



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2022/052

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Mission needed to enhance the effectiveness of misconduct prevention measures and address capacity gaps in the Conduct and Discipline Team and the Special Investigation Unit

11 October 2022

Assignment No. AP2021-620-02

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of measures implemented by MONUSCO to manage conduct and discipline in the Mission. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2021 and covered the areas of prevention of misconduct, enforcement of standards of conduct, and remedial action.

The Mission established a Task Force on sexual exploitation and abuse to review its approach to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) activities and oversee critical aspects of prevention, enforcement, and remedial actions. However, the Mission needed to enhance the effectiveness of misconduct prevention measures and address staffing capacity gaps in the Conduct and Discipline Team and the Special Investigation Unit to effectively manage conduct and discipline activities.

OIOS made five recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, MONUSCO needed to:

- Ensure that meetings of the Task Force on SEA are held regularly and attended by all members to address relevant issues;
- Develop effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system to ensure completion of mandatory ethics-related training by all staff;
- Ensure all newly onboarded and deployed personnel attend induction training through periodic reconciliation of lists of attendees with those of personnel onboarded or deployed to the Mission;
- Strengthen the misconduct risk management process by developing a comprehensive misconduct risk register to include all types of misconduct and categories of personnel and monitoring implementation of risk mitigation measures; and
- Promptly fill the three vacant posts in the Special Investigation Unit.

MONUSCO accepted the recommendations and has initiated action to implement them. Actions required to close the recommendations are indicated in Annex I.

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Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

2. Core values and principles to be upheld by staff members are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, whereby every staff member is called upon to maintain “the highest levels of efficiency, competence, and integrity.” The Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service¹ delineate fundamental values and principles and establish the highest standards of conduct which is an obligation for all personnel. The United Nations field personnel are also guided as to their behaviour by the policy on “Accountability for Conduct and Discipline in Field Missions”² that focuses on how they will be held accountable for misconduct and lack of discipline.

3. The Secretariat’s commitment to ensuring that all United Nations personnel, whether civilian, police, or military are accountable for their conduct while in the service of a United Nations field mission was reinforced in the Action for Peacekeeping initiative launched jointly with the Member States. Strengthening the conduct of peacekeeping operations and personnel is a core part of this initiative. The United Nations has a three-pronged strategy to address misconduct: prevention of misconduct, enforcement of United Nations standards of conduct, and remedial action. The Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) is responsible for enforcing United Nations policies on conduct in peacekeeping and special political missions and works closely with the Departments of Peace Operations and Peacebuilding and Political Affairs. The Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance oversees all field missions’ conduct and discipline functions. The Conduct and Discipline Service (CDS) of the Administrative Law Division (ALD) provides direction for conduct and discipline issues.

4. Misconduct refers to the violations of the United Nations standards of conduct (under the Charter, the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, or other relevant administrative issuances or policy documents developed for specific categories of personnel), or failure to observe the Standards of Conduct expected of an international civil servant. There are two categories of misconduct: (i) misconduct; and (ii) serious misconduct. Serious misconduct includes sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), complex fraud, abuse of authority, conflict of interest, all cases involving risk of loss of life, serious criminal acts, gross mismanagement, and waste of substantial resources.

5. The Mission’s Conduct and Discipline Team (CDT) serves as the principal adviser to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for all matters related to conduct and discipline, including SEA involving all categories of personnel. CDT also provides guidance and technical advice to the Mission on issues relating to conduct and discipline; assists the Mission in developing strategies to prevent, identify and respond effectively to misconduct; and disseminates all United Nations policies, procedures and guidelines on misconduct to Mission personnel.

¹ <https://icsc.un.org/Resources/General/Publications/standards.pdf>

² <https://conduct.unmissions.org/documents-standards>

6. MONUSCO CDT is headed by a Chief at the D-1 level and assisted by nine international, eight national staff, and two United Nations volunteers (UNVs). It has offices in six locations. The approved operating budgets of CDT were \$80,375 and \$126,119 for 2019/20 and 2020/21, respectively.

7. Comments provided by MONUSCO are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

8. The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of measures implemented by MONUSCO to manage conduct and discipline in the Mission. The audit focused on the three-pronged strategy for addressing conduct and discipline issues in peace operations and addressed three main audit questions:

- a) To what extent has the Mission established adequate measures to prevent misconduct?
- b) To what extent has the Mission established effective mechanisms for reporting, recording and timely addressing misconduct cases?
- c) To what extent has the Mission taken adequate remedial action in substantiated misconduct cases?

9. OIOS included this audit in its 2021 risk-based work plan because of the immediate and detrimental consequences of some misconduct types on the victims and other stakeholders. It was also due to the high operational and reputational consequences that conduct and discipline matters may bear to the United Nations and the importance of ethical and professional behaviour and personal conduct of all civilian and uniformed personnel.

10. OIOS conducted this audit from March 2021 to March 2022. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2021. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered high and medium risk areas relating to the prevention of misconduct, enforcement of standards of conduct, and remedial action.

11. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews with key personnel, (b) review of relevant documentation, (c) analytical review of misconduct allegations received by CDT during the audit period, (d) testing of a random sample of 93 cases recorded in the Case Management Tracking System (CMTS), (e) analysis of all eight quarterly reports on conduct and discipline and risk assessment reports, (f) testing of a randomly selected sample of training and vetting records of 93 out of 25,194 newly onboarded and deployed civilian and uniformed personnel, and (g) review of minutes of 18 staff welfare committee meetings held 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. Prevention of misconduct

Need to enhance the oversight of conduct and discipline activities in the Mission

13. Effective oversight mechanisms are necessary to ensure established conduct and discipline preventive, enforcement and remedial measures are up-to-date and adequate to achieve expected ethical standards of behaviour for smooth mandate implementation.

a. Need for regular meetings attended by all members of the Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Task Force

14. The Mission established a Task Force on SEA chaired by the Chief of CDT. It included representatives from eight Mission components and sections including police and military components, United Nations Children’s Fund and United Nations Population Fund. The SEA Task Force was required to meet quarterly to review the Mission’s approach to SEA activities and oversee critical aspects of prevention, enforcement and remedial actions taken by the Mission.

15. However, the SEA Task Force held only four of the eight required meetings, which were attended on average by three of the expected eight members because the members had other priorities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In its meetings, the SEA Task Force discussed preventive and enforcement measures such as internal awareness raising for all categories of personnel, misconduct risk assessment, community-based complaint reception networks, support to the victims of SEA and investigative capacity. Considering the damaging effect of SEA on Mission mandate implementation, the impact of SEA on victims and the reputational risk to the Organization, a more effective SEA Task Force was necessary to oversee and ensure SEA preventive and remedial measures were on course and up to date.

(1) MONUSCO should ensure that meetings of the Task Force on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse are held regularly and attended by all members to address relevant issues.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 1 and stated that it recognized that a strengthened SEA Task Force would enhance the implementation of the Secretary-General’s “Zero-Tolerance Policy” by ensuring overall coordination on SEA matters at the MONUSCO level. To strengthen the SEA Task Force, the Mission had ensured that its terms of reference were in place, and it comprised representatives from relevant mission components to form a single monitoring and advisory structure on SEA. The Task Force shall convene quarterly and had already convened on 22 August 2022, chaired by SRSG. In the absence of SRSG, the Deputy SRSG or the Chief of Staff would chair the SEA Task Force.

b. Need for a mechanism to regularly apprise senior leadership on conduct and discipline issues

16. The Chief of CDT presented conduct and discipline issues at Mission Senior Management Group (SMG) meetings comprising the SRSG, deputy SRSGs (DSRSGs), Force Commander, Police Commissioner, and chiefs of sections. Because of the large gathering and other agenda items, SMG discussed only general preventive, enforcement and remedial conduct and discipline issues and action points in these meetings. Also, SMG meetings were not always attended by all senior members. The Mission had no mechanism to enable the Chief of CDT to periodically meet the SRSG and DSRSGs to apprise them on SEA and other confidential misconduct and discipline issues that cannot be dealt with in other venues, including SMG meetings. As the SRSG had overall responsibility to ensure ethical behaviour in the Mission, it was necessary to create a regular forum where the Chief of CDT would directly brief and update the SRSG and DSRSGs on challenges faced and preventive, enforcement and remedial measures adopted.

17. The lack of scheduled meetings, low attendance by the members of the SEA Task Force, and absence of regular meetings between the Chief of CDT and senior leadership prevented the Mission from exercising effective oversight and addressing conduct and discipline matters on time.

18. In response to audit observations on the issue, MONUSCO established a mechanism that allowed the Chief of CDT to hold biweekly meetings with the Chief of Staff who communicated with the SRSG and DSRSGs on the state of the Mission’s conduct and discipline matters. The Mission also adopted an

open-door policy via face-to-face meetings, emails, phone calls and memos to discuss vital issues for the effective implementation of the mandate, including the conduct and discipline related affairs. Furthermore, on 29 June 2022, the Mission established a mechanism that required CDT to hold quarterly advisory meetings to brief senior leadership on all aspects of conduct and discipline issues. Based on the actions taken by MONUSCO, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

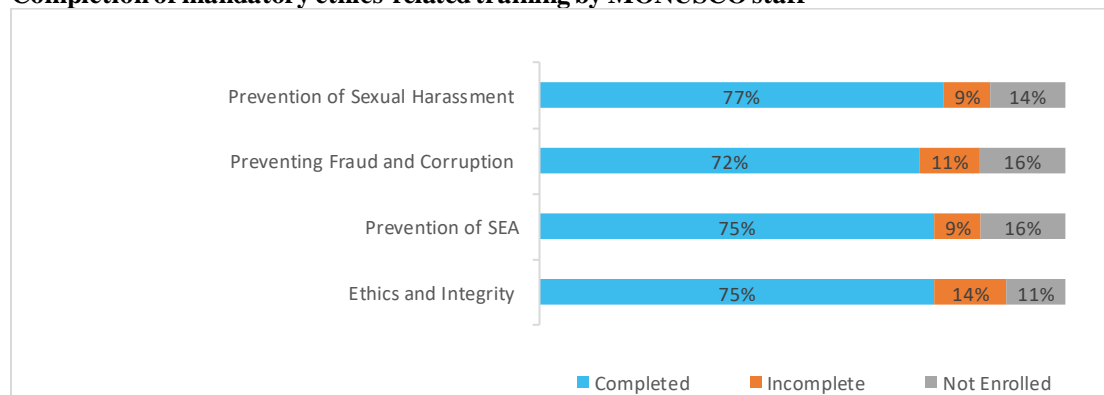
Need to ensure that all personnel complete mandatory training

