



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2020/016

Audit of records management in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

The Mission needed to up-date and take action to implement its records management planning for its drawdown and eventual liquidation

29 July 2020

Assignment No. AP2019-634-04

Audit of records management in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of records management in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The objective of the audit was to assess whether UNAMID had effective procedures in place to ensure important records and information were being adequately managed and properly identified for archiving during drawdown and its pending liquidation. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 November 2019 and included a review of: planning and implementation of the records and archives management programme; records classification and retention; management of electronic records; and records storage and disposal facilities.

The Mission needed to update and take action to implement its records management planning for its drawdown and eventual liquidation.

OIOS made three recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, UNAMID needed to:

- Update its pre-liquidation documentation roadmap to include realistic completion dates for tasks and take necessary action to ensure they are complied with, as well as include actions for documentation transfer to the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS); and expedite the development of a protocol on transfer of classified and sensitive data and information to members of the United Nations Country Team;
- Train records management focal points and alternates to ensure important documents are safeguarded during the Mission's liquidation and transition to UNITAMS; and
- Set a target date for all sections/units to submit their list of files for classification and mapping to the retention schedule to enable the Records Management and Archive Unit to organize shipment of records to New York for archiving.

UNAMID accepted the recommendations and have initiated actions to implement them.

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Audit of records management in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of records management in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).
2. Records management is governed by a set of guidelines and procedures including: (a) the United Nations Archives and Records Management Toolkit; (b) file classification scheme; (c) the Peacekeeping and Operations Retention Schedule (PORS); and (d) the Secretary-General's bulletin on recordkeeping and management of United Nations archives (ST/SGB/2007/5).
3. With the drawdown and pending liquidation of UNAMID as well as its transition to the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS)¹, there is a need for effective records management to ensure proper retention and safeguarding of records on-site, as well as their transfer to the Archives and Records Management Section (ARMS) at United Nations Headquarters for storage, preservation and future access. In anticipation of the Mission's liquidation, ARMS visited the Mission in 2019 to review its current practices and provided guidance and recommendations to improve procedures.
4. The UNAMID Records Management and Archives Unit (RMAU), in the Field Technology Section (FTS), is responsible for planning and implementing the Mission's records management programme. The Unit is headed by an Information Management Assistant at the Field Service level-4 and assisted by two national staff. Due to the pending liquidation, and as recommended by ARMS, the Mission was in the process of hiring a temporary P-3 Information Management Officer to manage its records and archive management activities.
5. Comments provided by UNAMID are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The objective of the audit was to assess whether UNAMID had effective procedures in place to ensure important records and information were being adequately managed and properly identified for archiving during its drawdown and pending liquidation.
7. This audit was included in the 2019 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to risks related to loss of important records and unauthorized access to sensitive information.
8. OIOS conducted this audit from September to December 2019. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 November 2019. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risk areas including: planning and implementation of the records and archives management programme; records classification and retention; management of electronic records; and records storage and disposal facilities.
9. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews of key personnel; (b) reviews of relevant documentation; (c) testing of controls; and (d) physical observation of records by sections/units, digital data server rooms and the UNAMID Records and Archives Center.

¹ Security Council resolution 2525 extended mandate of UNAMID to 31 December 2020 and Security Council resolution 2524 established UNITAMS to be operational from 1 January 2021 succeeding UNAMID

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

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Planning and implementation of records and archives management programme

The Mission needed to update its roadmap plan for managing its records due to its drawdown and eventual liquidation

(a) The pre-liquidation roadmap needed to be revised

11. As part of its records management readiness, the Mission developed a pre-liquidation roadmap, starting from October 2018 until December 2020. The roadmap provided archiving instructions to Mission components on tasks to be conducted during its drawdown and liquidation and timelines for completion. This included: identifying and training focal points and alternates by 31 December 2019; classifying records into two main categories of those to be retained and those to be destroyed by 30 June 2020; packing records earmarked for archiving and arranging their shipment to ARMS by 30 June 2020; and destroying records and compacting the shredded materials for disposal by 31 December 2020. This roadmap was approved by Mission Leadership and reviewed by ARMS.

12. Taking into account the best information known at the time, UNAMID had developed a realistic roadmap for the various documentation management tasks to be completed, although its implementation was slow. For example, as of December 2019, all sections/units had not assigned and trained focal points. However, considering the current situation related to COVID-19, as well as the recent Security Council resolutions 2525 (UNAMID) and 2524 (UNITAMS), there is a need for the Mission to update its pre-liquidation roadmap, as well as implement a documentation plan to ensure the smooth transition of activities from UNAMID to UNITAMS.

