



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

AUDIT REPORT

Aviation safety in MONUSCO

The aviation safety measures implemented by the Mission need to be improved to further mitigate air safety risks

17 December 2010

Assignment No. AP2010/620/04

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: Mr. Roger A. Meece
A: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
MONUSCO

DATE: 17 December 2010

REFERENCE: IAD: 10- **01121**

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

Fatoumata

SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AP2010/620/04 – Audit of aviation safety in MONUSCO**

OBJET:

1. I am pleased to present the report on the above-mentioned audit.
2. Based on your comments, all recommendations remain open in the OIOS recommendations database. In order for us to close these 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, 3, 4, 8 and 10) in its annual report to the General Assembly and semi-annual report to the Secretary-General.

cc: Mr. Paul Buades, Director of Mission Support, MONUSCO
Mr. David Pittfield, Chief Integrated Support Services, MONUSCO
Mr. Swatantra Goolsarran, Executive Secretary, UN Board of Auditors
Ms. Susanne Frueh, Executive Secretary, Joint Inspection Unit
Mr. Seth Adza, Chief, Audit Response Team, DFS
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Ms. Eleanor T. Burns, Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Service, OIOS
Ms. Amy Wong, Professional Practices Section, IAD, 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 aviation safety in MONUSCO

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of aviation safety in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The overall objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls over air safety operations. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

In general, aviation safety measures implemented by the Mission needed to be improved to mitigate air safety risks. The main audit results are as follows:

- The Aviation Safety Council had not convened for two years to ensure that air safety risks and hazards were systematically identified and action had been taken to mitigate or eliminate them in a timely manner. Critical safety issues that needed to be addressed included the low proficiency of air traffic controllers, lack of equipment at air traffic control towers, inadequate maintenance of airfields, and lack of calibration of navigation aids.
- The Mission had not fully implemented Operational Risk Management Policy promulgated by DFS, precluding it from ensuring a harmonized, consistent and coherent aviation risk management process.
- Airfields used by United Nations aircrafts were generally in disrepair, presenting the risk of air accidents.

OIOS made 13 recommendations to address the issues identified during the audit and to improve aviation safety measures in MONUSCO.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of aviation safety in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.
2. MONUSCO's Aviation Section was responsible for providing logistical and tactical air support to its operations using a fleet that includes 76 aircraft. These assets were used for transporting passengers, cargo, reconnaissance, close aerial support, troop deployments, aero-medical evacuations, search and rescue operations for civilians and combat missions. During the financial year 2008/2009, the fleet transported 218,824 passengers and 35,194 metric tons of air cargo.
3. The Mission has an Aviation Safety Unit (ASU), which reports to the Director of Mission Support (DMS) and is responsible for implementing the Mission's aviation safety programme and providing expert advice to Management on aviation safety matters.
4. Comments made by MONUSCO are shown in *italics*.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVES

5. The main objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls over air safety operations in the Mission.

III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The audit covered aviation safety activities implemented during the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.
7. The audit methodology included a review of relevant documents and records, analysis of available data, interviews with key personnel and visits to airfields at Kinshasa, Bukavu and Goma.

IV. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Organization and governance of aviation safety

Aviation Safety Council

8. The Department of Field Support (DFS) Aviation Safety Manual (ASM) provides that the Aviation Safety Council (ASC) should meet regularly to ensure timely action is taken on safety related issues in the Mission. The ASC had not convened for over two years, and therefore there was a lack of management
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oversight over aviation safety. There were several critical safety issues that had not been addressed in a timely manner. These included the low proficiency of air traffic controllers, lack of equipment at air traffic control towers, inadequate maintenance of airfields and lack of calibration of navigation aids.

9. The Chief of ASU was of the view that weekly meetings with the DMS to discuss safety related issues, and frequent interaction with the Chief Aviation Officer and other stakeholders was sufficient to ensure that safety related issues were addressed in a timely manner. In OIOS' view, considering that the ASC is an important part of the United Nations aviation safety programme and is designed as a means of obtaining agreements for action on specific safety related problems that could otherwise be very difficult to achieve, it needs to convene regularly to ensure that these issues are addressed in a more formal forum. It will also provide assurance to Management that aviation risks are being dealt with in a systematic manner. The DFS' assessment visit in 2009 also had identified the lack of a functioning ASC as a weakness in the Mission's aviation safety programme. However, no action had been taken by Senior Management to address DFS' recommendation.

