



OIOS

Office of Internal Oversight Services

INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

AUDIT REPORT

Audit of patrolling by United Nations military observers in UNMIL

**Logistical support for UNMIL military observers
needs improvement**

13 April 2009

Assignment No. AP2007/626/04

United Nations  Nations Unies

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

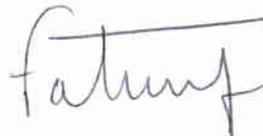
MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT SERVICES · BUREAU DES SERVICES DE CONTRÔLE INTERNE
INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION · DIVISION DE L'AUDIT INTERNE

TO: Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj
A Special Representative of the Secretary-General
United Nations Mission in Liberia

DATE: 13 April 2009

FROM: Fatoumata Ndiaye, Acting Director
DE: Internal Audit Division, OIOS



REFERENCE: IAD: 09- 02358

SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AP2007/626/04 – Audit of patrolling by United Nations military observers in UNMIL**
OBJET: **UNMIL**

1. I am pleased to present the report on the above-mentioned audit.
2. Based on your comments, we are pleased to inform you that we will close recommendation 4 in the OIOS recommendations database as indicated in Annex 1. In order for us to close the remaining recommendations, we request that you provide us with the additional information as discussed in the text of the report and also summarized in Annex 1.
3. Please note that OIOS will report on the progress made to implement its recommendations, particularly those designated as high risk (i.e., recommendations 1, 4, 6 and 8) in its annual report to the General Assembly and semi-annual report to the Secretary-General.

cc: Lt. Gen. Abu Tayeb Muhammad Zahirul Alam, Force Commander, UNMIL
Maj. Gen. Carl Setorwu Modey, Deputy Force Commander/Chief Military Observer, UNMIL
Mr. Stephen Lieberman, Director of Mission Support, UNMIL
Mr. Swatantra Goolsarran, Executive Secretary, UN Board of Auditors
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Mr. Moses Bamuwamye, Chief, Oversight Support Unit, DM
Mr. Byung-Kun Min, Programme Officer, OIOS
Ms. Eleanor Burns, Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Service, OIOS

INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

FUNCTION

“The Office shall, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations examine, review and appraise the use of financial resources of the United Nations in order to guarantee the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, ascertain compliance of programme managers with the financial and administrative regulations and rules, as well as with the approved recommendations of external oversight bodies, undertake management audits, reviews and surveys to improve the structure of the Organization and its responsiveness to the requirements of programmes and legislative mandates, and monitor the effectiveness of the systems of internal control of the Organization” (General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Patrolling by United Nations military observers in UNMIL

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of patrolling by the United Nations Military Observers (UNMOs) in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The overall objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of UNMOs in performing their mandated responsibilities. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

OIOS assessed that UNMOs are satisfactorily performing and reporting their patrolling duties despite many constraints, including the following:

- UNMIL's standard operating procedures for UNMOs did not always reflect the Department of Peacekeeping Operations policies and guidelines and in some cases procedures were inconsistently applied;
- UNMOs selected for UNMIL did not always have the required skills and competencies, and were not repatriated even after failing the required skills tests;
- UNMOs did not always arrive in the Mission adequately equipped with the essential quantities and types of protective and survival equipment. In order for UNMOs to function more effectively, adequate equipment needs to be budgeted for; and
- There was an acute vehicle shortage facing UNMO teams, which could hamper ground patrols.

OIOS made recommendations to address the issues identified and to further improve UNMOs operations.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of patrolling by the United Nations Military Observers (UNMOs) in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

2. UNMIL's mandate (S/RES/1509 dated 19 September 2003) includes the observation and monitoring by the UNMOs of the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the investigation of violations of the ceasefire. In fiscal year 2006-2007, the UNMOs role was expanded to include the monitoring of the illegal movement of natural resources. S/RES/1509 provided that UNMIL will consist of up to 15,000 UN military personnel, including up to 250 military observers.

3. The budget for UNMOs for fiscal year 2007-2008 was \$11 million. As of 30 June 2008, there were 202 UNMOs in UNMIL organized into 13 teams. The UNMOs are located at UNMIL Headquarters (HQ) and at four sector HQs. UNMOs serve on 12-month assignments during which they are typically assigned to two locations for approximately six months each – in one location closer to the capital Monrovia and with relatively better living conditions (“blue areas”) and in another location farther from Monrovia and with relatively more difficult conditions (“red areas”).

4. Comments made by UNMIL are shown in *italics*.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVES

5. The main objectives of the audit were to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of UNMOs in performing their mandated responsibilities and determine opportunities for improvement in supporting them.