19. The Secretary-General committed to creating a culture of prevention through pursuing initiatives designed to reconnect all personnel to the core values of the United Nations. The Mission is required to create an environment that promotes ethical conduct, and all personnel are expected to adhere to the highest standards of behaviour.

20. One of the ways the Mission communicates and promotes shared values and expectations of conduct is through awareness raising and training. As part of the awareness-raising efforts, MONUSCO displayed posters with various messages to remind all staff of their obligations to act with the highest standards of integrity and conduct. CDT also posted awareness-raising messages on the Mission’s intranet and desktop telephones and disseminated brochures and other information during outreach activities.

21. There are four mandatory training courses for staff at all levels which relate to ethics and integrity. The completion rates of the mandatory courses are published on the management dashboards, and they are included in the senior managers' compacts. On average, 75 per cent of staff had completed all four ethics and integrity-related mandatory courses as of 28 July 2021 (figure 1). However, completion rates were low at the senior management level, with 42 per cent of staff at D-2 and above level completing the courses. One of the main reasons for this was the absence of effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system to ensure the completion of mandatory training by all staff.

Figure 1
Completion of mandatory ethics-related training by MONUSCO staff



Source: Management dashboard mandatory training data (accessed on 28 July 2021)

22. MONUSCO had also developed Mission-specific training on the United Nations standards of conduct and core values, policies and procedures on preventing and addressing misconduct, staff duties and responsibilities relating to misconduct, protection from retaliation and relevant local laws and regulations. CDT covered these and other related topics in induction sessions, training of trainers for military and police, briefings on specific topics such as fraud and conflict-related sexual violence for senior managers, military commanders and contractors, and SEA briefings to the local communities. However, OIOS could not verify that all 93 sampled of the 25,194 onboarded and deployed civilian and uniformed personnel during the audit period attended mandatory induction sessions. Although the quarterly reports indicated that all newly

onboarded and deployed staff attended induction, this could not be verified as no attendance records were available. A review of the survey³ results by the Office of the Special Coordinator on improving United Nations' response to SEA indicated that only 34 per cent and 48 per cent of MONUSCO civilian staff who onboarded in 2020 and 2021, respectively, attended induction training. The absence of periodic reconciliation of lists of newly onboarded and deployed staff with induction records contributed to low completion of induction training.

23. Almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of MONUSCO staff who responded to the OIOS accountability survey⁴ believed that standards on ethics and integrity have been communicated somewhat or extremely effectively, while the rest were either neutral or believed that they were communicated somewhat or extremely ineffectively (figure 2). About 61 per cent of staff believed that training on ethical standards and integrity has been sufficient, while the rest were either neutral or thought it was somewhat or totally insufficient (figure 3).

Figure 2
Staff perception of how effectively the standards on ethics and integrity are communicated

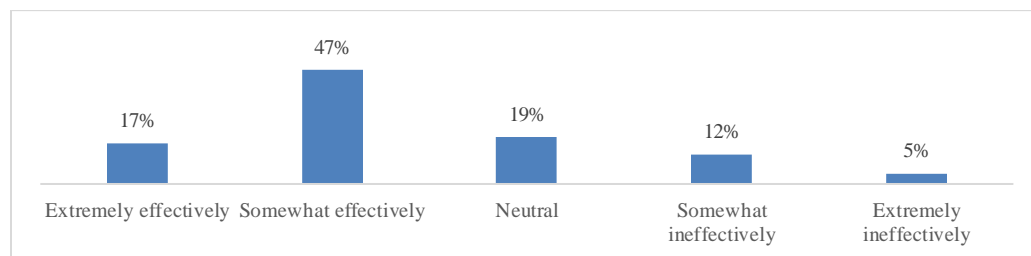
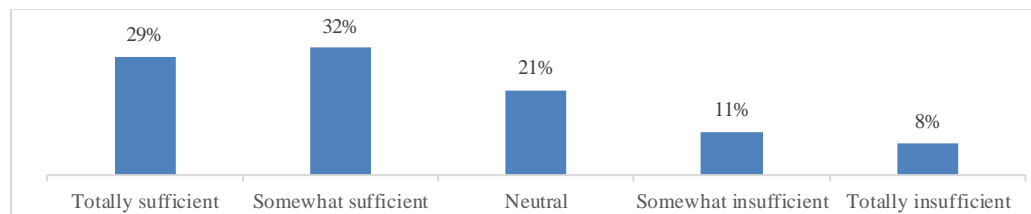