(b) Need for a formal protocol to share classified, confidential and sensitive data and information with UNCT

13. State Liaison Functions (SLFs), as per UNAMID Transition Process and the State Liaison Functions memorandum dated 28 May 2019, were established to carry out UNAMID's mandated activities jointly with the UNCT, and included activities related to infrastructure development and rule of law capacity building projects. SLFs were comprised of representatives from the Mission and from various United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. To ensure a smooth transition, documentation sharing with members of the UNCT is important, particularly in areas to be taken over by members of the UNCT related to, for example, rule of law, human rights and peacebuilding. ARMS had recommended that UNAMID develop a protocol for sharing data and information that might be required by UNCT members.

14. To transfer the extensive knowledge and datasets that UNAMID had gathered over the years to relevant UNCT members, a joint UNAMID-UNCT Joint Technical Team on Knowledge and Data Transfer was established to explore its practical implementation. The Team was co-chaired by the Chief of UNAMID Joint Operations Centre and the Information Management Officer from the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). As a starting point, the Team decided that those records that were not classified or confidential and were readily available be shared with appropriate UNCT members. To initiate this, UNAMID sections/units provided UNCT members, who were represented by

the Information Management Officer from OCHA, with catalogues listing data and information that was available for sharing. This included project documents, maps and results of surveys conducted by the various substantive sections/units to identify needs of the local population. However, UNAMID and UNCT were yet to develop a data and information sharing protocol for the transfer of confidential and classified documents. This was because they planned to seek guidance from the Office of Legal Affairs prior to its development and thus transfer of documents.

(1) UNAMID, due to current events, should: (a) update its pre-liquidation documentation roadmap to include realistic completion dates for tasks and take necessary action to ensure they are complied with, as well as include actions for documentation transfer to UNITAMS; and (b) expedite the development of a protocol on transfer of classified and sensitive data and information to members of the UNCT.

UNAMID accepted recommendation 1 and stated that: (a) it confirmed the importance of record management and archiving activities as one of the four Organizational pillars during the drawdown and liquidation phases of a mission. The work process of record management and archiving was integral to the work programme of UNAMID's Administrative Task Force, functioning as the administrative arm of the Mission Support Planning Team during drawdown and liquidation. The first container has been handed over to the Movement Control Section and RMAU was compiling the second container. Each section/unit would determine what records it wants to hand over to UNITAMS for business continuity; and (b) transfer of data to UNCT protocol was being handled by Joint Operations Center and Field Technology Section. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of: (a) updated pre-liquidation documentation roadmap and list of records by each section/unit to be handed over to UNITAMS; and (b) a protocol on transfer of classified and sensitive data and information to UNCT.

There is need to appoint and train focal points and their alternates

15. To ensure effective records and archiving management and to properly facilitate the process, focal points and alternatives needed to be assigned and trained. Training activities include: classifying records to be retained or destroyed based on PORS; handling sensitive information; and preparing paper records for transfer to ARMS. As at 31 October 2019, of the 50 sections/units in UNAMID only 27 of them had focal points and alternates, although an additional 12 sections/units had focal points but no alternates. Out of this number, however, 13 of the designated focal points had already left the Mission.

16. The Mission had not ensured that focal points/alternates had been adequately trained, as only eight persons had been trained on records classification and mapping to PORS and archiving; handling sensitive information; and preparing paper records for transfer to ARMS. This was because the last training was conducted in December 2018 and some of those trained had already left the Mission and others were newly appointed. No training was held during 2019. ARMS recommended the importance of Mission management ensuring the provision of regular training to those responsible for records management during Mission drawdown and liquidation.

17. The lack of sufficiently trained personnel meant that important functions were delayed or not completed competently. For example, OIOS visit to the UNAMID Records and Archives Center observed boxes of documents that were not properly labelled, and some boxes included both records to be retained as well as those marked for destruction. RMAU was planning to correct the situation by working in coordination with focal points to reclassify the contents of the boxes.

18. While efforts were being made by FTS to monitor the appointment of focal points/alternates and broadcasts reminders were sent to section/unit heads, this had been ineffective, and management

intervention is needed. Well trained focal points will ensure that adequate attention is given to the safeguarding of important records during the drawdown and liquidation phases of the Mission.

(2) UNAMID should take action to ensure all section/unit heads assign records management focal points and alternates and provide them with the necessary training to ensure important documents are safeguarded during the drawdown and liquidation phases.

UNAMID accepted recommendation 2 and stated that focal points for archiving and record management were nominated and trained on United Nations policies of data sensitivity and classification. OIOS subsequently received a list of focal points and their alternates. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that all focal points and alternatives have been trained.