III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The audit covered patrolling activities of the UNMO component and support activities rendered by various sections of the Mission during the fiscal years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008. The audit methodology comprised: (a) review of rules, procedures and relevant guidelines; (b) analysis of data; and (c) interviews with responsible personnel.

IV. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Inadequacies in policies and procedures

7. There are insufficient policies and guidelines regarding several operational aspects of UNMOs, such as: (a) the specifications of protective equipment that UNMOs should bring from their countries; (b) the equipment that missions should provide to UNMOs for use during patrolling; and (c) the surveillance equipment necessary for aerial patrolling. Adequate and up-to-date guidelines and specifications of equipment are necessary for medium and long-term planning for the budgeting and procurement of goods and services.

8. Moreover, while there were standard operating procedures (SOPs), they did not include all relevant practices in dealing with UNMOs. Also, in some cases the Mission SOPs were inconsistent with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) policies. For example:

- The SOPs did not include post-arrival procedures for UNMOs and timeframes for completion;
- Decisions to exempt certain UNMOs from the English language proficiency examination (ELPEX) was not documented.
- There were inconsistencies and a lack of clarity in the procedures for repatriating UNMOs who did not take or who failed competency tests (driving and ELPEX), and in recovering repatriation costs for UNMOs that failed the competency tests;
- The practice of rotating UNMOs between “blue” and “red” areas was not formally included in the SOPs; and
- The UNMO Selection Standards and SOPs were contradictory, i.e., the Selection Standards for UNMOs requires them to bring helmets and recommends they bring armored vests (flak jackets) while the Mission’s current SOPs on UNMOs stipulate that UNMIL would provide these items to newly arrived UNMOs.

Recommendation 1

(1) The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should ensure that the Mission’s standard operating procedures for military observers are consistent with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations policies and procedures and that they comprehensively cover important operational aspects of the military observers’ operations in the Mission.

9. *The UNMIL Deputy Force Commander/Chief Military Observer (DFC/CMO) accepted recommendation 1 and stated that the review and*

updating of the Mission's SOPs for UNMIL UNMOs has commenced. The update will encompass all DPKO policies and all operational aspects concerning UNMOs in the Mission. Recommendation 1 remains open pending OIOS' receipt of the revised SOPs and verification that they are consistent with DPKO policies and procedures and address operational aspects of UNMOs in the Mission.

B. Patrolling activities

10. The Concept of Operations (CONOPS) for UNMOs outlines the overall methods of deployment of UNMOs and is designed to fulfill the requirements of the Force's CONOPS dated 25 April 2006. The present UNMOs SOPs require UNMOs to report on 15 Named Areas of Interest (NAIs) and 6 reserve NAIs.

11. From the 23 UNMO reports and patrolling programmes reviewed for the year 2007-2008, including 13 daily reports of UNMO teams and 2 special reports, it could be concluded that UNMO teams are performing their patrolling duties, within logistical constraints, in accordance with the UNMOs CONOPS. For example, during the period, UNMOs performed 7,993 mobile patrols, logged 1.3 million kilometers (km) and conducted 720 hours of air patrols. In 2006-2007 they performed 8,994 mobile patrols comprised 19,994 person days and 555 hours of air patrols.

12. The lack of comprehensive data on patrolling prevented more in-depth assessment of UNMO activities. While there were available statistics of patrolling activities, the data was collated and presented inconsistently from year-to-year which made it difficult to make a comparison. OIOS suggested that data could be better collated and reported in a consistent matter in order to have more structured and meaningful monitoring of activities. For example:

- The total number of aerial patrols rather than the hours of patrolling, as well as the number of aerial patrols per team and flight patrol hours by team; and
- The total mobile patrol person days for 2007-2008, which was done for 2006-2007.

13. Moreover, there was no monitoring of the average number of km driven during patrols. Likewise, there was no monitoring of the proportion of the number of km driven for non-operational purposes to those for patrols. Absence of this data prevents an assessment of the effective use of vehicles.

Recommendation 2

(2) The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should improve data management and generate reports to facilitate the monitoring of and subsequent reporting on patrolling activities.

