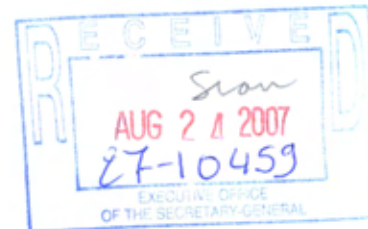


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Note to the Deputy Secretary-General

Report of Investigation into allegations of misuse of UN property in UNON

It has been brought to my attention that no formal response has been provided to your office in reply to your predecessor's note of 1 August 2006. In this regard please find outlined below a status update and summary of actions taken to date.

(prev. corres see #26-10195)
(#26-09214)

As you will note, the report found that there was personal use of UN cars and drivers by UNON-based executives which, in the case of the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, was regular and recurring. The report further found that the executives concerned had not exercised sound judgment in the personal use of UN cars and drivers, which had provided them with financial gain, and which was widely known in the UN compound. However, it was noted that this lack of sound judgment was mitigated by the failure of the UNON Administration to provide proper procedures and policies for close protection, or to conduct necessary threat assessments for its senior personnel. There was general agreement that the conduct of the senior personnel referred to in the report did not rise to the level of misconduct.

ID/OIOS made a number of recommendations based on these conclusions, including the conduct of professional threat assessments, the development and implementation of standard operating procedures and policies for close protection and vehicle use within UNON, and the development and implementation of an employee overtime policy within UNON. ID/OIOS also made a general recommendation, requesting the Secretary-General to take appropriate action.

Action was taken in the form of the issuance of a new "Policy on the provision and use of official cars" (ST/AI/2006/1 dated 1 August 2006) to ensure that the use of official cars was consistent across all duty stations. In addition, in August 2006, OHRM wrote to UNON and requested that it prepare draft guidelines on the use of official cars, which could be refined and finalized in consultation with OHRM, bearing in mind the special security considerations in Nairobi. These guidelines were ultimately approved on 11 December 2006 and were issued to provide further explanations to assist managers in the proper use of official cars.

ST/AI/2006/1 provides (at section 2.1(d)) that requests for exceptions to the general policy on the use of official cars based on reasons of health, security or other location-specific facts should be forwarded for consideration to the Under-Secretary-General for Management. The Director-General, United Nations at Nairobi, made such a request on 13 December 2006, based on the special security considerations at Nairobi. This request was approved on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Management on 23 February 2007 "on an exceptional basis for a two-year period and as long as Nairobi remains classified as a "C" duty station or for security phase I and above." It was further stated that "(s)hould the hardship classification or security situation improve during that period, this exception will be lifted unless there are further reasons to justify its continuation."


Alicia Bárcena
21 August 2007