Figure 3
Staff perception of the degree to which ethics and integrity training has been sufficient



(2) MONUSCO should develop effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system, to ensure the completion of mandatory ethics-related training by all staff.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 2 and stated that although some progress had been made, Mission personnel were continually encouraged to complete mandatory ethics-related training and section chiefs were encouraged to monitor staff completion of ethics-related training by addressing and reviewing monthly non-compliance reports and set internal deadlines for completion, nominating

³ Survey conducted by the Office of the Special Coordinator on improving United Nations response to SEA. The annual survey was administered online between April and September 2020 and 2021 and included an assessment of the adequacy of preventive mechanisms, training, leadership, and reporting processes. Survey response rates were 97 percent and 87 percent for 2020 and 2021, respectively.

⁴ Staff surveys were conducted as part of the OIOS Evaluation of the United Nations accountability system and the OIOS Evaluation of organizational culture in peacekeeping operations (A/75/803). The surveys were administered online and included an assessment of adequacy of communication on ethics and integrity; perception of personnel of the Mission's leadership commitment to ethical values and standards of conduct; and of handling conduct and discipline matters.

focal points to follow up with non-compliant staff, enforcing the idea that course completion was an official duty and setting the ethics-related course completion as an additional goal in the performance management system. The Mission also recognized the need for senior leadership to lead by example if measures were to be effective.

- (3) MONUSCO should ensure all newly onboarded and deployed personnel attend induction training through periodic reconciliation of lists of attendees with those of personnel onboarded or deployed to the Mission.**

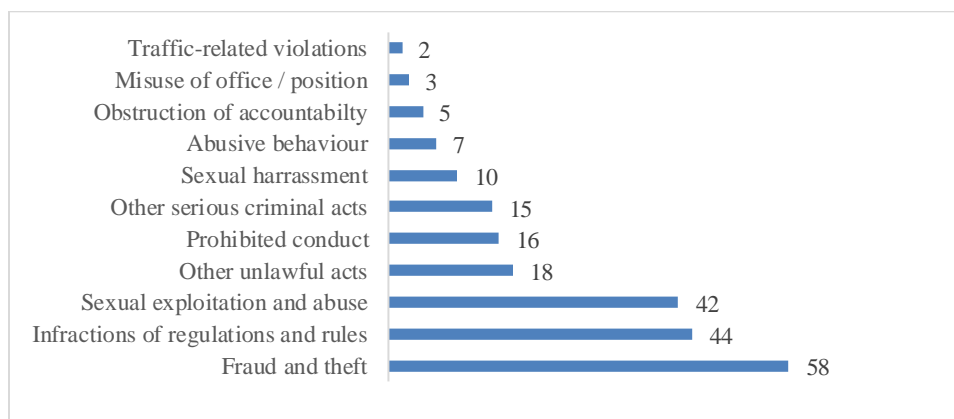
MONUSCO accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the Mission was taking action to ensure personnel attended induction training through continuous and ongoing actions which included working jointly with Integrated Mission Training Centre to ensure newly deployed contingents attended induction training within two months of their arrival, and reviewing the check-in process in coordination with Civilian Predeployment Training Unit at Entebbe Support Base, Human Resources Section, Military and Police Components and substantive sections to ensure that all MONUSCO personnel attended induction training.

Need to implement comprehensive misconduct risk management

24. Effective prevention activities constitute a solid foundation for ensuring that all personnel deployed in field missions always maintain the highest standards of conduct and integrity. An important way of preventing misconduct is identifying risks before misconduct occurs. Accordingly, missions are expected to develop risk management plans which should consider the level of risk and specific risk factors linked to possible misconduct by their personnel, with particular emphasis on SEA.

25. Several types of misconduct as indicated in figure 4 were prevalent in the Mission. However, the Mission did not develop a comprehensive misconduct risk register that included all of them. For example, the risk register had the risks of fraud and SEA, however, it did not contain other prevalent types such as infractions of regulations and rules, abusive behaviour, and misuse of office. This resulted in a lack of corrective action plans to mitigate the risks not included in the risk register.

Figure 4
Prevalence of reported types of misconduct in MONUSCO from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2021



Source: OIOS analysis of CMTS data on reported allegations

26. During the audit period, CDT undertook misconduct risk assessment visits to all uniformed personnel camps and bases, identifying misconduct risk factors. These included proximity of camps to civilian villages and markets, presence of minors and vendors around camps, economic hardships of the

local population, inadequate welfare facilities, poor fencing of camps, lack of proper communication channels for personnel to interact with their families, poor lighting and insufficient awareness training on SEA. While recommendations were made to mitigate these risks, their implementation was not systematically tracked and monitored.

