 2021 and focused on the checkout process of civilian and uniformed personnel (excluding contingent personnel). The human resources drawdown, comparative review process, staff capacity building and career development were covered during a separate OIOS assignment on the phasing out of human resources during the drawdown period in UNAMID (report 2019/096 dated 31 October 2019).

11. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews of key personnel; (b) review of relevant documents; (c) analytical review of data; and (d) testing of 93 randomly selected personnel checked out during the audit period.

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

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Planning for personnel checkout

The Mission had successfully developed and implemented a personnel drawdown plan

13. UNAMID is required to properly plan for personnel drawdown and separation, ensuring sufficient capacity is retained for efficient liquidation activities.

14. The Mission had prepared a detailed drawdown plan for all personnel being cognizant of staffing requirements for its liquidation activities. The plan contained proposed personnel separations from January to June 2021 and included information such as staff location sites to help synchronize the separation of staff with the camp closure dates; and proposed and actual separation dates to facilitate the separation process. UNAMID also implemented a tracking system to ensure staff were notified of their separation within the required notification period, and to monitor whether the actual separation took place as planned.

15. UNAMID had been providing adequate termination notice to its personnel, which was at least 30 days for those with a fixed term appointment and 15 days for staff with temporary appointments. UNAMID was actively monitoring the implementation of the plan. Bi-weekly status reports on the administrative drawdown were prepared by ATF and provided to the Mission Support Planning Team. OIOS review showed that UNAMID was mostly on track with the process, albeit with some delays.

16. All UNVs were separated on their planned separation date. As of 15 April 2021, 65 per cent of personnel were separated on or before their planned date, while the remaining 35 per cent (166 personnel) were separated 36 days on average after their proposed separation date. The reasons for delays were properly documented and were mainly due to: (a) the COVID-19 quarantine requirements for persons who had tested positive before leaving; (b) sick leave for personnel who got sick prior to departure and could

not travel; and (c) changes to team sites closure schedules. OIOS concluded that UNAMID had adequately planned for personnel drawdown and separation process.

B. Checkout procedures

The Mission was acting on claims, advances and assets assigned to separated staff

17. As part of the checkout process, UNAMID is required to ensure that: (a) assets assigned to staff are recovered; (b) outstanding amounts are settled; (c) access to enterprise systems is deprovisioned; and (d) disciplinary or rebuttal cases and other claims are addressed. To facilitate the checkout process, the Mission had established one-stop centralized separation centres in El Fasher and Zalingei to assist departing personnel to complete all necessary administrative requirements for better coordination and efficiency. Broadcasts were also issued to remind staff and their supervisors of their responsibility to ensure that all pending actions related to: (a) staff entitlements (leave balances, performance assessments, education grant advances and travel expense reports) were duly completed before separation; and (b) handing over Mission equipment (laptops, printers, vehicles, radios).

18. The ATF maintained the list of all investigations and outstanding disciplinary matters and set fortnightly targets for their resolution, pertaining to cases pending with: (a) the Board of Inquiry (for special investigations, force provost marshal, military police and internal investigations unit, and claims for member states death and disability claims), (b) the Conduct and Discipline Team, (c) the Claims Unit (for timely write-off of all UNAMID assets and processing of insured claims and other duty of care cases), and (d) the Management Evaluation Unit. OIOS review showed that the targets were closely monitored and reported on as part of the monthly pre-liquidation progress performance reports submitted to the Mission Support Planning Team, and that action was being taken to address outstanding matters. For example, the Board of Inquiry had 15 cases (personnel death claims) in February 2021, and by 30 April 2021, 6 were resolved and appropriate action taken.

19. Third-party claims, mainly relating to demand for compensation from the United Nations for motor vehicle accidents, had also been resolved from 15 in February 2021 to 7 in April 2021. OIOS review also confirmed that separation actions for pending management evaluation cases related to separation disputes for permanent and continuing contract holders had been suspended and their review was ongoing. OIOS concluded that controls over claims and investigations during the drawdown period were in place.

20. The Regional Service Centre Entebbe administers collection of receivables from civilian staff and uniformed personnel on behalf of UNAMID as per the service level agreement. OIOS review of accounts receivable balances as of 15 May 2021 noted an outstanding amount of \$197,000 related to education grant advanced to a staff member who had already separated. Subsequently, OIOS received evidence that these advances were cleared through recovery from final payments.

21. Of 93 randomly selected personnel separated during the Mission drawdown, 18 staff still had 52 assets with an acquisition cost of \$390,000 assigned to them. Further analyses showed that the 52 assets were fully depreciated “common assets” held on behalf of the section, and included items such as: water desalination unit, prefabricated ablution and accommodation blocks, generators and office and personnel information technology equipment. This happened because the Mission had not updated Umoja records during the checkout process or when a staff member was relocated and was no longer associated with the common assets. For example, one staff member was assigned 19 assets including sea containers, television sets, a water desalination plant, and generators, based on his position at the team site.

22. The Mission informed that the checkout process had been challenging given the scale and complexity of the drawdown operations, and the number of uniformed and civilian personnel being separated. Additionally, due to the COVID-19 pandemic many personnel checked out remotely. As a result, the checkout process may not have been as timely and led to delays in some equipment clearance. There were several instances where, in order not to delay the process, the checkout was processed with remarks, including cases where assets were returned to the nearest United Nations office in staff member's home country. The Mission was in the process of writing-off lost equipment, and processing assets that were manually returned or transferred to other personnel through hand-over forms, but the changes were not yet recorded in Umoja. For example, 21 of the 52 equipment were subsequently cleared in Umoja, and 19 items of equipment were placed through a write-off process. UNAMID confirmed that if a staff is unable to account for assets under their name, the relevant amounts will be deducted from the final settlement. In view of the actions taken by the Mission, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

Umoja user roles for separated personnel were not promptly removed

23. Of 93 randomly selected personnel, 52 had Umoja access rights although they had separated as of 15 April 2021. The access rights were in various functional areas, including service entry approval and invoice processing. Delayed deprovisioning of separated users occurred because the UNAMID Field Technology Service Section (FTS) was not strictly adhering to the requirement to deactivate all Umoja access rights as part of the checkout process, and an additional control was not implemented to ensure timely deprovisioning, increasing financial and security risks related to unauthorized access.