14. *The UNMIL DFC/CMO accepted recommendation 2 and stated that further information is available in the Results Based Budgeting (RBB) reports for air patrols. Moreover, detailed records of ground patrols should be available from the Car Log system. However, a directive has been distributed to all UNMOs to resume the use of trip tickets to generate data on the number, distance and time of UNMOs ground patrols. The UNMO Transport Officer has been assigned to monitor, collate and maintain the data generated by trip tickets. OIOS would clarify that information was already taken from RBB reports, which did not provide the most relevant data to monitor activities. Recommendation 2 remains open pending OIOS' verification that trip tickets are used for UNMOs' ground patrols and that the data generated from them are collated, monitored and maintained.*

C. Deployment of UNMOs

Driving skills



Photo 1. United Nations military observer vehicle in Maryland County, Liberia

15. Of the 202 UNMOs in the Mission, 42 did not have UNMIL driving permits. Of these 42 UNMOs, 15 had not yet taken the test, 12 failed the test three times, 10 failed the test twice and did not attempt it a third time, and 5 failed the test once and did not attempt it a second time. Driving conditions in Liberia are very difficult and four-wheel drive vehicles are necessary due to the difficult terrain, as shown above. Therefore, it is essential that UNMOs are capable of driving in these conditions. The lack of the appropriate driving skill could impact the UNMO teams' ability to perform their functions.

16. None of the UNMOs who had failed their driving tests had been repatriated early at the cost of their home countries. This is contrary to the Selection Standards for UNMOs that provides for them to be repatriated for failure to meet qualification requirements. All costs associated with their travel home and arrival of the replacement to complete the tour of duty is to be at the expense of the contributing country.

17. The Selection Standards for UNMOs allows UNMOs two attempts to pass the driving test but does not indicate any timeframe within which the test must be passed. However, in accordance with the United Nations 2004 Provisional Surface Transport Management Procedures for the Field, the

Mission's Transport Section allows all driving permit applicants three attempts to pass the test. These guidelines are inconsistent.

18. The former Force Commander informed OIOS that a stronger stance will be taken to address this, including the issuance of a directive indicating failure to pass the driving test on the second attempt will result in UNMOs early repatriation. This policy has yet to be formally developed and enforced.

English language proficiency examination

19. There was no evidence that 10 out of the 195 non-exempt UNMOs passed or taken the language examination. Additionally, one UNMO took the ELPEX and failed it twice. The Chief of the Military Induction Training Unit agreed that all UNMOs should pass the ELPEX. According to him, the Mission allows staff officers and UNMOs two attempts to pass the ELPEX, however, there is no written policy on this.

20. Five UNMOs from four countries were repatriated in 2007-2008 for failing the ELPEX. The Selection Standards for UNMOs state that failure to meet language standards could result in early repatriation but does not state the timeframe for passing the ELPEX. In these cases, no recovery of repatriation costs was initiated. The above examples highlight the importance of having clear and consistent standards and procedures to ensure UNMOs are treated equally and Mission management and staff are properly guided and directed.

Recommendation 3

(3) The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should ensure that military observers, once in the Mission, take the required competency tests to demonstrate they have the skills to carry out their functions effectively. Those who cannot demonstrate that they have the required skills during the established induction phase should be repatriated at the cost of their home country.

21. *The UNMIL DFC/CMO accepted recommendation 3 and stated that every UNMO deployed to the Mission who cannot pass the driving test and ELPEX after the allowed number of attempts within 30 days from arrival in the Mission will be repatriated.* Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of the revised SOPs. A future audit will review compliance with the SOPs.

Letter of undertaking on sexual exploitation and abuse

22. The Mission's offices in charge of military personnel and induction training do not require UNMOs to sign letters of undertaking on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). The Mission requires other personnel, including civilians and the police component to sign this letter. In OIOS' opinion, as UNMOs are also exposed to the same conditions as others in the mission, they should be required to sign the SEA letter. When OIOS raised this issue with the

DFC/CMO, it was stated that henceforth, all UNMOs will be required to sign this document.

Recommendation 4

(4) The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should ensure all military observers sign the Mission's standard letter of undertaking regarding sexual exploitation and abuse to enhance their awareness of the United Nations policy and to deter incidence of such misconduct.

23. *The UNMIL DFC/CMO accepted recommendation 4 and stated that the UNMIL Military Personnel and Administration Cell is assigned the task of ensuring that all UNMOs in the Mission sign the letter of undertaking on SEA and that all UNMOs in the Mission have done so. Based on OIOS' verification of a sample of these letters of undertaking, recommendation 4 has been closed.*

D. Budgeting process

24. The budget for 2007-2008 of \$11 million for UNMOs is principally for mission subsistence allowance and travel. UNMOs are classified with the Mission's civilian staff component and their needs are based on "generic scales of issue" documents that outline equipment entitlements of staff members. These scales of issue, however, may not consider the unique needs of UNMOs. As a result, Mission budgets do not provide for UNMOs' specific needs such as surveillance equipment and global positioning systems (GPS) units. There is a risk therefore that they are not available in the Mission's stock, when they are required.