Recommendation 1

(1) The MONUSCO Special Representative of the Secretary-General should revive the Aviation Safety Council to ensure that safety risks and hazards are systematically identified and timely actions are taken to mitigate identified risks.

10. *The MONUSCO Management accepted recommendation 1 and stated that the ASC would be convened early in 2011.* Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the ASC minutes.

Staffing resources in the Aviation Safety Unit

11. The ASU had a vacancy rate of 31 per cent in 2009/2010, as shown in Table 1. There was a shortage of staff at the professional and field service levels. The Mission explained that it had difficulties in finding suitable candidates. As a result, aviation safety staff were overburdened, potentially diminishing the quality of the ASU's work and the implementation of its annual work plan.

Table 1: Staffing position in Aviation Safety Unit in 2009 / 2010

Position	Approved	Available	Vacant
Chief Aviation safety Officer P-4	1	1	-
Aviation Safety Officer P-3	5	4	1
Aviation Safety Officer FS-5	3	1	2
Aviation Safety Officer NPO	2	2	-
Admin Clerk GS (national staff)	2	1	1
TOTAL	13	9	4

Recommendation 2

(2) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should expedite the recruitment of staff for the Aviation Safety Unit to ensure more effective management of the Mission's aviation accidents prevention programme.

12. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 2 and stated that 10 of the 13 authorized posts were now encumbered. Recruitment for the three vacant posts was expected to be completed by March 2011. Recommendation 2 remains open pending evidence that all authorized posts for the ASU have been encumbered.*

B. Critical issues for improving aviation safety

Air traffic control

13. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (International Standards and Recommended Practices) provide that air traffic control (ATC) towers should be equipped with adequate communication equipment and staffed with qualified air traffic controllers.

14. The communication and equipment in the ATC towers maintained by Regies des Voies Aeriennes (RVA) and the national aviation authority of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was inadequate and was below ICAO standards. For example, recording devices in the ATC towers in Bukavu and Goma were out of order for over six months. In addition, the proficiency levels of air traffic controllers were below the ICAO standards. For example, more than 50 per cent of the controllers in the Eastern Region were not qualified and did not meet the requirements prescribed by ICAO. The air traffic controllers in Goma had not attended any training since 1998. While MONUSCO sponsored training for the air traffic controllers through ICAO, it did not have the desired impact as many trainees left the RVA after being trained.

Recommendation 3

(3) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should liaise with the Regies des Voies Aeriennes to improve air traffic control services.

15. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the Mission had taken significant measures to assist RVA in improving air traffic control services including the provision of mobile air traffic control towers and communications equipment for use in ATC. The Mission will also supply 15 weather-monitoring stations and 32 very-high-frequency transceivers for air traffic control services in January 2011. The training of 120 air traffic controllers was underway and expected to be completed by June 2011. Recommendation 3 remains open pending evidence that training of air traffic controllers has been conducted and the equipment in air traffic control towers has been installed.*

Pedestrians on runways

16. The International Standards and Recommended Practices provide that airfields should be adequately secured with a perimeter fencing or a boundary wall to deter unauthorized persons. Due to the lack of boundary walls or perimeter fencing, there were several cases of runway incursions. For example, all airfields used by the Mission reported incidents of runway incursions by residents in the vicinity of the airfields. This constitutes a major hazard for aviation safety, which could result in serious accidents.

17. The Mission's Management acknowledged the need to comply with ICAO Standards, but it stated that fencing the aerodromes was not feasible due to budgetary constraints and the limitations of the Mission's mandate. However, the Mission had targeted selected high-risk airfields where concertina wire fences were provided. Plans were also underway to resolve runway incursion problems at Goma, which is considered a serious issue. In view of the actions taken by the Mission, OIOS does not make a recommendation.

Maintenance of airfields

18. The Aviation Manual provides that the air terminal officer should, in coordination with the Mission's Engineering Section and Contingent Engineering Units, ensure that air terminals are in serviceable condition.

