



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2018/115

Audit of the political affairs programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

**The Mission needed to enhance strategic
planning and guidance, performance
monitoring and knowledge management of
its political affairs programme**

**28 November 2018
Assignment No. AP2018/637/01**

Audit of the political affairs programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the political affairs programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the management of the political affairs programme in MINUSCA. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 April 2018 and included a review of: strategic planning and guidance, programme performance monitoring and knowledge management and training.

MINUSCA implemented various activities to implement its mandate on the political process and prepared the required reports of the Secretary-General for submission to the Security Council. The Political Affairs Division (PAD) provided input to briefings to senior management and the diplomatic community on political issues and conducted capacity-building training and workshops to advance the peace processes. However, there was a need for MINUSCA to improve its strategic planning and guidance, performance monitoring and knowledge management of the political affairs programme to ensure the effectiveness of the programme in contributing to the overall achievement of the mandate of the Mission.

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

- Assess risks and impact arising from the volatile security situation in the country as well as the high-level of vacant political affairs posts in field units and put in place appropriate mitigation measures, such as deployment of a support team from Mission headquarters, to ensure effective functioning of the field offices;
- Strengthen monitoring/supervision of budget performance reporting and maintain adequate portfolio of evidence to support outputs reported in budget performance reports for PAD;
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of the political affairs programme and assess its impact to ensure that programme objectives are being achieved and necessary adjustments are made;
- Regularly update and maintain conflict analysis and armed group profiles;
- Maximize the use of the central repository system (COSMOS) including transferring all relevant documents from PAD staff personal computers to COSMOS and providing training to staff at the field units on its use;
- Ensure that political affairs staff leaving the Mission submit handover reports to their respective supervisor to ensure smooth transition and to maintain institutional memory; and
- Conduct a capacity gap analysis of PAD staff to identify training needs and resources required and implement a training plan for staff.

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

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Audit of the political affairs programme 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 political affairs programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).
2. The MINUSCA Political Affairs Division (PAD) is responsible for: (a) identifying, analyzing and monitoring political developments and emerging issues related to the Mission's mandate; (b) providing advice and recommendations to Mission leadership on possible strategies, policies and other measures to advance mandate objectives; (c) managing preparation of the reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council and other reports on developments in the Central African Republic; and (d) providing support to local peace and reconciliation committees and the African Union-led initiatives.
3. The Division is headed by a Director at the D-2 level who reports to the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Political and Protection (DSRSG-P). The Division has 57 approved staff posts and positions comprising 40 international posts, 2 national posts and 15 United Nations Volunteers (UNV). The Division had deployed 27 political affairs officers (9 in sector west, 10 in sector centre, and 8 in sector east) to 11 field units in MINUSCA. The approved staffing cost for fiscal year 2017/18 was \$7 million.
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 effectiveness of the management of the political affairs programme in MINUSCA.
6. This audit was included in the 2018 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the criticality of the political affairs programme in the implementation of the MINUSCA mandate.
7. OIOS conducted this audit from March to June 2018. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 April 2018. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risk areas in the political affairs programme, which included: (a) strategic planning and guidance; (b) programme performance monitoring; and (c) knowledge management.
8. The audit methodology included: interviews of key personnel; reviews of relevant documentation; and analytical review of data.
9. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Strategic planning and guidance

The work planning process was being improved

10. The Secretary-General's bulletin on regulations and rules governing programme planning requires MINUSCA to prepare annual work plans that include activities to be conducted and timeframes for completion of planned activities. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Directive (007/2018) requires all senior managers to ensure that all staff are familiar with the Mission's mandate, political strategy and work in order to implement them in an integrated and coordinated manner.

11. PAD prepared a work plan for 2016/17. However, this plan was only for its headquarters operations and PAD did not disseminate it to its field units. Improvements were made in 2017/18, where the PAD annual work plan was used by field units to develop their annual work plans taking into account local situations. Despite this, the field units' work plans were not adequately formulated as: (a) they did not include planned outreach activities and meetings, and activities were not always time-bound and outputs were not specific and measurable; and (b) there was no provision in the annual work planning process for both headquarters and the field units to review status of implementation of activities and make necessary adjustments.