25. The Mission's Aviation Section does not consult with the UNMOs for the inclusion of their aerial patrolling requirements in the budgets. According to the Aviation Section, the budgeted flight hours for the Mission as a whole are based on actual activities of the previous year, including flight hours of UNMO teams. Using a previous year's actual flight hours instead of actual forecasted needs when budgeting may not accurately reflect operational requirements.

Recommendation 5

(5) The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should conduct a needs assessment that recognizes and consolidates military observer teams' operational requirements for inclusion in the Mission's budgets.

26. *The UNMIL DFC/CMO accepted recommendation 5 and stated that the UNMIL Military Operations Cell is liaising with the UNMIL Aviation Section to ensure adequate budgetary provisions for UNMOs' air patrols. Furthermore, the DFC/CMO has formed a committee to assess and articulate the operational needs of UNMOs, with a view to providing necessary information for adequate and appropriate budgeting. Recommendation 5 remains open pending OIOS' verification that the UNMOs' operational requirements are included in the*

Mission's budget, and a receipt of a copy of the report submitted by the committee assessing and documenting the operational needs of UNMOs.

E. Logistics and support functions

27. There is a need to improve the logistics support to UNMOs:

- Logistics officers are not involved in the budget process, and therefore, the logistical requirements are not adequately included;
- The number of vehicles allocated to UNMOs is inadequate for them to effectively perform their functions; and
- UNMOs do not maintain a systematic and consolidated reporting on quantities and status of all United Nations-owned equipment (excluding vehicles). For instance, the Communication and Information Technology Section (CITS) records show 77 vehicle transceivers issued to UNMOs as of 30 June 2008 but there was no record of this in the UNMOs summary report.

Recommendation 6

(6) The UNMIL Force Commander, in conjunction with the Chief Military Observer, should improve the logistics and support function procedures to assist military observers in performing their functions effectively.

28. *The UNMIL DFC/CMO accepted recommendation 6 and stated that the UNMO logistics officers have been advised to coordinate with UNMIL support sections (Transport, CITS, Aviation and Supply) and that the revised SOPs for UNMOs will cover this issue. Recommendation 6 remains open pending OIOS' receipt of the revised SOPs.*

29. For clothing allowances, the Selection Standards for UNMOs provides that the first half of the allowance is paid upon arrival in the Mission and the second half at the end of six months when there is reasonable expectation the UNMO will complete a year's tour of duty. Contrary to this, the Mission pays the first half of UNMOs' clothing allowance of \$200 only when an UNMO has completed six months of service, and the second half when the UNMO is about to complete or has completed 12 months of service.

Recommendation 7

(7) The UNMIL Office of Mission Support should ensure that the UNMIL Finance Section pays the clothing allowance of Military Observers according to the Selection Standards and Training Guidelines for United Nations Military Observers.

30. The UNMIL Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 7 and stated that UNMIL Finance Section has since been paying clothing allowance of military observers according to the Selection Standards and Training Guidelines for UNMOs. Recommendation 7 remains open pending OIOS' verification that UNMOs clothing allowance is paid according to the Selection Standards.

F. Inadequacies in equipment

31. The UNMOs significantly lack protective, surveillance, communications and computer equipment. A lack of adequate equipment, particularly as the UNMOs are unarmed, compromises their safety. Presently, apart from the Selection Standards for UNMOs' list of recommended and required clothing and equipment, there are no DPKO policies or guidelines on the equipment missions should provide and UNMOs should use during patrolling.

Protective and survival equipment

32. As of 30 June 2008, based on an UNMO report, the 202 UNMOs in the Mission had a shortage of 139 flak jackets and 141 Kevlar helmets. Moreover, seven UNMO teams and all four Sector HQs did not have flak jackets or helmets while five teams had insufficient or mismatched quantities of these items. Such equipment is required considering the nature of UNMOs responsibilities and their areas of assignment. The UNMIL Supply Section stated that the UNMO component has not requested these items during the past few years.

Surveillance equipment

33. UNMOs did not have the required number of binoculars and digital cameras. For instance, additional 184 binoculars and 26 cameras were required to comply with the present SOPs to ensure that the teams were properly equipped. Moreover, UNMO teams and Sector HQs did not have video camera recorders, sound recorders, night-vision binoculars or goggles, or infrared sensing equipment essential for surveillance and monitoring operations. The UNMOs SOPs stated that these items can be provided if required. According to the UNMIL Supply Section, UNMOs have not requested these items. Furthermore, according to the Mission's Aviation Section, because the UNMOs did not express their need for surveillance equipment onboard aircraft at the start-up of the Mission, such equipment was not considered when the Mission leased the aircraft.