B. Records classification and retention

Need for sections/units to submit list of records to RMAU to forecast volume of records to be archived

19. The pre-liquidation roadmap required all sections/units to submit lists of their records to RMAU by 31 March 2019 in order to forecast the volume of records to be retained and those to be shipped to ARMS after classifying and mapping them to PORS. However, as of mid-November 2019, despite active follow-up by RMAU, 43 of the 50 sections/units had yet to submit details of their records to enable the Unit to determine the volume of records to be retained and thus shipped. Lack of action by heads of sections/units impeded RMAU in its forecasting efforts to ensure shipment to ARMS in a timely and cost-effective manner. For instance, to ensure efficiencies, ARMS's estimate is that each sea container needs to be filled with about 400 boxes.

(3) UNAMID should set a target date for all sections/units to submit their list of files for classification and mapping to the retention schedule to enable the Records Management and Archive Unit to organize shipment of records to be archived.

UNAMID accepted recommendation 3 and stated that it confirmed this process was still ongoing. RMAU was continuing to follow up with relevant sections/units to submit inactive files to organize shipment of records to be archived. Recommendation 3 remains open pending confirmation that a revised target date has been established for sections/units to submit their lists of files to RMAU and evidence that this has been complied with.

C. Management of electronic records

UNAMID was adequately securing its electronic records

20. Heads of sections/units are responsible for classifying their electronic records in accordance with PORS and to implement controls to prevent unauthorized access and ensure integrity of information. Staff should be aware of their responsibilities relating to their electronic records and have completed the mandatory information security awareness training course.

21. Five sections/units (the Special Investigation Unit, Conduct and Discipline Team, Board of Inquiry, Procurement Section and Human Resources Management Section) were selected for review as they had sensitive and confidential records. The audit noted that access rights to their shared drives were provided only to authorized staff and folders were password protected to ensure data integrity and to prevent unauthorized access. All electronic records of the five sections/units were properly classified in accordance with PORS. The staff compliance rate on the mandatory online information security awareness training

course was 95 per cent as at 30 October 2019. The Mission was regularly issuing email broadcasts and following up with staff to complete the course.

22. FTS is responsible for implementing adequate controls over servers hosting records. A visit to the server rooms in El Fasher Logistics Base noted that FTS was located in a well-secured compound. Physical access to the server rooms was limited as entry required both an individual fingerprint recognition and a key, which was only available to three pre-authorized persons who also registered when it was requested for use. The server rooms were under 24/7 close circuit television monitoring, air-conditioned and equipped with smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. The servers have been placed onto racks which were raised from the floor to protect it from water in case of floods. There was also a back-up generator for contingency purposes. Further, FTS had installed firewalls, antivirus software and an intrusion detection system.

23. Records in servers were backed up daily at the United Nations Global Service Center in Brindisi. An exception to the daily back-up was the electronic case files of the Human Rights Section, which were uploaded to a database managed centrally by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. Also, as recommended by ARMS, FTS planned to complete a Digital Information Asset Register by October 2020 in coordination with the Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT) at United Nations Headquarters to list information technology applications and software, transfer format, platforms used, and validation methodology. ARMS and OICT would provide a suitable storage media to store the content from the UNAMID's shared drives after the Mission's closure.

24. OIOS concluded that UNAMID had established adequate controls to physically safeguard its electronic records in its shared drives and servers and to plan their transfer upon the Mission's liquidation.

D. Storage and disposal facilities

The Mission's preparedness to provide storage and disposal facilities was adequate

25. UNAMID was required to prepare adequate facilities to securely store paper records to be archived until their shipment to ARMS and dispose other paper records by pulping, shredding or burning them using incinerators.

26. UNAMID had not completed its inventory of paper records, and therefore could not determine the exact volume that needed to be stored and disposed of. However, the Mission and ARMS, after reviewing the requirements at the Mission's main offices in Zalingei and El Fasher and based on past experience, estimated that about three sea containers would be needed to ship records to be archived to ARMS. They also estimated that about 144 tons (12 sea containers) would need to be disposed of.