(1) UNAMID should enhance its checkout procedures to include deprovisioning of Umoja roles no longer required for all separating personnel.

UNAMID accepted the recommendation and stated that after the end of drawdown on 30 June 2021, a comprehensive review was conducted of all Umoja roles and all roles were effectively removed (other than Umoja Self Service Roles CR01) for staff not in the UNAMID liquidation team. For the liquidation period, UNAMID was taking a robust and proactive approach on management of Umoja roles, not just to ensure timely deprovisioning of Umoja roles for separating staff, but also to ensure that departing staff will not leave a gap with regards to Umoja roles required for completion of liquidation tasks. As such, HRMU would be communicating to the Umoja Security Liaison Officer (SLO) on a weekly basis with details of upcoming separations. The SLO will then communicate to the concerned section chiefs with indications of Umoja roles assigned to the separating staff for the section head to identify possible gaps in Umoja roles assignment in lieu of the separating staff and identify replacement staff to be assigned the required roles. The SLO will subsequently ensure that Umoja roles for the separating staff member are deprovisioned by the close-of-business date. Based on the information received and action taken by UNAMID, the recommendation has been closed as implemented.

Separation files were properly maintained

24. All departing personnel were required to complete the following documents, which must be maintained in their personnel files: (a) electronic field support suite (FSS) checkout form, (b) final time and attendance report, (c) hand-over notes, (d) proof of checkout from United Nations provided accommodation clearance, and (e) final settlement bank account. OIOS review of 93 personnel files noted that HRMU had maintained copies of all required documentation, with a few exceptions. All personnel had also provided final settlement bank accounts. HRMU was maintaining a checklist for reviewing completeness of the documents. OIOS concluded that controls over maintaining personnel separation files were in place.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

25. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of UNAMID 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 the checkout of personnel in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid
Operation in Darfur**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1.	UNAMID should enhance its checkout procedures to include deprovisioning of Umoja roles no longer required for all separating personnel.	Important	C	No action required	27 July 2021

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁴ Date provided by [entity] in response to recommendations. [Insert “Implemented” where recommendation is closed; (implementation date) given by the client.]

APPENDIX I

Management Response

AFRICAN UNION

الإتحاد الأفريقي



UNITED NATIONS

الأمم المتحدة

African Union – United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Office of the Officer-in-Charge of UNAMID

27 July 2021

To: Ms. Eleanor T. Burns
Director, Internal Audit Division
OIOS

From: Houston Fergusson
Officer-in-Charge, UNAMID

Subject: **Draft report on an audit of the checkout of personnel in the African Union-
United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (Assignment No. AP2021-634-04)**

1. With reference to your memorandum of 16 July 2021, on the captioned-subject, please find attached UNAMID response (Appendix I) to the draft report for your consideration.

Thank you.

cc: Mr. Michael Tarallo, Chief Administration Pillar, UNAMID
Mr. Joseph Betima, Chief Human Resources Management Unit, UNAMID
Mr. Samuel Kiiru, Chief, Risk Management and Compliance Unit, UNAMID
Mr. Alexandre Etocke, Chief Resident Auditor for UNAMID, Internal Audit Division, OIOS
Ms. Maya Fridman, Professional Practices Section, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Management Response
Audit of the checkout of personnel in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	UNAMID should enhance its checkout procedures to include deprovisioning of Umoja roles no longer required for all separating personnel.	Important	Yes	Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) and Chief Field Technological Section (CFTS)	Implemented	<p>Subsequent to the end of drawdown on 30 June 2021, the Mission conducted a comprehensive review of all Umoja roles and effectively removed all roles (Other than Umoja Self Service Roles CR01) for staff not in the UNAMID liquidation team.</p> <p>For the liquidation period, the Mission is taking a robust and proactive approach on management of Umoja roles, not just to ensure timely deprovisioning of Umoja roles for separating staff, but also to ensure that departing staff will not leave a gap with regards to Umoja roles required for completion of liquidation tasks. As such, the Human Resources Management Unit (HRMU) will be communicating to the Umoja Security Liaison Officer (SLO) on a weekly basis with details of upcoming separations. The SLO will then communicate to the concern section chiefs with indications of Umoja roles assigned to the separating staff for the section head to identify possible gaps in Umoja roles assignment in lieu of the separating staff and identify replacement staff to be assigned the required roles. The SLO will subsequently ensure that Umoja roles for the separating staff member are deprovisioned by the close-of-business date.</p> <p>For effective management of the DoA, the SLO will also maintain communication with the OiC Senior Administrative Officer (SAO) who will revoke DoAs for separating staff members on their close-of-business date.</p> <p>In view of the above measures, UNAMID considers the recommendation as efficiently implemented and requests for closure of the recommendation.</p> <p><u>Enclosures:</u> (i) Umoja Users Deprovisioned as of 18 July; (ii) Revocation of DoA for staff separated/reassigned - remove all Umoja Role - email communication between SLO and OIC/SAO.</p>

¹ 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.

² 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.