

May 7, 2019

Director, Investigations Division –
Office of Internal Oversight Services
7th Floor 300 East 42nd
(Corner Second Avenue)
New York, NY, 10017

Dear Director of Investigations Division,

Re UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo - MONUSCO

The Africa faith & Justice Network (AFJN) was among many organizations that called on the international community to send a United Nations (UN) mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) during the conflict of 1996. AFJN also joined many other organizations to advocate for a more robust mandate to allow the UN mission root out armed groups. Over the years, the UN mission has contributed tremendously to the stability of the DRC for which the mission is to be commended.

It has come to our attention however, that presently all is not well with the UN mission in the DRC. The situation we understand, has been building up over the past several years and is now exacerbated by the process of implementing the UN Resolution 2463, adopted by the Security Council at its 8498th meeting, on 29 March 2019 that calls for **Strategic review and exit strategy** so as to “progressively transfer MONUSCO’s tasks to the Government of the DRC, the UNCT and other relevant stakeholders,” and “to conduct and provide the Security Council, no later than 20 October 2019, with an independent strategic review of MONUSCO assessing the continued challenges to peace and security in the DRC” (§§ 44-45).

There are allegations of gross mismanagement, taking advantage of the Congolese people and exploiting the conflict situation for personal gains. Particular allegations include theft of funds, ghost hospitals, ghost employees or duplicate employment, overbilling and price misinvoicing, mistreatment of Congolese staff and hiring of unqualified personnel because of personal relationship. Our sources stand ready to testify under strict confidentiality for security reasons upon your request.

You may have already been aware that yesterday, May 6, 2019 the DRC MONUSCO staff started a sit-in at the UN office in Kinshasa and across the DRC demanding that the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in the DRC rescind the decision to terminate 555 national staff jobs scheduled for June 30, 2019. They note that while DRC local staffs are marked for termination, the Special Representative is hiring international staff whose

salaries, bonuses, and other benefits constitute a far bigger budgetary burden than the amount allocated to national staff. This is giving the UN a bad image it does not deserve.

Although this information has come from credible and reliable sources, we on our part have not independently verified these allegations. However, as an advocacy organization dedicated to the welfare of the African peoples, and working to combat corruption and promote transparency and accountability in African communities, we feel obliged to bring this issue to your attention in your capacity as one entrusted with providing oversight to UN missions, so you can act as you deem fit, and in such a way that it would bring solution to the current situation in the DRC.

More specifically, we are appealing to you as one entrusted with oversight responsibilities and as a matter of urgency, to set in place the mechanisms to:

1. Investigate these allegations and if necessary, order an audit of MONUSCO in the DRC
2. Appraise the current steps taken towards the closure of MONUSCO's offices and in the meantime, suspend the termination of staff until the evaluation is completed
3. Ensure that witnesses are not intimidated so as to obtain a just and fair evaluation of the process

We will be obliged to provide you additional information and clarifications related to this matter and, can be reached at 202-817-3670 or at director@afjn.org and bahati@afjn.org. Thank you for your committed attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Rev. Aniedi Okure, OP
Executive Director

Cc: United States Mission to the United Nations

PS: Please share this message with the appropriate UN personnel who are in position to take action on this matter.