27. The above occurred due to inadequate supervision and staffing constraints in CDT, which was attributable to delays in the recruitment process and restrictions imposed following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. CDT had no Section Chief until May 2020, and at the time of the audit, 3 of the 20 authorized posts were vacant. Without a comprehensive risk register for other forms of misconduct, the Mission could not develop and implement effective measures to prevent and mitigate those risks. At the date of the audit report, there was only one vacant P-4 post in CDT for which the interviews had been conducted. Based on the progress the Mission had made in filling the vacancies, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

(4) MONUSCO should strengthen the misconduct risk management process by: (a) developing a comprehensive misconduct risk register to include all types of misconduct and categories of personnel; and (b) monitoring implementation of risk mitigation measures.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 4 and stated that it maintained a misconduct risk register of SEA and non-SEA cases to identify the areas of risk and their root causes, evaluate their likelihood of occurrence and their impact on the Mission's mandate, and the effectiveness of internal controls. MONUSCO also stated that to strengthen the misconduct risk management process, the process of identifying risks, improving internal controls and risk responses, it would enhance coordination among the Office of Director of Mission Support, Strategic Planning Cell, head of offices, section chiefs, office of the Force Commander, Force Military Police, CDT and other relevant components of the Mission and that monitoring the implementation of risk mitigation measures would be done by risk owners in cooperation with CDT.

The Mission established adequate staff welfare and recreational activities

28. Providing welfare and recreation for mission personnel is vital for promoting adequate working and living conditions for staff often deployed in hardship environments and under stressful post-conflict situations. In addition, welfare and recreational activities strengthen the morale and discipline of United Nations personnel and play an essential role in misconduct prevention.

29. MONUSCO Staff Welfare Unit guided and coordinated with the local welfare committees to facilitate recreational and social welfare events and activities to improve staff well-being. The activities were aimed at reducing stress levels, strengthening morale and promoting good behaviour, and included recreational and sports facilities and opportunities for staff to come together and informally interact. The Unit also formed a welfare choir which periodically worked with CDT to sensitize Mission personnel against misconduct. These facilities and activities were open to both civilian and uniformed personnel. In addition, contingent-specific activities such as inter-troop sports competitions, national day celebrations, national music and dances, cultural displays and occasions to showcase national culture were in place for the contingent personnel.

30. A review of minutes of all 18 staff welfare committee meetings indicated that CDT participated in the discussions to guide on conduct and discipline matters. Agreed actions were implemented as soon as resources were available. For example, two treadmills in the gymnasium in Goma were fixed in April 2022. In addition, the Welfare Unit explained that they monitored the needs of each location through interviews and discussions with staff conducted by local welfare committees and obtained both positive and negative feedback, especially during the pandemic. For example, the Unit addressed the need for the duty- and tax-

free Post Exchange contracted by the Mission to stock a wide variety of food to minimize staff shopping from outside.

B. Enforcement of standards of conduct

The Mission established an adequate complaint reception mechanism but needed to timely record new allegations

31. The functions of reporting and analyzing misconduct have been identified as high-priority activities by the Secretary-General and the Member States because they are critical to strengthening accountability in the overall handling of misconduct. All United Nations personnel, whether civilian, military or police must report misconduct to the officials whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action. All reporting of misconduct allegations should be centrally captured for prompt assessment, referral for investigation and timely follow-up.

32. The Mission established multiple channels for reporting misconduct, including private meeting rooms, secure hotlines, complaints boxes and community-based complaints networks. Results of the 2019 Staff Engagement Survey indicated that most (89 per cent) MONUSCO staff knew what to do and whom to approach to report unethical behaviour or wrongdoing. Similarly, most (93 per cent) MONUSCO staff who responded to the 2021 SEA survey understood that it was their responsibility to report acts of SEA by colleagues and staff from other United Nations entities, implementing partners, vendors and suppliers.

33. In the audit period, CDT received 220 misconduct allegations. Cases were recorded in CMTS using sequential numbering with all required information and documents uploaded. CDT properly managed access to CMTS on a “need to know” basis, and access of former staff members was timely deprovisioned. Mandatory fields, including categorization of cases, were completed and serious misconduct cases were assigned Investigations Division/OIOS case numbers. However, most of the cases were not recorded timely. Of the selected 93 cases, 53 were not recorded in CMTS within 7 days as required and it took on average 57 days to record them. This occurred because CDT relied on one staff member to enter reported cases in CMTS. Delays in recording cases could compromise the Mission’s efforts to timely and effectively address wrongdoing, and incomplete misconduct records could also impact the effectiveness of the risk management process. OIOS did not make a recommendation as the Mission had made significant progress in filling the vacancies.

