

United Nations  Nations Unies

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29 September 2017

Dear Ms. Donovan and Mr. Lewis,

Thank you for your letter dated 21 September 2017, OIOS is extremely grateful to you for having brought these matters to our attention.

I was appalled and offended by what I read, any reasonable person would conclude that this is not the way to either treat victims or conduct investigations. The behaviours highlighted in the files are not reflective of the behaviour of professional United Nations Investigators and neither is the material in the files representative of official United Nations investigations.

We note from your website that you received some 90 files from your source and of that number, at this stage, you have identified 14 as being of concern.

Our analysis of those 14 matters reveals that neither the Conduct and Discipline Team in MINUSCA and by extension the Conduct and Discipline Unit at Headquarters, or ourselves for that matter, were informed of the existence of 8 of the matters about which you have expressed concern.

As you correctly point out in your letter OIOS is responsible for investigating reports of misconduct within the United Nations system. As a direct result of your disclosure we have predicated the 8 matters, that were not reported to us, for investigation. Furthermore, we have opened an investigation into the conduct of those involved in the initial response.

In line with the strategy of the Secretary-General, OIOS and the Department of Field Support will together continue actively to promote joint investigations with the Troop Contributing Countries in these matters.

For your information, we were aware of the following cases, numbered in your report as: 2, 3, 4, 7, 12 and 14. They were all handled in accordance with established procedures. We will however, in conjunction with MINUSCA and appropriate partners, revisit the victims to ensure their welfare and re-open and review the investigations in the light of your disclosures.

Ms. Paula Donovan, Co-Director
Mr. Stephen Lewis, Co-Director
AIDS-Free World
New York

OIOS is committed to both the victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and to the proper administration of Justice. I can assure you that both the rights, the best interests and the welfare of the victims, as well as ensuring independent, thorough and objective investigations, with the aim of assisting in the delivery of Justice for the victims will be central to our response.

My Office welcomes the opportunity to work in partnership with Civil Society in order to respond and to deal with the scourge of sexual exploitation and abuse; and we look forward to future early engagement with Code Blue should such issues as you have helpfully, recently highlighted arise again in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Heidi Mendoza

Under-Secretary-General
Office of Internal Oversight Services