12. The above happened as PAD was not systematically communicating its political strategies with field political affairs officers and providing adequate guidance in the formulation and implementation of their work plans to ensure they were aligned with PAD's overall work plan and strategy. However, for 2018/19, the Mission took action and required all substantive sections to prepare and upload their work plans in the MINUSCA central repository system (COSMOS) for better monitoring, evaluation and reporting. PAD also recently developed its work plans in COSMOS and made them available to the field units for better alignment between the work plans of PAD and field units.

13. In addition, the current reporting structure, where field political affairs officers report directly to the Heads of Offices (HoOs) and the Field Offices Coordinator in the Office of the Chief of Staff without formally involving PAD, made it difficult for the Director of PAD to effectively coordinate and direct the Division's activities with the officers in the field units. For example, the Director of PAD was not always assigned as second or additional reporting officer of field political affairs officers in their performance appraisal. However, the Mission was taking action to address this.

14. Given the actions taken by MINUSCA, OIOS has not made a recommendation on these issues.

Need to develop mitigating measures in field units to address risks in the political affairs programme

15. The United Nations Secretariat enterprise risk management policy and related Departments of Peacekeeping Operations/Field Support (DPKO/DFS) guidelines require MINUSCA programme managers to document and implement a risk management process by: identifying and assessing risks; incorporating risk management practices within all planning efforts; conducting regular reviews of residual risks; and recommending risk mitigation measures to the appropriate approving authority.

16. During the audit period, some PAD field units facing volatile security situations were operated by junior professional staff and UNVs. For example, Kaga Bandoro and Bria were led by P-3 officers and Bangassou was led by a UNV. Field units in Obo, Paoua, Birao and Berberati were led by UNVs who were

not classified as critical staff and therefore could not remain in the field in the event of a crisis involving evacuation.

17. Furthermore, interviews conducted with the HoOs in Bangassou and Obo indicated that, due to the nature of the political affairs officer functions, the HoOs depended on these junior professional staff or UNVs to perform high-profile representational responsibilities and potential crisis management in the absence of HoOs. The HoO in Bangassou further indicated that during the May 2017 crisis in Bangassou, although the presence of a political affairs officer was critical to manage the crisis and support the HoO on political strategies, the UNV working in the political affairs unit was evacuated for five months which resulted in a challenge for the Office in dealing with political issues including effective representation of MINUSCA.

18. The PAD Director indicated that the high level of vacant posts, which was 10 of 18 international posts at the time of the audit, and a lengthy recruitment process had adversely affected the ability of the Division to ensure that all field units were adequately staffed with political affairs officers at all times. The recruitment process for the vacant posts was on-going. Nonetheless, given the volatile security situation and vacancies in some field units, PAD had not devised adequate mitigating measures to address relevant risks in the field during a crisis when those staff assigned as having non-critical functions are evacuated. For instance, other MINUSCA sections had put in place measures such as the establishment of mobile support teams that could be deployed for short periods to support the HoOs in times of crisis, and the use of staff on temporary assignment.

(1) MINUSCA should assess the risks and impact arising from the volatile security situation as well as the high-level of vacant political affairs posts in field offices and put in place appropriate mitigation measures, such as deployment of a support team from the Mission headquarters, to ensure effective functioning of the political affairs field units.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 1 and stated that PAD was intent on filling all vacant posts. The Division would be rotating some personnel in areas with particular security and protection of civilian challenges. In addition, the Civil Affairs and Human Rights Sections and PAD had reached an agreement that each field office would have at least one professional officer who can cover some substantive functions of the other two sections. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence of progress made on recruitments and mitigation measures implemented at each field office.

B. Programme performance monitoring

Output data in programme performance reports were not properly supported

19. The United Nations results-based budget (RBB) guidelines require MINUSCA to maintain portfolio of evidence as part of their annual performance report, to support their reported activities and outputs. Performance data should be captured and stored systematically for efficient retrieval and analysis and for monitoring progress on activities and projects.

20. During the audit period, PAD reported expected accomplishments and outputs in the 2016/17 year-end and 2017/18 mid-year budget performance reports. However, the outputs reported were not adequately supported with evidence to substantiate that its programmatic activities were effectively implemented. For example, for 2016/17: (a) PAD did not maintain complete records on actual indicators of achievement for 16 workshops organized to prevent, appease and mitigate community violence and solve local conflicts; and (b) 227 meetings with local authorities in prefectures and sub-prefectures, mayors and sultans were not adequately supported by adequate portfolio of evidence including attendance sheets, agendas, minutes and notes.