Need to address wrongdoing in a timely manner

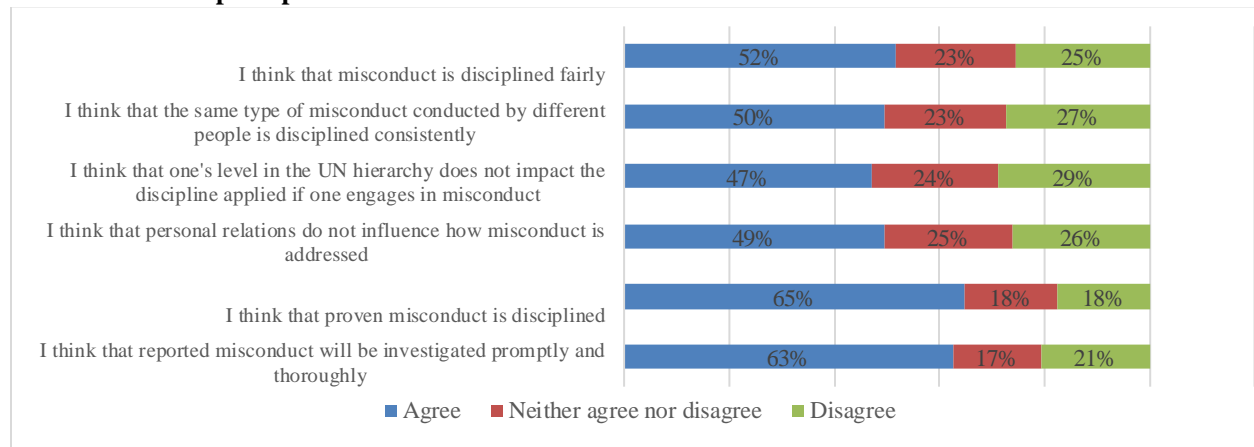
34. Knowing that misconduct is disciplined fairly and consistently reinforces the culture of accountability for wrongdoing and strengthens staff morale. Timely and proper assessment of alleged wrongdoing is critical to demonstrating the Mission’s commitment to creating a culture of “zero-tolerance” to misconduct.

35. The OIOS evaluation of the organizational culture in peacekeeping operations⁵ conducted between November and December 2019 showed that there was a perception by personnel at various levels that a “culture of impunity” was widespread, and senior leaders and managers did not sufficiently enforce accountability for performance and misconduct. While most (65 per cent) MONUSCO staff who responded to the OIOS accountability survey believed that proven misconduct was disciplined, nearly half (48 per cent) either did not agree or were neutral that misconduct was disciplined fairly, and only 49 per cent agreed

⁵OIOS Evaluation of organizational culture in peacekeeping operations (IED-21-006)

that personal relations did not influence how misconduct was addressed (figure 5). These figures were low considering the importance of addressing misconduct in a timely manner.

Figure 5
MONUSCO staff perceptions of how misconduct is addressed



36. The lengthy time taken to complete investigations may contribute to the staff's perception. Most (85 per cent) of the 220 allegations were open as of 30 June 2021. Of these, 44 per cent were outstanding for more than one year. The outstanding cases were pending investigation as follows: SIU - 44 per cent, OIOS - 31 per cent, and TCC/PCC - 23 per cent. The remaining two per cent was pending closure by CDT as unsubstantiated.

37. According to CDT, investigations were delayed due to the unavailability of witnesses, challenges in gathering evidence and the nature of the allegations. Staffing constraints in SIU and lack of capacity to handle complex cases contributed to the delays. For example, three posts in SIU, including that of Chief, were vacant for more than one year due to delays by the Mission in the recruitment process. Other cases were pending decisions from TCCs/PCCs on matters such as paternity/child support claims. To address the staffing issue in SIU, in April 2021, 16 United Nations police officers were deployed to SIU to assist with investigating outstanding cases under a memorandum of understanding. However, the Mission needed to take proactive measures to timely address outstanding cases and ensure accountability. The long delays in concluding investigations and taking appropriate action could signal a lack of commitment by senior leadership in addressing misconduct and may encourage a culture of impunity.

(5) MONUSCO should take action to promptly fill the three vacant posts in the Special Investigation Unit.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 5 and stated that as of 30 June 2022, there were three posts to be filled in SIU, including: one P-2 post was under recruitment but had since been removed from the Mission's budget by the 5th Committee; one National Professional Officer post was under recruitment; and one post of Investigations Assistant in Kinshasa for which the job opening had been reviewed and the Human Resources Section was yet to commence the recruitment process.

C. Remedial action

The Mission conducted awareness-raising activities and collaborated with stakeholders to assist victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

38. The United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel calls for the United Nations system to provide, in a coordinated manner, assistance to individuals with needs directly arising from an incident of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse. In addition, targeted awareness-raising and external communications activities help to inform the general population about the United Nations standards of conduct, reporting misconduct and assistance available to victims.

39. In 2016, MONUSCO participated in the establishment of a Protection from SEA (PSEA) Task Force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Unlike the Mission's Task Force on SEA which comprises Mission components in addition to the United Nations Children's Fund and United Nations Population Fund and chaired by the Chief of CDT, the PSEA Task Force is a network for collaboration among MONUSCO, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, international non-governmental organizations and national partners in providing assistance to victims of SEA. The PSEA Task Force also conducted sensitization activities to the local population on reporting mechanisms for SEA cases and assistance available to victims of SEA. During the audit period, MONUSCO participated in seven planning meetings of the PSEA Task Force.

