



JCSC Highlights

2024



Another year of challenging deployments in an increasingly unstable world has passed. The closure of MINUSMA came as a surprise but the Justice and Corrections Standing Capacity (JCSC) deployed quickly to support the Mission's rule of law transition engagement.

In parallel, JCSC had the opportunity to temporarily increase the absorption capacity of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Mali to ensure the handover of the most crucial rule of law functions of the Mission to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),

the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UN Women.

JCSC continued rule of law support to the largest peacekeeping missions including in the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Sudan and Abyei in addition to special political missions in Somalia, Haiti and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).

We were pleased to expand work with the wider United Nations system, namely UNODC for engagements in Burkina Faso and Mauritania, UNDP in

Lesotho, and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) for an assessment in the DRC.

Again, we say 'Thank You' to all of our clients - past, present and future. Also, we are extremely grateful to Germany for the continuous and generous support to the rapidly deployable standing capacities of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) of the Department of Peace Operations. We look forward to carrying on with full speed to support our partners and beneficiaries' efforts in advancing the rule of law.

KEY AREAS SUPPORTED IN 2023

Transition of MINUSMA

Strategic support to key operations

Institutional Development/Legal Reform

Assessments and Analysis

As part of the Justice and Corrections Service (JCS), Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI), United Nations Department of Peace Operations, JCSC is a rapid response team that deploys to support United Nations peace operations and other United Nations partners including those of the Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law (GFP). It is located within the United Nations Global Service Centre in Brindisi, Italy.

Aiming for peace, with all of you.

Carsten, Alice, Moussa, Gisèle, Oscar, Mohamed, Raffaella

A SNAPSHOT OF JCSC OPERATIONS IN 2023

Transition



JCSC Judicial Affairs Officer (centre right) co-facilitating the MINUSMA Justice and Corrections retreat. Credit: MINUSMA

MINUSMA

In a critical phase for the Mission, following the request by the Malian transitional Government to the United Nations Security Council to end the mandate of MINUSMA, JCSC deployed to Mali between June and August and assisted the MINUSMA Justice and Corrections Section to plan and operationalize its transition and drawdown. JCSC also conceptualized and led the drafting of a 10-year rule of law legacy report, the collective product of the Section, taking stock of its key achievements regarding 1) the restoration and extension of State authority in support of the 2015 Peace Agreement and 2) the fight against impunity for crimes that risk destabilizing the peace process. The legacy report, which was finalized through remote support until October, also identifies the main challenges and lessons learned, as well as opportunities and recommendations for the Malian authorities, the UNCT, donors and other partners for the post-MINUSMA period, including on gender-specific issues.

UNDP Mali

In addition to the transition-related deployment to MINUSMA, JCSC temporarily augmented the absorption capacity of the UNCT and deployed to UNDP between September and October. JCSC drafted a new joint United Nations project (UNDP, UNODC, UN Women) that takes on unfinished rule of law tasks from MINUSMA in crucial areas, such as counter-terrorism and the prosecution of other destabilizing crimes, including conflict-related sexual violence. JCSC also delivered essential elements to inform a resource mobilization strategy for the new project to be implemented based on identified priorities.



JCSC Rule of Law Officer Gisèle Samvura (second from right) conducting consultations with national stakeholders to inform the design of a new joint United Nations rule of law project. Credit: Ministère des Affaires Religieuses, du Culte et des Coutumes

Strategic support to key operations

UNSONM

JCSC, between January and April, assisted the Mission's Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG)-Political with the establishment of processes that support the alignment of joint United Nations programming with mandated priorities of UNSOM, especially in the rule of law and security institutions areas. JCSC initiated the creation of mandate implementation roadmaps and a programme review mechanism. Furthermore, JCSC assisted the DSRSG with the design of a strategy for stabilization in areas recovered from Al-Shabaab, with a focus on the rule of law and reconciliation.



UNSONM DSRSG Kiki Gbeho with JCSC Team Leader Carsten Weber (left) meeting delegation of senior women representatives in Mogadishu. Credit: UNSOM

MINUSMA

Through this deployment, carried out between March and May, JCSC supported strategic planning for justice activities, including the development of work plans for Bamako and the four regions, leading to a consolidated plan based on thorough consultations. JCSC further coordinated the rule of law work of MINUSMA in support of the implementation of the Peace Agreement focusing on the restoration and extension of state authority, including the complementarity between formal and informal justice. JCSC also advised on integrating a stronger gender perspective into this work.



JCSC Judicial Affairs Officer (middle) and MINUSMA officers meeting with women traditional justice actor to discuss her role in conflict prevention and resolution. Credit: MINUSMA

UNMISS

Following an expanded Security Council mandate on the rollout of rule of law work to the sub-national level, JCSC - between February and June - assisted UNMISS with the design of rule of law, security sector reform and community violence reduction support strategies to enhance coordination and impact of the Mission's engagements in this respect. JCSC also designed and delivered capacity-building sessions on rule of law project management for 65 UNMISS staff.



