INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

AUDIT REPORT

Business continuity and crisis management in UNMIS

The Mission had taken steps to ensure it could respond to crisis but was not adequately prepared to maintain continuity of critical business processes if a disruptive event occurred

18 March 2011
Assignment No. AP2010/632/12

TO: Mr. Haile Menkerios
A: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
United Nations Mission in Sudan

DATE: 18 March 2011

REFERENCE: IAD: 11- **00298**

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

SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AP2010/632/12 - Audit of business continuity and crisis management in UNMIS**
OBJET:

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 2 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 and 4), in its annual report to the General Assembly and semi-annual report to the Secretary-General.

cc: Mr. David Wimhurst, Chief of Staff, UNMIS
Mr. Nicolas Von Ruben, Director of Mission Support Division, UNMIS
Mr. Swatantra Goolsarran, Executive Secretary, UN Board of Auditors
Ms. Susanne Frueh, Executive Secretary, Joint Inspection Unit
Mr. Jonathan Childerley, Chief, Oversight Support Unit, Department of Management
Mr. Byung-Kun Min, Special Assistant to the USG-OIOS
Mr. Seth Adza, Chief Audit Response Unit, Department of Field Support
Ms. Eleanor Burns, Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Service, OIOS
Ms. Amy Wong, Programme Officer, Internal Audit Division, 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

Audit of business continuity and crisis management in UNMIS

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of business continuity and crisis management in the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). The overall objective of the audit was to establish the preparedness of the Mission to respond to crisis and to maintain continuity of critical business processes at a minimum agreed level following disruptive events. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

UNMIS had taken steps to ensure it could respond to crisis. However, it was not adequately prepared to continue critical business processes if a disruptive event occurred. The results of audit are summarized below:

- Of the several sections and units of the Mission, only the Communications and Information Technology Section (CITS) had a draft business continuity and disaster recovery plan for its activities. However, the plan had not been regularly tested, individuals responsible for activating the plans were not aware of their roles, and users of CITS' services had not been informed and trained regarding their respective roles in activating the plan. The absence of business continuity management may be attributed to the lack of policy directive for field missions on the subject. UNMIS would benefit greatly from the experience of the United Nations Mission in Liberia, which rolled out a business continuity plan and a planning methodology in November 2010 with the support of DPKO/DFS.

- Business continuity management includes crisis management planning, the principal purpose of the latter being the preservation of life and property. The Mission had implemented several unrelated activities intended to preserve life and property in the event of crisis. These included the establishment of a functioning Crisis Management Team, security risk assessment and planning, and an evacuation and relocation plan. While these actions were adequate to mitigate security governance risks, there was the need for additional measures to ensure their effectiveness. In particular, staff needed to be briefed on evacuation procedures, the evacuation and relocation plan needed to be tested and updated regularly to reflect the accurate contact information of key personnel responsible for its activation.

- Four critical sections of the Mission had not archived their vital records increasing the risk of loss of important records in the event of a disruptive event.

OIOS made five recommendations to address the weaknesses identified in the audit and to further improve the business continuity management process in the Mission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

1.   The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of business continuity and crisis management in the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

2.   The Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly A/64/472 dated 5 October 2009 states that business continuity management is an important business practice and should constitute one of the elements supporting the delivery of United Nations mandates, including that of ensuring the health, safety and security of its staff. The report defines business continuity management as a holistic management process that strengthens an organization's ability to respond to risks and to maintain continuity of critical business processes, at a minimum agreed level following disruptive events, which can have catastrophic effects and emanate from sources such as natural events, technological, industrial or public infrastructure events, or civil and political events.

3.   The business continuity management process includes three basic components - i.e. crisis management planning (CMP), business continuity planning (BCP) and disaster recovery planning (DRP). The CMP details an organization's immediate crisis response with the objective of quickly gaining control of a crisis situation. BCP on the other hand is concerned with recovery plans that are focused, comprehensive and cost effective in keeping the business running. CMP deals with incidents that pose threats to the safety and security of an organization's staff and addresses specific types of crisis while BCP focuses on incidents that cause disruption to an organization's critical business processes and adopts a multi-hazards approach. DRP on the other hand is the provision of resources, equipments, facilities, data and skills enabling organizations to recover specific business systems in the event of a disruptive event.