40. The Mission also established 43 community-based complaints networks in 11 locations, trained more than 469 focal points to sensitize the members who volunteered to disseminate information on SEA to the local population, and carried out 231 PSEA sensitization campaigns focusing on local community groups, non-governmental organizations, religious communities, internally displaced persons, and schools. In cooperation with the MONUSCO Public Information Division (PID), CDT designed, procured and disseminated sensitization materials for internal and external outreach. To disseminate information and sensitize the public regarding misconduct by United Nations personnel, CDT and PID used conferences, posters, leaflets, multimedia platforms, webinars, live shows and debates as channels and tools. In addition, CDT and PID completed five activities related to sensitization of conduct and discipline issues in the communities, which included media training, short messaging service campaigns, theatrical sketch and campaigns using community radios.

41. The Mission had a Victims' Rights Officer to advocate for all SEA victims and up-to-date mapping of services to implementing partners to enable victims' access to medical, legal and psychosocial support and other assistance. The Victims Assistance Tracking System (VATS) was used to monitor assistance provided to victims. OIOS review indicated that all 84 SEA cases recorded in VATS were referred to the United Nations agencies for medical, psychological or material help during the audit period. Since 2018, CDT has implemented projects in Bunia, Beni, Bukavu, Kalemie, Goma and Uvira at the cost of \$360,000 to support victims of SEA. The projects funded through the Trust Fund benefited 32 victims who received vocational and skills training in hairdressing, dressmaking, animal husbandry, mushroom cultivation, and baking. Through the same fund, 80 children were returned to school in 2020 and 2021.

42. The Mission had a budgetary allocation of \$1,000 for each financial year to supplement the United Nations Children's Fund's and the United Nations Population Fund's efforts in supporting victims of SEA. Using this fund, CDT provided direct financial assistance to help victims with food, clothing, medical treatment and logistical support for court appearances. However, this amount was inadequate to meet needs such as legal fees, hospital bills of children of victims, and transportation of victims to areas where implementing partners were available.

43. MONUSCO concurred and increased the budgetary allocation for victims' assistance to \$2,000 in the 2022/23 fiscal year to enable the Mission to meet most of the needs of victims.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organisation Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ⁶ / Important ⁷	C/ O ⁸	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁹
1	MONUSCO should ensure that meetings of the Task Force on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse are held regularly and attended by all members to address relevant issues.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that the meetings of the Task Force on SEA are held regularly and attended by all members.	30 June 2023
2	MONUSCO should develop effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system to ensure the completion of mandatory ethics-related training by all staff.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of completion of mandatory ethics-related training by all staff.	31 March 2023
3	MONUSCO should ensure all newly onboarded and deployed personnel attend induction training through periodic reconciliation of lists of attendees with those of personnel onboarded or deployed to the Mission.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of periodic reconciliation of lists of attendees with those of personnel onboarded or deployed to the Mission to ensure they all attend induction training.	30 June 2023
4	MONUSCO should strengthen the misconduct risk management process by: (a) developing a comprehensive misconduct risk register to include all types of misconduct and categories of personnel; and (b) monitoring implementation of risk mitigation measures.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has developed a comprehensive misconduct risk register that includes all types of misconduct and categories of personnel and continuously monitors implementation of risk mitigation measures.	30 June 2023
5	MONUSCO should take action to promptly fill the three vacant posts in the Special Investigation Unit.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that the two vacant posts which are within the control of the Mission have been filled.	31 December 2022

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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.

⁸ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁹ Date provided by MONUSCO in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: 28 September 2022

Ref: SRSRG.CDT-2022-01934

To: Mr. Kemal Karaseki, Acting Chief
À: Peacekeeping Audit Service
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

From: Bintou Keita
De: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
and Head of MONUSCO



**Subject: Mission response to the Draft Report on the audit of conduct
Objet: and discipline activities in MONUSCO (Assignment No.
AP2021-620-02)**

1. Your interoffice memorandum dated 7 September 2022 (Ref: OIOS-2022-01281) forwarding the Draft Report on the audit of conduct and discipline in MONUSCO is received with thanks.
2. Attached please find the Mission's comments on the recommendations in the Draft Report for your consideration.
3. Thank you and best regards.

Cc: Ms. Fatoumata Ndiaye, Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services
Ms. Nathalie Ndongo-Seh, Mission Chief of Staff
Mr. Ebrima Ceesay, Director of Mission Support
Ms. Yewande Odia, Chief of Service, Conduct and Discipline
Mr. Daniel Maier, Chief Strategic Planning Cell
Ms. Judith Atiagaga, Mission Audit Focal Point
Mr. Jeffrey Lin, OIOS

Management Response

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical/Important?	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	MONUSCO should ensure that meetings of the Task Force on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse are held regularly and attended by all members to address relevant issues including resource allocation for conduct and discipline activities in the Mission.	Important	Yes	SMSG/CoS/CCDT	30 June 2023	<p>The Mission recognizes that a strengthened SEA Task Force will enhance the implementation of the Secretary-General's "Zero-Tolerance Policy" by ensuring overall coordination on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) matters at MONUSCO level. The following steps will be taken to strengthen MONUSCO SEA Task-Force:</p> <p>a) The ToRs of the MONUSCO SEA Task Force (SEA-TF) is in place</p> <p>b) The SEA-TF is comprised of representatives from the Office of the Force Commander, UN Military Police, the Office of the Police Commissioner, the Office of the Chief of Staff, the Security Investigation Unit (SIU), the Office of the Director of Mission Support, Child Protection Unit, HIV Unit, Gender Unit, Public Information Division, Office of Human Rights,</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.