21. PAD explained that actual outputs were included in various daily “notes to file” issued by each field unit. However, PAD did not maintain a complete record comprising all notes received from field units as evidence to support implementation of outputs reported in budget performance reports. This happened because of inadequate monitoring and supervision to ensure that outputs reported in budget performance reports were properly supported. In the absence of complete portfolio of evidence there was limited assurance that reported activities were implemented.

(2) MINUSCA should take measures to strengthen monitoring and supervision of budget performance reporting and maintain adequate portfolio of evidence to support outputs reported in budget performance reports of the Political Affairs Division.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 2 and stated that PAD started using the COSMOS platform as a planning and monitoring tool as well as a repository for its portfolio of evidence for budget performance. The Division would seek the support of the Strategic Planning Unit to maximize the platform’s potential and provide guidance to heads of units to ensure systematic performance reporting and documentation. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence of enhanced monitoring and supervision of budget performance reporting and properly maintained portfolio of evidence.

Need to assess impact of the political affairs programme

22. The Secretary-General’s bulletin on regulations and rules governing programme planning requires MINUSCA to conduct self-evaluation of activities to assess their effectiveness, continued relevance and progress towards the achievement of its objectives.

23. PAD provided input to the briefings to senior management and the diplomatic community on political issues and conducted capacity-building training and workshops to advance the peace process. However, PAD did not periodically conduct self-evaluation of the political affairs programme to assess the effectiveness and impact of the programme. This resulted because PAD had not established a programme performance management mechanism to evaluate its continued relevance and progress towards achievement of objectives. PAD therefore missed an opportunity to establish the extent to which programme objectives had been achieved and make necessary adjustments to ensure effective implementation of the political affairs mandate.

(3) MINUSCA should implement a mechanism to evaluate the performance of the political affairs programme and assess its impact to ensure that programme objectives are being achieved and necessary adjustments made.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 3 and stated that PAD would expand its monitoring and evaluation of the political programme and report on it in existing reporting mechanisms and gradually transitioning to the comprehensive performance assessment system. The Division had established a tracking matrix for local peace processes. The Mission had also established a strategic objectives matrix that tracks the implementation of the political strategy, which would be reviewed regularly by the operations planning team chaired by DSRS-G-P. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of the evaluation mechanism implemented and the assessed impact of the political affairs programme.

Need to regularly update conflict analysis and the armed groups profile

24. Political affairs officers are required to: (a) compile profiles of key players and armed groups in a conflict or peace process; (b) analyze political developments; (c) establish contacts with parties to the conflict at all levels; and (d) develop strategies to achieve or implement peace agreements.

25. MINUSCA had established mechanisms to analyze and report on political developments, develop strategies to achieve and implement peace agreements, and had established contacts with relevant parties to the conflicts. However, MINUSCA did not systematically update and document profiles of armed groups, as these were being prepared on an ad hoc basis. For example, armed groups profiles were last updated in December 2017 and were prepared to support the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic (a roadmap to promote dialogue between the Government and armed groups) and therefore, did not reflect the constant changes to armed group profiles in 2018, including information on split groups, new grievances, base locations and leaders. There was also no updated analysis on the state of conflict in the Central African Republic, with MINUSCA still relying on an analysis that was conducted in March 2016, as the 2017 was still in draft.

26. Without a systematic and regular update of the conflict analysis of the country and the profiles of armed groups to determine their drivers and grievances, the Mission may miss the opportunity to accurately address the root cause of conflicts and formulate appropriate strategies in a timely manner. There was also a risk that MINUSCA may not have accurate information on the political and security situation in the host country. For example, the hotspots identified in the conflict analysis did not include Bangassou, although the security situation was extremely volatile in 2017. Also, the most recent armed groups profiles as at December 2017 indicated 14 armed groups in the Central African Republic whereas the state of conflict analysis indicated 11 armed groups.

27. The above resulted because the responsibility, timing and regularity to update the armed groups profiles and conflict analysis had not been adequately assigned to different substantive sections. During the audit, the DSRSG-P assigned the Joint Mission Analysis Centre to collate inputs from some substantive sections within MINUSCA to prepare the armed groups profiles and conflict analysis. However, this did not ensure that the armed groups profiles and conflict analysis were updated.