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

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVES

5.   The main objectives of the audit were to assess the preparedness of the Mission to respond to crisis and whether it had established procedures to ensure continuity of critical business processes at a minimum agreed level following disruptive events.

III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6.   The audit covered the activities implemented by the Mission in the areas of CMP, BCP and DRP.

7.   The audit methodology included a review of pertinent documents and records, interviews of key personnel and visits to field locations at Juba and Kadugli.

IV. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Business continuity management

8.   The business continuity management process, *inter alia*, entails the development of an integrated BCP and DRP, also called the business continuity and disaster recovery (BCDR) plan, so that the organization resumes critical operations, post crisis, in a timely manner. The BCDR plan involves five main steps including project initiation and policy establishment, risk assessment, business impact analysis, mitigating strategy development and plan implementation, testing and maintenance.

9.   UNMIS had not developed an integrated BCDR identifying the critical activities and business processes of the Mission and the steps to be taken for their continuing operation after a disruptive event. Out of 38 sections, only the Communications and Information Technology Section (CITS) of UNMIS had a draft BCDR. While the efforts of the CITS are commendable, OIOS noted the lack of appropriate mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of the plan. For example, the CITS BCDR plan had not been tested regularly and users of CITS' services had not been informed and trained regarding their respective roles in activating the plan.

10.   The absence of business continuity management may be attributed to the lack of policy directive for field missions on the subject. In this regard, OIOS notes that Section III on business continuity management contained in the General Assembly resolution A/RES/63/268 (7 May 2009) and the Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly A/64/472 (5 October 2009) pertain almost exclusively to headquarters, offices away from headquarters and regional commissions. Additionally, the DPKO/DFS Standard Operating Procedures on Short-term Continuity of Operations (approved 1 June 2009), and DPKO/DFS Standard Operating Procedures on Emergency Preparedness (approved 1 June 2009) were headquarter-centric.

11.   OIOS notes that in November 2010, with the support of DPKO/DFS, UNMIL rolled out a business continuity plan and a planning methodology that could be used by other DPKO/DFS missions. UNMIS would benefit greatly from the experience of UNMIL and DPKO/DFS.

> **Recommendations 1 and 2**
>
> **The UNMIS Management:**
>
> **(1)   In consultation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, should develop and implement a mission-specific policy/methodology for business continuity management process.**

(2)   Should ensure that the Communication and Information Technology Section's business continuity and disaster recovery plan is tested regularly and that lessons learnt are used to update the plan.

12.   *The UNMIS Management accepted recommendation 1and stated that its implementation was ongoing. It stated that as it is likely that UNMIS will end its mandate in July 2011, a mission-specific policy to enable the business continuity management process will be developed if a new mission is established in Southern Sudan. The Office of the SRSG will take the lead in developing the plan.* Recommendation 1 will remain open pending the development and implementation of a mission-specific policy/methodology for business continuity management process.

13.   *The UNMIS Management accepted recommendation 2 and stated that live on-site exercise in the form of disaster recovery and business continuity testing is held periodically, with the most recent one being held on 7 December 2010 in Entebbe. In addition, the CITS's disaster recovery and business continuity plan is updated regularly based on the lessons learned from live testing.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 2 has been closed.

Archiving of records

14.   Archiving of records is a prerequisite for easy and timely retrieval of records after a disruptive event. Four critical sections, i.e. the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG), Office of Chief of Staff, Office of Force Headquarters, and Office of United Nations Police were among the 12 sections that had not archived their records.   These sections had also not designated their respective focal points responsible for backup of records in the database. The staff in these sections indicated that they were not aware of the need to archive essential documents. Failure to archive records may adversely affect resumption of operations.