19. The aprons used by United Nations aircrafts at N'djili, Goma and Kavumu airports were not serviceable and needed immediate re-pavement or repair.

Recommendation 4

(4) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure appropriate repair and maintenance of aprons, taxiways and runways used by the Mission fleet at Goma, Kavumu and N'djili airports.

20. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 4 and stated that the Mission had already been engaged in the repair and maintenance of the runways and aprons at those airfields.* Recommendation 4 remains open pending completion of the repair and maintenance of runways and aprons at Goma, Kavumu and N'djili airports.

Calibration of navigation aids

21. The Aviation Manual provides that the Air Terminal Officer should ensure good repair and serviceability of air terminals, which include navigation aids installation.

22. The Mission did not ensure that navigation tools used at airfields were calibrated on a regular basis to ensure that they were in a serviceable condition. For example, the precision approach path indicators (PAPIs) installed at Kavumu

and Goma airfields for \$250,000 were not calibrated due to the lack of calibration vendors. This could hamper safe landing of aircraft.

Recommendation 5

(5) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure timely calibration of the precision approach path indicators at Goma and Kavumu airfields.

23. *The MONUSCO Management accepted recommendation 5 and stated that the Mission was inviting bids for the calibration of the PAPIs at Goma. Recommendation 5 remains open pending evidence of the calibration of PAPIs at Kavumu and Goma airfields.*

Disabled commercial aircrafts

24. The International Standards and Recommended Practices provide that a clearway should extend laterally to a distance of at least 75 meters on each side of the extended centre line of the runway. Additionally, the Aviation Manual provides that the air terminal officer should ensure removal of disabled aircrafts.

25. There were two disabled commercial aircraft parked very close to active runway and MONUSCO apron in Goma and the national army maintains a camp near the runway at Kavumu. Noncompliance with aviation standards could have severe consequences on air operations and may endanger life and property. In this regard, a commercial aircraft hit the military camp during a landing operation last year causing serious injuries to the soldiers.

Recommendation 6

(6) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should actively pursue with the host Government the relocation of the army camp at Kavumu and remove the disabled aircrafts at the Goma airport.

26. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 6 and stated that all but two disabled aircraft parked close to the runway at Goma had been removed and the relocation of the remaining aircraft was expected to be completed by December 2010. The relocation of the camp at Kavumu was likely to be completed by March 2011. Recommendation 6 remains open pending the removal of the commercial aircraft and the relocation of the camp.*

Safeguarding of aviation assets

27. The International Standards and Recommended Practices provide that aerodrome facilities should be adequately guarded and illuminated for protection and security reasons.

28. The Mission aviation assets and the Movement Control (MovCon) air cargo warehouse at the Goma airfield were not properly safeguarded. This has

resulted in the losses through theft. For example, in July 2010, jet fuel was stolen from the United Nations aircraft at Goma apron. In August 2010, the MovCon warehouse was ransacked by unidentified persons.

29. The Mission had taken measures such as installing temporary lights at the apron in Goma and established a checkpoint at the airfield perimeter. However, these measures were not adequate and therefore potentially ineffective. In OIOS' view, static posts at critical entry points, night patrols, and permanent security lighting would further safeguard the Mission's assets.

Recommendation 7

(7) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should properly safeguard aviation assets and the Movement Control warehouse at the Goma airfield.

30. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 7 and stated that consultations with the military contingent in Goma were ongoing regarding the safeguarding of aviation assets.* Recommendation 7 remains open pending evidence of the additional safety measures that have been implemented by the Mission.

C. Implementation of aviation safety policies and programmes

Operational risk management policy

31. The Mission was required to implement the Operational Risk Management (ORM) policy promulgated by DFS in April 2008 and submit the draft standard operating procedures for implementing the ORM by October 2008.

32. The Mission did not implement the ORM policy in a timely manner, and it was only in October 2010 that the standard operating procedures were developed and submitted to DFS. However, the Mission has trained more than 200 staff members on the ORM policy, but still needs to set up a task group to monitor the road map for implementing the new policy.

Recommendation 8

(8) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should review the road map for the implementation of the operational risk management policy and ensure that a task group is established to monitor the implementation of the policy.

33. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 8 and stated that the ORM policy would be implemented and that a monitoring task group would be established by March 2011.* Recommendation 8 remains open pending evidence of the full implementation of the ORM policy.

Risk assessment

34. The Mission prepared quarterly aviation risk assessment reports in compliance with the ASM, but it had not taken appropriate corrective actions in compliance with the Manual. For example, from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, the ASU conducted risk assessments for 14 main airfields including international airports in Entebbe (Uganda) and Bujumbura (Burundi) and 24 secondary airfields used by the Mission in DRC. The assessments identified a number of critical safety risks relating to rescue and firefighting services, runway and landing facilities, helipads and helicopter landing sites, ramp operations and air traffic control services. However, the Mission had not taken the corrective actions suggested by the ASU.

35. Moreover, in December 2009, the DFS assistance visit team identified a number of safety concerns and made related recommendations to the Mission's Management. However, these recommendations had not been fully addressed as there was no plan of action.

Recommendation 9

(9) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should develop a plan of action including specific timeframe for the implementation of the recommendations of the Department of Field Support's aviation safety assistance visit in December 2009.

36. *The MONUSCO Management accepted recommendation 9 and stated that a plan of action for the implementation of the DFS assessment visit recommendations has been established and sent to DFS.* Recommendation 9 remains open pending evidence of the implementation of recommendations made by the DFS team.

D. Mission's preparedness for aviation emergencies

Search and rescue services

37. The International Standards and Recommended Practices provide for the establishment and prompt provision of search and rescue (SAR) services to ensure assistance is rendered to persons in distress.

38. The Government of the DRC did not have SAR services due to resource constraints. Therefore, MONUSCO acquired SAR services from a troop contributing country in March 2010 for \$9.3 million for a two-year period. However, off-base simulated SAR exercises had not been carried out to evaluate the capability of the services provided. Additionally, the SOPs for SAR outlined in the ICAO Standards had not been customized as required. In the absence of appropriate exercises and operating procedures, the requisite proficiency of SAR cannot be assured, increasing the risk of loss of life in the event of an accident.

Recommendation 10

(10) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure that an off-base simulated search and rescue exercise is carried out to evaluate the capability of rescue helicopters and to subsequently customize and streamline the standard operating procedures for search and rescue services.

39. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 10 and stated that the SAR exercise was conducted in September 2010 and the SOP was being reviewed continually in the Mission.* Recommendation 10 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the customized SOPs for the SAR services.

Aviation emergency response plan was not reviewed since 2008

40. The Mission's emergency response plan (ERP) had not been reviewed and updated with respect to some locations since 2008 in violation of the ASM which requires that the ERP be tested and updated annually. For example, ERP for N'djili airfield was tested in December 2008, but deficiencies identified were not addressed and reflected in the plan. The Chief of ASU explained that the updated Mission's ERP was waiting for approval by the DMS. The effectiveness of the up-dated mission level emergency plan may not be assured because emergency response plans were not tested and updated annually in all locations in the Mission.

Recommendation 11

(11) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure that the Mission Aviation Emergency Response Plan is approved and regularly tested and that deficiencies found are addressed and reflected in the updated plan.

41. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 11 and stated that the ERP was ready and that it had been tested at seven locations this year, with three others planned for the coming months.* Recommendation 11 remains open pending receipt of the updated ERP reflected changes based on the tests conducted.

Medical plan and emergency medicine

42. The ASM provides that the Senior Medical Officer shall ensure that ambulances are properly equipped including sufficient medical supplies required to treat casualties.

43. Medical plans to supplement the ERP in the case of an aviation accident had not been developed by the MONUSCO medical sections in Bukavu and Goma presenting the risk that emergency medical assistance is not available when most needed. Also, there was inadequate contingency stock of emergency medical supplies to administer first aid to casualties.

Recommendation 12

(12) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure that medical plans for assisting casualties in the event of an accident are prepared and that there is an adequate contingency stock of drugs and medical supplies.

44. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 12 and stated that the Emergency Crash and Rescue Medical plans for assisting casualties were available and that these will be tested during next ERP activation at Kinshasa. Also, adequate stock of contingency drugs was available or under requisition.* Recommendation 12 remains open pending receipt of the medical plans and evidence of the contingency stock of emergency medical supplies.