(4) MINUSCA should assign responsibility to all relevant substantive sections to regularly update conflict analysis and armed groups profiles.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 4 and stated that PAD would coordinate with other sections to produce regular updates to profiles of armed groups and analyses of armed groups dynamics. The Division would also regularly contribute to analysis on conflict dynamics as part of Mission-wide conflict analysis with inputs from other substantive sections. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of updated conflict and armed groups analysis.

Political Affairs Division prepared the reports of the Secretary-General in accordance with the Security Council resolutions

28. Security Council resolutions 2301 (2016) and 2387 (2017) require MINUSCA to prepare and submit progress reports every four months on the implementation of the Mission's mandate and the security situation in the Central African Republic. PAD is responsible to prepare the Secretary-General's reports in collaboration with other substantive sections using a prescribed template. During the audit period, PAD prepared six Secretary-General's reports in accordance with the prescribed template containing all required information and submitted for issuance through the DSRSG-P.

C. Knowledge management and training

The Political Affairs Division needs to maximize the use of the Mission's knowledge management system

29. The Secretary-General's bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling requires MINUSCA to store sensitive records in an electronic record-keeping system or secure network drives. Sensitive documents should not be kept on computer hard drives that do not have security controls.

30. PAD was not using a centralized record-keeping system for maintaining documents and for ease of retrieval. In most cases, political affairs officers maintained work documents on their individual computer hard drives, which did not always have adequate security controls and their documents were not regularly archived. Also, PAD did not always have minutes or notes to file relating to their participation in various high-level meetings involving other MINUSCA sections and external partners on the ongoing political and security situation in the country. As a result, PAD could not locate some documents requested by OIOS including budget documents, some notes to file and records of outreach activities for 2016/17. Additionally, between July 2016 and April 2018, 23 PAD staff (including the Director and Deputy Director) left the Mission without preparing handover notes to facilitate the retention of institutional memory, as this was not considered an important requirement of the check-out process.

31. The above happened as PAD was not maximizing the use of COSMOS to retain relevant documents, citing confidentiality concerns. The Mission had also not implemented a mechanism for departing staff to submit handover notes. Lack of available important information could hinder effective decision making due to loss of institutional memory. PAD also missed the opportunity to learn from the challenges and best practices of the departing staff, including status of recent projects, reports and meetings notes.

32. During the audit, PAD after receiving a briefing on COSMOS security features, started using and transferring records into the system. In addition, PAD staff at headquarters were trained on the use of the system. The staff in the field were yet to be trained.

(5) MINUSCA should maximize the use of COSMOS central repository system by the Political Affairs Division including: (a) transferring all relevant documents from staff personal computers to the system; and (b) extending training to staff members at the field units on the use of the COSMOS system.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 5 and stated that a considerable amount of documentation and reference materials had been transferred onto the platform, including notes to file produced by PAD between 2016 and 2018. The Director of PAD also appointed two COSMOS focal points to facilitate the transfer and upload of documents. Two training sessions on COSMOS were organized for Bangui-based PAD personnel and the Division was exploring options to expand training to personnel at the field units. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of confirmation that all relevant documents from staff personal computers have been transferred to the COSMOS system and that staff members at the field units have been trained on the use of the system.

(6) MINUSCA should require political affairs officers leaving the Mission to submit handover reports to their respective supervisor to ensure smooth transition and to maintain institutional memory.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 6 and stated that PAD management had instructed all heads of units to implement the recommendation systematically with assistance of COSMOS focal points

who would establish a COSMOS-based handover repository. Recommendation 6 remains open pending receipt of evidence that handover reports are systematically submitted and stored.

Need to provide training to political affairs officers

33. For its political affairs staff, MINUSCA needs to identify capacity gaps and invest in appropriate training for all levels of staff to build their skills and knowledge to support prevention, mediation and peacebuilding.