Recommendation 3

(3)   The UNMIS Management should ensure that sections/units of the Mission archive essential documents to facilitate their retrieval after a disruptive event.

15.   *The UNMIS Management accepted recommendation 3 and stated that focal points have been identified for all sections, including substantive sections. These individuals are responsible for backing up records and are being trained on the use of new e-archiving system, TRIM System, which was rolled out in February 2011. The TRIM System will allow UNMIS to be in full compliance with DPKO/DFS and UN policies and guidelines in relation to records management. The entire Mission is expected to be covered by 30 June 2011 and it will definitely provide a mechanism for quick business recovery after a disruptive event.* Recommendation 3 remains open pending implementation of the TRIM System throughout the Mission.

B.   Crisis management

16. As indicated in paragraph 3 above, business continuity management includes crisis management planning (CMP). The principal purpose of crisis management is the preservation of life and property. The Mission has implemented several unrelated activities intended to preserve life and property in the event of crisis. There was a Crisis Management Team whose activities are coordinated by the Joint Operations Centre (JOC). The JOC, in close cooperation with Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) also assists the Mission's Management in managing threats such as safety and security of personnel, Mission assets and premises. The Department of Safety and Security (DSS) had prepared a security risk assessment as part of security planning. The Mission also has in place a Security Management Team. The Finance and the Personnel Sections had their respective crisis management plans. OIOS review of the crisis management activities in UNMIS revealed the following:

- The JOC-prepared document entitled "Operation Rapid", which specifies the evacuation and relocation plan of the Mission, was not adequate as staff had not been briefed on evacuation procedures, it had not been tested, and it did not contain the latest contact information of key personnel including the Chief of Mission Support, Security Coordinator and Chief of Transport, responsible for coordinating the evacuation/relocation.

- The Mission had not developed a natural disaster response plan as contemplated in its security plan. Therefore, the Mission was unprepared to handle emergencies arising out of natural disasters.

Recommendations 4 and 5

The UNMIS Management should:

(4)   Update and test the "Operation Rapid" evacuation plan regularly so that gaps in the plan can be identified and steps taken to improve it; and

(5)   Develop a natural disaster response plan to mitigate risks arising out of natural disasters.

17. *The UNMIS Management accepted recommendation 4 and stated that it will review the plan and ensure that it reflects the requirements highlighted by the audit. It also stated that all advisories, including evacuation and relocation procedures, are broadcast regularly and that it will continue to broadcast these procedures and include them in security briefs and trainings.* Recommendation 4 remains open pending review and updating of the evacuation plan by the Mission.

18. *The UNMIS Management accepted recommendation 5 and stated that it will look into the natural disaster response plan in conjunction with formulating a Mission-specific policy for business continuity management process.*

Recommendation 5 remains open pending establishment of a natural disaster response plan.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O[1]	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date[2]
1	The UNMIS Management, in consultation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, should develop and implement a mission-specific policy/mythodology for business continuity management process.	Governance	High	O	Development and implementation of a mission-specific policy/mythology for business continuity management process.	Ongoing
2	The UNMIS Office of Mission Support should ensure that the Communication and Information Technology Section's business continuity and disaster recovery plan is tested regularly and that lessons learnt are used to update the plan.	Operational	Medium	C	Action taken.	Implemented
3	The UNMIS Management should ensure that sections/units of the Mission archive essential documents to facilitate their retrieval after a disruptive event.	Operational	Medium	O	Implementation of the TRIM System throughout the Mission.	30 June 2011
4	The UNMIS Management should update and test the "Operation Rapid" evacuation plan regularly so that gaps in the plan can be identified and steps taken to improve it.	Operational	High	O	Review and updating of the evacuation plan by the Mission.	Ongoing
5	The UNMIS Management should develop a natural disaster response plan to mitigate risks arising out of natural disasters	Governance	Medium	O	Establishment of a natural disaster response plan.	Ongoing

1. C = closed, O = open
2. Date provided by UNMIS in response to recommendations.