

Activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on peace operations for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016

A/71/337 (Part II)

**Statement to the Fifth Committee by the
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services
Heidi Mendoza
8 May 2017**

Madame Chair, distinguished Members of the Fifth Committee,

I am pleased to introduce the report on the Activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services for peace operations for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016 (A/71/337 Part II).

The report before you provides an overview of OIOS' work in internal audit, investigations, and inspection and evaluation. The Office issued 249 oversight reports on peace operations in 2016. The reports included 528 recommendations, 27 of which were classified as critical to the Organization. Descriptions of selected results are contained in the report.

During the reporting period, the Internal Audit Division continued to make use of thematic audits to identify systemic strengths and weakness across peace operations. In 2016, thematic audits were completed on construction activities and engineering projects, contingent-owned equipment, asset management, use of consultants and individual contractors, procurement, leave and attendance records. Thematic audits help the Office identify systemic strengths and weaknesses across peace operations, to assess whether adequate policies and instructions have been developed and implemented and to determine whether appropriate monitoring and oversight occurs. The Division issued 88 reports related to peace operations and issued 430 recommendations, including 26 of which were critical.

The Investigations Division issued 159 reports, including 50 investigation reports, 72 contingent reports and 37 closure reports. The Division also referred 139 matters to more appropriate offices or entities for possible action. The highest number of investigation and contingent reports related to sexual exploitation and abuse, with 70 reports issued, constituting some 44% of all reports issued in 2016.

During the reporting period, the Inspection and Evaluation Division issued two reports. The Divisions workplan was based on a risk-based assessment developed in consultation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. The Division completed the following evaluations: evaluation of the results of national policy capacity-building in Haiti, Cote d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the United Nations Police in MINUSTAH, UNOCI and MONUSCO; and the evaluation of the integration between peacekeeping operations and the United Nations country teams in Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti.

Madame Chair,

In 2016, the Investigations Division concluded major investigations into widespread allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in Dekoa, Central African Republic. As reported in paragraph 57 in the report before you, the large number of complaints called for an unprecedented response by OIOS through the rotational deployment of 31 staff members to the Central African Republic, where some 435 interviews were conducted of both witnesses and complainants. The findings of the investigations were transmitted to the Department of Field Support for referral to the relevant troop contributing countries. The experience resulted in the Division reviewing how it responded to challenges of investigation and sexual exploitation and abuse, especially in terms of gathering testimonial, physical, medical and forensic evidence, and lead to the launch of a training course on forensic interviewing of children, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Programme, using a child advocacy centre based in New York.

Madame Chair,

In conclusion, I would like to thank OIOS staff for their dedication to the work of OIOS, and for their commitment to the ideals of the United Nations.

I look forward to serving the United Nations and assure you of my full commitment to working together with Member States and internal stakeholders across the Secretariat towards assisting the Secretary-General in fulfilling his oversight responsibilities in respect of the resources and staff of the Organization.

I thank you and welcome your questions on any subject matter.