27. To deal with this, UNAMID designated its Records and Archiving Centre and two sea containers within El Fasher Logistics Base to store those records to be shipped to ARMS. This location was well secured with doors and padlocks. For those records to be disposed of, UNAMID planned to use two large capacity containerized incinerators, which it estimated would be sufficient to destroy the required volume of records. The incinerators had been procured and were currently under customs clearance in Port Sudan. The Mission envisaged that these would be delivered and installed by June 2020. Although some delays may be expected because of COVID-19, OIOS assessed that the planned measures would be sufficient to adequately store or dispose of paper records.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

28. 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 records and archives management in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ² / Important ³	C/ O ⁴	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁵
1	UNAMID, due to current events, should: (a) up-date its pre-liquidation documentation roadmap to include realistic completion dates for tasks and take necessary action to ensure they are complied with, as well as include actions for documentation transfer to UNITAMS; and (b) expedite the development of a protocol on transfer of classified and sensitive data and information to members of the United Nations Country Team.	Important	O	Receipt of: (a) updated pre-liquidation documentation roadmap and list of records by each section/unit to be handed over to UNITAMS; and (b) a protocol on transfer of classified and sensitive data and information to UNCT.	31 December 2020
2	UNAMID should take action to ensure all section/unit heads assign records management focal points and alternates and provide them with the necessary training to ensure important documents are safeguarded during the drawdown and liquidation phases.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that all focal points and alternates have been trained.	30 September 2020
3	UNAMID should set a target date for all sections/units to submit their list of files for classification and mapping to the retention schedule to enable the Records Management and Archive Unit to organize shipment of records to be archived.	Important	O	Pending confirmation that a revised target date has been established for sections/units to submit their lists of files to RMAU and evidence that this has been complied with.	31 December 2020

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁵ Date provided by UNAMID in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

AFRICAN UNION

الإتحاد الأفريقي



UNAMID



UNITED NATIONS

الأمم المتحدة

African Union - United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Office of the Joint Special Representative

12 July 2020

To: Mr. Daeyoung Park, Chief
Peacekeeping Audit Service
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

From: Jeremiah N. Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative

Subject: **Draft report on an of records management in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (Assignment No. AP2019/634/04)**

1. In response to your memorandum of 23 June 2020 on the above referenced subject, kindly find attached UNAMID's responses to the draft report (Appendix I) for your consideration.

Thank you.

cc: Mr. Houston Fergusson, Director of Mission Support, UNAMID
Mr. Prem Singh, Chief Service Delivery Service, UNAMID
Mr. Michael Tarallo, Chief, Operations and Resource Management, UNAMID
Mr. Lawi Ooko, Ag. Chief, Field Technology Section, UNAMID
Mr. Mohammed Kabir Gobir, OIC Records Management and Archives, UNAMID
Ms. Florence Ndungu, Senior Administrative Officer, UNAMID
Mr. Samuel Kiiru, Chief, Risk Management and Compliance Unit, UNAMID
Mr. Alexandre Etocke, Chief Resident Auditor, Internal Audit Division, OIOS, UNAMID

Management Response

Audit of records and archives management 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, due to current events, should: (a) up-date its pre-liquidation documentation roadmap to include realistic completion dates for tasks and take necessary action to ensure they are complied with, as well as include actions for documentation transfer to UNITAMS; and (b) expedite the development of a protocol on transfer of classified and sensitive data and information to members of the United Nations Country Team.	Important	Yes	a) Records Management and Archive Unit b) Joint Operations Center and Field Technology Section	31 December 2020	a) UNAMID confirms the importance of record management and archiving activities as one of the four Organizational pillars during the drawdown and liquidation phases of a mission. The work process of record management and archiving is integral to the programme of works of UNAMID's Administrative Task Force (ATF), which functions as the administrative arm of the Mission Support planning Team (MSPT) during drawdown and liquidation. The first container has been handed over to MovCon. Records Management and Archive Unit (RMAU) is compiling the second container. Each section/unit will determine what records it wants to hand over to UNITAMS for business continuity.

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 records and archives management 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
						b) Transfer of data to UN country team protocol is being handled by Joint Operations Center (JOC) and Field Technology Section (FTS).
2	UNAMID should take action to ensure all section/unit heads assign records management focal points and alternates and provide them with the necessary training to ensure important documents are safeguarded during the drawdown and liquidation phases.	Important	Yes	Records Management and Archive Unit	24 March 2020	UNAMID has affirmed at the detailed audit results that focal points for Archiving and Record Management (ARM) were nominated and trained on UN policies of data sensitivity and classification. Relevant evidence of portfolio was accorded to office of the CRA/OIOS. UNAMID requests closure of this recommendation.
3	UNAMID should set a target date for all sections/units to submit their list of files for classification and mapping to the retention schedule to enable the Records Management and Archive Unit to organize shipment of records to be archived.	Important	Yes	Records Management and Archive Unit	31 December 2020	UNAMID confirms that this process is still ongoing. RMAU continues to follow up with relevant Sections/units to submit their inactive files to organize shipment of records to be archived.