Management Response

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical/Important?	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
2	MONUSCO should develop effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system to ensure completion of mandatory ethics-related training by all staff.	Important	Yes	HoM/CoS/DMS	31 March 2023	<p>Sexual Violence Unit and Civil Affairs.</p> <p>c) In case of absence of the HoM, MONUSCO-SEA-TF can meet under the leadership of a DSRSG or Chief of Staff and will bring all relevant mission components into a single monitoring and advisory structure on SEA.</p> <p>d) The Task Force shall convene quarterly and has already met on 22nd August with HoM chairing.</p> <p>The Mission concurs with recommendation 2 and would like to highlight that, although some progress has been made, mission personnel are continually encouraged to complete mandatory ethics-related trainings. Specifically, HoM, Deputy and CoS should lead by example. Measures cannot be effective otherwise. In coordination with the OSRSG, OCOS, ODMS, HR and IMTC, the Section Chiefs are encouraged to monitor their staff to promptly comply with ethics-related training by 31 March 2023</p>

APPENDIX I

Management Response

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical/Important?	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
3	MONUSCO should ensure all newly onboarded and deployed personnel attend induction training through periodic reconciliation of lists of attendees with those of personnel onboarded or deployed to the Mission.	Important	Yes	IMTC/HR	30 June 2023	<p>a) Addressing and reviewing the monthly non-compliance reports and set internal deadlines for completion.</p> <p>b) Nominating Focal Points to remind non-compliant Staff.</p> <p>c) Enforcing the idea that course completion is an official duty</p> <p>Setting the ethics-related course completion as an additional targeted goal for 2022/2023 e-performance cycle.</p> <p>MONUSCO accepts recommendation 3 and would like to state that it is already implemented through the following actions, which are continuous and ongoing.</p> <p>a) Jointly with IMTCs all the induction trainings are being carried out timely and efficiently.</p> <p>b) All military contingent members receive a pre-deployment training in their home country before arriving in the mission area. Additionally, CDT has undertaken to train the newly deployed contingents within two months of their arrival.</p> <p>c) The Mission, in coordination with the Civilian Pre-deployment Training (CPT) Unit/ UN Entebbe Support Base, IMTC,</p>

Management Response

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical/Important	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
4	MONUSCO should strengthen the misconduct risk management process by: (a) developing a comprehensive misconduct risk register to include all types of misconduct and categories of personnel; and (b) monitoring implementation of risk mitigation measures.	Important	Yes	CDT/ODMS/SIU	30 June 2023	<p>HR, Military and Police Components and, substantive sections, always reviews the check-in process to ensure that all MONUSCO personnel attend induction training.</p> <p>The Mission accepts recommendation 4 and states that MONUSCO maintains a misconduct risk register of SEA and non-SEA cases, with the objective of identifying the areas of risk and their root causes, evaluating their likelihood of occurrence and their impact on the Mission's mandate, as well as the effectiveness of internal controls. To strengthen the misconduct risk management process:</p> <p>a) the process of identifying risks, improving internal controls and risks responses will be enhanced in coordination with the Office of the Director of Mission Support (ODMS), the Strategic Planning Cell, Heads of Offices, Section Chiefs, the Office of the Force Commander, Force Military Police, Conduct and Discipline.</p>

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Management Response

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical/Important?	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
5	MONUSCO should promptly fill the vacant posts of conduct and discipline officers and enhance supervision by the Chief of the Conduct and Discipline Team.	Important	Yes	CDT	31 December 2022	Services/HQ – CDT and other relevant components of the Mission. b) Monitoring the implementation of risk mitigation measures will be done by risk owners in cooperation with CDT. MONUSCO accepts recommendation 5 and would like to state that there is only one vacant post currently in CDT i.e. P4 Goma/HQ. The recruitment process of this post is ongoing with tests and CBI interviews already completed. August 2022.
6	MONUSCO should take action to promptly fill the three vacant posts in the Special Investigation Unit.	Important	Yes	PSA a.i./SIU	31 December 2022	MONUSCO accepts recommendation 6 and would like to clarify that as at the end of June 2022, there were three posts required to be filled in SIU as follows. - One [1] P2 post – this post was under recruitment but has been cut by the 5th Committee from the budget of MONUSCO - One [1] NPO post – this is currently under recruitment - One G5 post of Investigations Assistant in Kinshasa. - The job opening for this post has been reviewed and is with HR for the recruitment process to commence.