Shelters for fire tenders and storage for firefighting chemicals were not provided

45. The International Standards and Recommended Practices provide that all rescue and firefighting vehicles should normally be housed in a fire station. The manufacturer recommends that firefighting foam concentrate should be stored at 25 degree Celsius.

46. At Goma airport, two fire tenders valued at \$1 million and foam concentrate containers valued at \$42,000 were exposed to direct sunlight for nearly a year making them susceptible to damage. The Chief of Integrated Support Services agreed to provide shelter for the fire tenders and storage for the chemicals.

Recommendation 13

(13) The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure proper shelter for fire tenders and adequate storage facilities for firefighting chemicals and equipments.

47. *The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 13 and stated that a hard shelter was being obtained from RVA to park fire tenders and store firefighting chemicals.* Recommendation 13 remains open pending evidence of acquisition of a shelter at Goma.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

48. We wish to express our appreciation to the Management and staff of MONUSCO 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 MONUSCO Head of Mission Support should revive the Aviation Safety Council to ensure that safety risks and hazards are systematically identified and action taken to mitigate identified risks in a timely manner.	Compliance	High	O	Receipt of minutes of the ASC indicating that it has been revived.	31 March 2011
2	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should expedite the recruitment of staff for the Aviation Safety Unit to ensure more effective management of the Mission's aviation accident and prevention programme.	Human Resources	Medium	O	Evidence that all authorized posts for the ASU have been encumbered.	31 March 2011
3	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should liaise with Regies des Voies Aeriennes for improve air traffic control services.	Compliance	High	O	Evidence of completion of training of air traffic controllers and installation of equipment in air traffic control towers.	31 July 2011
4	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure appropriate repair and maintenance of aprons, taxiways and runways used by the Mission's fleet at Goma, Kavumu and N'djili airports.	Compliance	High	O	Completion of the repair and maintenance of runways and aprons at Goma, Kavumu and N'adjili airports.	31 July 2011
5	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure timely calibration of the precision approach path indicators at Goma and Kavumu airfields.	Compliance	Medium	O	Evidence of the calibration of PAPIs at Kavumu and Goma airfields.	30 June 2011
6	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should actively pursue the host Government to re-location the army camp at Kavumu and remove the disabled aircrafts at Goma airport.	Compliance	Medium	O	The removal of the commercial aircraft and the relocation the camp.	30 March 2011
7	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should properly safeguard aviation	Compliance	Medium	O	Evidence of additional safety measures taken in the light of ongoing consultations	Ongoing

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
	assets and the Movement Control warehouse at the Goma airfield.				with military contingent based in Goma.	
8	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should review the road map for the implementation of the operational risk management policy and ensure that a task group is established to monitor the implementation of the policy.	Compliance	High	O	Evidence of full implementation of operational risk management policy.	31 March 2011
9	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should develop a plan of action including specific timeframe for the implementation of the recommendations of the Department of Field Support's aviation safety assistance visit in December 2009.	Governance	Medium	O	Evidence of the implementation of recommendations made by the DFS team.	Not provided
10	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure that an off-base simulated search and rescue exercise is carried out to evaluate the capability of rescue helicopters and to subsequently customize and streamline the standard operating procedures for search and rescue services.	Compliance	High	O	Receipt of a copy of the customized standard operating procedures for search and rescue services.	Not provided
11	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure that the Mission Aviation Emergency Response Plan is approved and regularly tested and that deficiencies found are addressed and reflected in the updated plan.	Compliance	Medium	O	Receipt of the updated ERP reflected changes based on the tests conducted.	Not provided
12	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure that medical plans for assisting casualties in the event of an accident are prepared and that there is an adequate contingency stock of drugs and medical supplies.	Compliance	Medium	O	Receipt of the medical plans and evidence of the contingency stock of emergency medical supplies.	31 January 2011
13	The MONUSCO Office of Mission Support should ensure proper shelter for fire tenders and adequate storage facilities	Compliance	Medium	O	Evidence of acquisition of a shelter at Goma.	31 January 2011

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date²
	for firefighting chemicals and equipments.					

1. C = closed, O = open

2. Date provided by MONUSCO in response to recommendations.