

DPA

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Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda*

Programme questions: evaluation

**Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth
evaluation of Political Affairs – decolonization and question of Palestine**

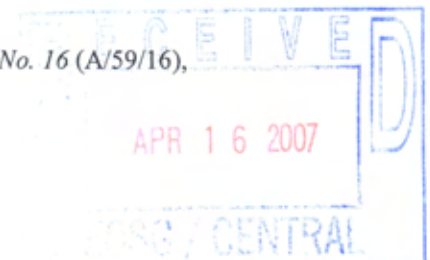
Summary

At its forty-fourth session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) requested the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to undertake an in-depth evaluation of political affairs.¹ The first report on subprogramme 1 on prevention, control and resolution of conflicts was presented to the CPC at its forty-sixth session in 2006. This evaluation is part of phase two of the in-depth evaluation and covers subprogramme 4 on decolonization and subprogramme 5 on question of Palestine. It focuses on the structure, activities and products of both the Decolonization Unit (DU), responsible for implementing subprogramme 4, and the Division for Palestinian Rights (DPR), responsible for implementing subprogramme 5.

Given political, social, economic, and environmental challenges, the decolonization process has recently stalled. Nevertheless, the DU is effectively carrying out its core functions in support of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Peoples. Special Committee members are generally satisfied with the quality and timeliness of the Unit's work, and have welcomed recent initiatives taken by the Unit to enhance support provided. Among the Unit's primary outputs are the 16 working papers on the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, which were produced on time in 2006 but for which questions exist regarding their utility and content. The Unit has provided

* E/AC.51/2007/x

¹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/59/16), para 382, and General Assembly Resolution 59/275, para 22.



effective substantive advice to the Special Committee, including support for its regional seminars, but could strengthen its work in preparing information products on decolonization. The Unit's structure and management are generally sound, although it lacks a good knowledge management system and guidelines documenting its work, and recent steps taken to further integrate the Unit within the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) have been successful and should be continued. Lastly, the separation of support functions for the Special Committee is not optimal.

OIOS recommends that the DU and DPA:

- establish a comprehensive knowledge management system;
- develop clear and precise guidelines for all of its work products and process;
- explore, in consultation with the Special Committee, consolidation of the Unit's mandated reporting into fewer documents;
- explore ways to further integrate DU with the rest of the Department; and
- in consultation with the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM), develop an action plan for better coordinating support to the Special Committee with its secretariat.

The DPR is effectively supporting the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, although a peaceful settlement to the question of Palestine is yet to be achieved. Committee members are highly satisfied with the Division, giving good ratings to quality and timeliness of its work, and to staff knowledge and responsiveness. DPR's implementation of its work programme, while generally successful, is somewhat uneven. It provides strong secretariat services to the Committee, and fully carries out its programme of international meetings and conferences. The United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), while largely successful, can be improved, as can the Division's work with regard to publications and information sharing and cooperation with civil society. A more innovative approach to DPR's work could be taken, in consultation with the Committee, and more systematic feedback could be obtained on its work products. Opportunities exist to strengthen DPR's internal management, and further integration of the Division with DPA, through temporary staff rotations, would enhance efficiencies and staff morale.

OIOS recommends that the DPR and DPA:

- assist the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in developing a strategy for further enhancing the content of international meetings and conferences;
- conduct regular and systematic user surveys for its international meetings and conferences and UNISPAL, as well as follow-up to its annual training programme for Palestinian Authority staff;
- develop a strategy for strengthening its cooperation with civil society organizations;
- undertake a change management exercise to strengthen internal management practices, enhance Division synergies and raise staff morale; and
- consider ways to further integrate DPR with the rest of DPA.

NOTE TO MR. NAMBIAR

(through Mr. Kim) *JK*

**OIOS report on the in-depth evaluation of
Political Affairs – decolonization and
question of Palestine**

Please find attached for information the Executive Summary of the report of OIOS on the in-depth evaluation of Political Affairs – decolonization and question of Palestine.

The Executive Summaries of such reports are customarily shared with the Secretary-General for his information.

Thank you.

CdC		SG	
For SG's approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
For SG's attention	<input type="checkbox"/>	Noted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Lara</i>
For SG's information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Seen	<input type="checkbox"/>
For SG's signature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Signed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Date		Date	2 April 2007
Comment (if applicable):			
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