34. PAD had not conducted a capacity gap analysis to identify staff training needs and corresponding resources to enhance staff skills and knowledge during fiscal years 2016/17 and 2017/18. Also, while the Division had approved travel and training budgets of \$94,800 and \$90,000 for 2016/17 and 2017/18, respectively, these funds were spent on official travel for staff in field offices. As a result, political affairs staff had not attended any training or conducted any on-line training in their specific areas of responsibility. The absence of providing continuous professional development to staff may hinder the ability of the Division to address the constant changes in the political situation and effectively prevent conflict or mediate in the peace-building process.

(7) MINUSCA should conduct a capacity gap analysis of the staff of the Political Affairs Division to identify training needs and resources required and implement a training plan for staff.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 7 and stated that PAD was conducting a rapid evaluation of staff training needs, which would inform subsequent requests for staff participation in available trainings. Recommendation 7 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the results of the training needs assessment and an action plan to provide required training.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

35. 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 the political affairs programme 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 assess the risks and impact arising from the volatile security situation and vacant political affairs posts in the field offices and put in place appropriate mitigation measures, such as deployment of a support team from the Mission headquarters, to ensure effective functioning of the political affairs field units.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of progress made on recruitments and mitigation measures implemented at each field office	31 July 2019
2	MINUSCA should take measures to strengthen monitoring and supervision of budget performance reporting and maintain adequate portfolio of evidence to support outputs reported in budget performance reports of the Political Affairs Division.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of enhanced monitoring and supervision of budget performance reporting and properly maintained portfolio of evidence	30 April 2019
3	MINUSCA should implement a mechanism to evaluate the performance of the political affairs programme and assess its impact to ensure that programme objectives are being achieved and necessary adjustments made.	Important	O	Receipt of the evaluation mechanism implemented and the assessed impact of the political affairs programme	31 July 2019
4	MINUSCA should assign responsibility to all relevant substantive sections to regularly update conflict analysis and armed groups profiles.	Important	O	Receipt of updated conflict and armed groups analysis	30 June 2019
5	MINUSCA should take steps to maximize the use of COSMOS central repository system by the Political Affairs Division including: (a) transferring all relevant documents from staff personal computers to	Important	O	Receipt of confirmation that all relevant documents from staff personal computers have been transferred to the COSMOS system and	30 April 2019

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 the political affairs programme 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
	the system; and (b) extending training to staff members at the field units on the use of the COSMOS system.			that staff members at the field units have been trained on the use of the system	
6	MINUSCA should take measures for political affairs officers leaving the Mission to submit handover reports to their respective supervisor to ensure smooth transition and to maintain institutional memory.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that handover reports are systematically submitted and stored	30 November 2018
7	MINUSCA should conduct a capacity gap analysis of the staff of the Political Affairs Division to identify training needs and resources required and implement a training plan for staff.	Important	O	Receipt of a copy of the results of the training needs assessment and an action plan to provide required training	31 January 2019

APPENDIX I

Management Response



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

TO: Mr. Daeyoung Park, OIC
A: Peacekeeping Audit Service
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

DATE: 23 November 2018

FROM: Parfait Onanga-Anyanga
DE: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
and Head of MINUSCA

REFERENCE: OSRSG/031/2018

SUBJECT: **Draft report on an audit of the political affairs programme in the United Nations**
OBJET: **Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**
(Assignment No. AP2018/637/01)

1. Reference is made to your memorandum (OIOS:2018-637-01-03) dated 24 October 2018, on the above captioned subject-matter. Please find attached MINUSCA's comments to the recommendations in Appendix I. Additionally, an action plan with target dates and titles of individuals responsible for implementing the recommendations is included in the appendix.

Attachments: (1) Appendix 1 Management response

CC: Mr. Kenneth Gluck, Deputy Special Representative of Secretary-General, Political and Protection, MINUSCA
Mr. Ray Virgilio Torres, Director of Political Affairs Division, MINUSCA
Ms. Vivian van de Perre, Chief of Staff, MINUSCA
Ms. Dorice Omolo, Audit Focal Point, MINUSCA
Mr. Laud Botchwey, Chief Resident Auditor for MINUSCA
Mr. Arnold Valdez, Chief, Resident Audit Coordination Section, IAD-OIOS
Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Management Response

