

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Confidential

Reference: CMS/0109/2015
Date: 08 April 2015

To: Ms. Kim Bolduc
Special Representative of the Secretary General and
Head of Mission

From: Michael Mulinge Kifivi
Chief of Mission Support



Subject: **Fact Finding Exercise Regarding Allegations of Misuse of Meals Provided by the Local Authorities at Authorized Hotels**

A. Preamble

1. As requested, I have initiated a Fact Finding Exercise (hereafter "the FFE") regarding allegations of misuse of meals provided by the Local Authorities at authorized Hotels.
2. Due to the sensitive nature of the issue, only two (2) of my core staff have been involved; Mr. Chris WHITE, Chief Communications and Technology Section (CCITS) and Mr. Alfred KESCHL, Administrative Officer (AO).
3. As I considered the submission of the "meal invoices" from the authorized Hotels incomplete and lacking transparency and in an effort to improve oversight, a Note Verbale (NV) (attached as Annex A) was forwarded to the Moroccan Coordination Office in Laayoune (hereafter "the Local Authorities (LA)"). Implementation date was to be 01 October 2014.
4. The LA responded with a return NV No. 517/R/2014 dated 17 November 2014 (attached as Annex B).

B. General

4. The LA has provided Portable Document Format (PDF) copies of their "discrepancy reports" (hereafter "the DR") for the months of October 2014 (attached as Annex C) and July 2014 (attached as Annex D).

5. In view of the fact that no details are provided on any invoices prior to October 2014, the DR for July 2014 could not be reviewed.

C. Implementation

6. Initially the following steps have been taken :

a) A Comparison Chart (CC) (attached as Annex E) has been created indicating the following information .

(I) List of MINURSO ID #s

(II) Names of individuals concerned

(III) Country of origin regarding the individuals concerned

(IV) Locations of individuals concerned as per "accommodation work sheets (AWS)

(V) A legend stipulating the various abbreviations used on the CC.

(b) SO2 Protocol/Welfare provided the AWS files for the month of October 2014. These AWS files are originally broken down by date, i.e. "accommodation =! OCT 2014" etc. Hence all thirty one (31) files consolidated into one (1) list (Annex F).

D. Findings

7. Based on the data collected there is a strong indication of possible misuse of meals provided by the authorized Hotels in Laayoune.

8. According to the existing data provided by SO2 Protocol/Welfare, numerous individuals who are stationed at TS, still avail of meals at various authorized Hotels in Laayoune. Out of sixty two (62) military personnel, sixty (60) have been identified as having misused meals provided by the authorized Hotels in Laayoune (attached as Annex E).

9. This is only possible if both the individuals in question as well as hotel staff collude in a scam to defraud the Organization as well as the LA.

10- Please note that FEE does not cover MINURSO personnel stationed in Laayoune. Although not substantiated or proven, there are indications that hotels may have been requesting MINURSO HQ staff to "leave" their MINURSO IDs behind when commencing on leave / Compensatory Time Off (CTO) away from Laayoune. Upon doing so, the individuals in question receive either cash or free accommodation in Agadir. To clarify this, the Organization would require investigative assistance from the LA.

E. Conclusion

11. The possible fraudulent activities of individuals regarding the inappropriate access to meals at authorized Hotels in Laayoune could be very damaging to the reputation of the Organization by the LA is part of the assessed contributions of Morocco towards the Organization.

12. As it is difficult to tie meal(s) consumption with accommodation(s) and in an effort to accelerate the initial gathering and verification of information, we focused primarily on the issue of meals.
13. Nevertheless, the problem of fraudulent declaration of room occupation is part of this scheme as reported by the LA and remains pending for further investigation.
14. Further informal reports to the SRSG have also indicated a problem of selling military rations at the Team Sites to unauthorized individuals.
15. In view of the sensitive nature of this issues and the fact that MINURSO does not have the investigative resources for such a task, I respectfully suggest this issue be handed over to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) for their purview.
16. Thank you for your support in this matter.
17. Best regards.

Attachments:

- Annex A: Note Verbale, CMS/158/2014, 22 September 2015 (6 pages).
- Annex B: Note Verbale, No. 517/R/2014 dated 17 November 2014 (2 pages).
- Annex C: Local Authorities, Discrepancy Reports, October 2014 (7 pages).
- Annex D: Local Authorities, Discrepancy Reports, July 2014 (14 pages).
- Annex E: Comparison Chart, (7 pages).
- Annex F: Accommodation Work Sheets (11 pages).
- Annex G: Sahara Line Hotel Laayoune, invoice October 2014 (11 pages).
- Annex H: Oscar Hotel, invoice October 2014 (6 pages).
- Annex I: Hotel Emilio Moretti, invoice October 2014 (8 pages).
- Annex J: Hotels Parador – Al Massira, invoice October 2014 (16 pages).
- Annex K: Hotel Lakouara, invoice October 2014 (11 pages).
- Annex L: Hotel Nagjir Ville, invoice October 2014 (4 pages).