34. The Mission relies on UNMOs' accurate observations and reliable inputs on the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and in monitoring illegal movement of natural resources in Liberia. UNMOs' CONOPS require that they perform ground and aerial patrols in and above vegetation, which require state-of-the-art surveillance equipment. When UNMOs principally rely on eyesight and on standard binoculars and digital cameras, they may not be able to record any violations. Lack of nocturnal surveillance equipment could limit UNMOs' ground patrolling activities to daylight hours when illicit activities they must watch for are normally perpetrated at night.

35. The newly formed committee referred to in paragraph 26 should address these issues to ensure that UNMOs have the necessary equipment to carry out their functions effectively.

G. Ground transportation issues

36. Vehicles allocated to UNMOs were inadequate. As of July 2008, the component had only 64 vehicles against their entitlement of 84 vehicles.

37. Thirteen of the 64 vehicles were unserviceable for reasons other than routine maintenance. Seven vehicles were specifically assigned to five UNMOs who do not perform regular patrolling and to two non-UNMO staff officers. Effectively, the UNMO teams in the field had only 44 serviceable vehicles.

Recommendation 8

(8) The UNMIL Office of Mission Support should ensure the prompt issuance of additional vehicles to the military observer component to rectify the vehicle shortage issue.

38. *The UNMIL Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 8 and stated that the UNMIL Transport Section is trying to provide the UNMO teams with additional vehicles and that eight vehicles have been repaired and handed over to the UNMOs. Recommendation 8 remains open pending OIOS' verification that the Mission has issued UNMOs with their vehicle entitlements and that all unserviceable vehicles have either been replaced or put back in service.*

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

39. We wish to express our appreciation to the Management and staff of UNMIL for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS
Assignment No. AP2007/626/04 – Audit of patrolling by United Nations military observers in UNMIL

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
1	The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should ensure that the Mission's Standard Operating Procedures for Military Observers are consistent with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations policies and procedures and that they comprehensively cover important operational aspects of military observers in the Mission.	Governance	High		Receipt of a copy of the revised SOPs, which include all relevant procedures and are consistent with DPKOs policies and procedures for UNMOs.	30 June 2009
2	The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should improve data management and generate reports to facilitate the monitoring of and subsequent reporting on patrolling activities.	Operational	Medium		Verification that adequate data is available to report on UNMOs patrols.	30 June 2009
3	The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should ensure that military observers, once in the Mission, take the required competency tests to demonstrate they have the skills to carry out their functions effectively. Those who cannot demonstrate that they have the required skills during the established induction phase should be repatriated at the cost of their home country.	Operational	High		Verification that UNMOs take the driving test and English language proficiency examination within 30 days from arrival in the Mission, and those who do not pass these tests after the allowed number of attempts have been repatriated at the cost of their home countries.	30 June 2009
4	The UNMIL Chief Military Observer should ensure all United Nations military observers sign the Mission's standard letter of undertaking regarding sexual exploitation and abuse to enhance their awareness of this United Nations policy and to deter incidence of such misconduct.	Human Resources	High		Action complete	Implemented
5	The UNMIL Chief Military Observer	Operational	Medium		Verification that UNMOs operational	31 May 2009

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
6	<p>should conduct a needs assessment that recognizes and consolidates military observer teams' operational requirements for inclusion in the Mission's budgets.</p> <p>The UNMIL Force Commander, in conjunction with the Chief Military Observer should improve the logistics and support function procedures to assist military observers in performing their functions effectively.</p>	Operational	High		<p>requirements have been included and duly considered in the Mission's budget.</p> <p>Issuance of the revised SOP for UNMOs requiring UNMO logistics officers to coordinate with UNMIL support sections in order to enhance their logistics support to UNMOs.</p>	30 June 2009
7	<p>The UNMIL Office of Mission Support should ensure that the UNMIL Finance Section pays the clothing allowance to the military observers according to the Selection Standards and Training Guidelines for United Nations Military Observers.</p>	Finance	Low		<p>Verification that UNMOs clothing allowance is paid by Finance Section according to the UNMOs Selection Standards and Training Guidelines.</p>	Implemented
8	<p>The UNMIL Office of Mission Support should ensure the prompt issuance of additional vehicles to the military observer component to rectify the vehicle shortage issue.</p>	Operational	High		<p>Verification that the Mission has issued the UNMOs with their vehicle entitlements and that all unserviceable vehicles have either been replaced or put back in service.</p>	30 June 2009

¹ C = closed, O = open

² Date provided by UNMIL in response to recommendations