**Audit of the political affairs programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission
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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
1	MINUSCA should assess the risks and impact arising from the volatile security situation and vacant political affairs posts in the field offices and put in place appropriate mitigation measures, such as deployment of a support team from the Mission headquarters, to ensure effective functioning of the political affairs field units.	Important	Yes	Director PAD	July 2019	While recruitment processes are not entirely under the Political Affairs Division's control, the Division is intent on filling all vacant posts. For FY 18/19 Political Affairs Division (PAD) is rotating some personnel to areas with particular security and Protection of Civilians (POC) challenges. In addition, Civil Affairs, Human Rights and PAD have reached an agreement that each field office will have at least one professional staff who can cover some substantive functions of the other two sections.
2	MINUSCA should take measures to strengthen monitoring and supervision of budget performance reporting and maintain adequate portfolio of evidence to support outputs reported in budget performance reports of the Political Affairs Division.	Important	Yes	Deputy Director PAD	April 2019	As of FY 18/19, the Political Affairs Division started using the COSMOS platform as a planning and monitoring tool, as well as a repository for its portfolio of evidence for budget performance. The Division will seek the support of the Strategic Planning Unit to maximize the platform's potential and will provide guidance to Heads of Units to ensure systematic performance reporting and documentation both in Mission HQ and Field locations.

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 the political affairs programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission
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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
3	MINUSCA should implement a mechanism to evaluate the performance of the political affairs programme and assess its impact to ensure that programme objectives are being achieved and necessary adjustments made.	Important	Yes	DDPAD	End July 2019	<p>The Political Affairs Division will expand its monitoring and evaluation of the political programme and report on this in existing reporting mechanisms and gradually transitioning to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment System (CPAS).</p> <p>In addition, the PAD has devised tools to monitor other key substantive elements of the political programme. Additionally, it has established a tracking matrix that provides an overview of the evolution of local peace processes. The progress in local agreements and other aspects of the political programme will be monitored through established reporting processes such as code cables, analytical notes, and reports of the Secretary-General.</p> <p>The assessment and monitoring of the progress of the African Initiative will also be provided in regular code cables, update notes to Mission leadership and in the reports of the Secretary General.</p> <p>The Mission has also established planning tools based on the political</p>

Management Response

**Audit of the political affairs programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission
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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
						strategy, such as a Strategic Objectives Matrix that tracks the strategy's implementation and is revisited regularly by the Joint Operations Planning Team chaired by the DSRSG-Political.
4	MINUSCA should assign responsibility to all relevant substantive sections to regularly update conflict analysis and armed group profiles.	Important	Yes	DPAD	Ongoing	PAD will coordinate with other sections to produce regular updates on the profiles of armed groups and analysis of armed group dynamics. This will be part of Mission-wide conflict analysis; with inputs from Civil Affairs Section (CAS), Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), UNPOL, Force and other sections, The Division will also regularly contribute update and analysis on the positions of armed groups and other key actors through analytical notes and code cables.
5	MINUSCA should take steps to maximize the use of COSMOS central repository system by the Political Affairs Division including: (a) transferring all relevant documents from staff personal computers to the system; and (b) extending training to staff members at the field units on the use of the COSMOS system.	Important	Yes	DDPAD	April 2019	The Division has been working since April with GITTS on revising its COSMOS presence. To date, all PAD units have sub-pages on the repository and transfers of documentation and reference materials, including notes to file produced by the Division since 2016, has begun. The Director of the Division also appointed two

Management Response

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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
						COSMOS Focal Points with whom PAD and other personnel can interface to facilitate the transfer and upload of documents onto COSMOS. Two training sessions on COSMOS were organized for Bangui-based PAD personnel and the Division is exploring options to expand training to personnel in the field units.
6	MINUSCA should take measures for political affairs officers leaving the Mission to submit handover reports to their respective supervisor to ensure smooth transition and maintain institutional memory.	Important	Yes	DPAD	November 2018	The PAD's management has instructed all Heads of Units to implement this recommendation systematically with the support of Administrative Staff and PAD COSMOS Focal Points who will establish a COSMOS-based handover repository.
7	MINUSCA should conduct a capacity gap analysis of the staff of the Political Affairs Division to identify training needs and resources required and implement a training plan for staff.	Important	Yes	DDPAD	31 January 2019	PAD is conducting a rapid evaluation of staff training needs and which will inform subsequent requests for staff participation in available trainings. As of 20 November a questionnaire for an online survey addressed to all PAD staff members has been developed. The survey will be shared online by 23 November and accessible until 5 December