JCSC Rule of Law Officer Gisèle Samvura (first from right) meeting with judicial authorities to discuss strategic and operational support for the UNMISS rule of law field presence in Wau. Credit: UNMISS

Strategic support to key operations

UNISFA

In a joint deployment with the Standing Police Capacity (SPC) between September and November, JCSC reviewed and redrafted a thoroughly researched and consulted Rule of Law Support Strategy for Abyei, as requested by the Security Council in 2021. The strategy was endorsed by the acting Head of Mission/Force Commander of UNISFA in November 2023 and paves the way for coordinated rule of law engagement by the United Nations in Abyei. The deployment also resulted in a revised Standard Operating Procedure on the Handling of Detention by UNISFA, which was endorsed in December 2023.



JCSC Team Leader Carsten Weber (middle) and SPC Legal Adviser Jeffrey Buenger (left) consulting women and youth representatives in Abyei Town for the preparation of a revised rule of law strategy. Credit: UNISFA



JCSC Team Leader Carsten Weber (middle) and SPC Legal Adviser Jeffrey Buenger (second from right) engaging with Community Protection Committee representatives in Agok (Abyei). Credit: UNISFA

MINUSCA

In November, JCSC started a deployment to MINUSCA to support and advise the Central African Republic authorities on the implementation of the national legal aid law. This includes the development of a roadmap for the operationalization of the National Legal Aid Committee. This ongoing deployment will result in concrete recommendations for improving the effectiveness, efficiency, national ownership and sustainability of capacity-building activities for informal justice actors. Lastly, through this deployment, JCSC provides coordination support to the Thematic Group on access to justice to advance the implementation of the national Justice Sector Policy.



JCSC Rule of Law Officer Gisèle Samvura (first from left) participating in a justice policy coordination meeting chaired by the Ministry of Justice of CAR. Credit: Ministère de la Justice



Strategic support to key operations

UNOWAS

As West Africa and the Sahel have entered an unprecedented level of political instability, JCSC deployed to UNOWAS between October and December to follow up on the recommendations of the 2022 JCSC-supported regional study that had identified the instrumentalization of the judiciary as an increasing trend and conflict driver. Strategically engaging with regional networks of bar associations and lawyers and supporting their efforts to uphold the rule of law at the regional level was one of the key recommendations and has become part of the prevention strategy of the SRSG. In this context, UNOWAS with the assistance of JCSC, is supporting the revitalization of the West African Bar Association, including the process leading to the revision and adoption of its new Constitution to strengthen its mandate and improve the functioning and representativeness of its governing bodies, as well as its strategic planning.



JCSC Judicial Affairs Officer (standing) briefing UNOWAS on the 10-Year MINUSMA Rule of Law Legacy Report and discussing post-MINUSMA engagement. Credit: UNOWAS

Institutional Development/Legal Reform

UNDP Lesotho

In this deployment, which JCSC undertook as part of the GFP between February and March, JCSC worked with the national prison service to design an offender data management system and develop a tool for security classification. The national authorities endorsed the tools in March.



JCSC Corrections Officer Oscar Ouedraogo (first from left), UNDP Lesotho Resident Representative and Lesotho Correctional Service Deputy Commissioner visiting Leribe Prison. Credit: Lesotho Correctional Service



JCSC Corrections Officer Oscar Ouedraogo delivering training on prisoners data management. Credit: Lesotho Correctional Service

Institutional Development/Legal Reform

UNISFA

JCSC deployed between January and March to the Mission to further support the community-based law and order mechanisms in the Abyei Administrative Area. Engagements focused on the recently established Community Protection Committee (CPC) in the northern part of Abyei (Diffra). In addition to the provision of basic training on detention and human rights-related issues, JCSC further developed operational guidance documents in the area of detention, which are being used by the Mission as well as the CPCs in the north and south and the Joint Protection Committee in the centre of Abyei.



JCSC Corrections Officer Moussa Diomandé (third from right) and UNISFA officers during joint assessment visit to Amiet Market/Souk Al Zaraf detention centre. Credit: UNISFA

UNODC Regional Office - Dakar

In two deployments between May and June, JCSC – as part of the GFP – assisted UNODC in the implementation of its Sahel Programme in Burkina Faso and Mauritania. In this context, JCSC deployed to Mauritania and supported the development of a set of tools including a gender-sensitive training curriculum and guidance material for personnel and inmates on prison routines management and inmates’ rights respectively. Moreover, support was provided for the design of a gender-specific inspection tool for the Prison Administration of Burkina Faso.



JCSC Corrections Officer Moussa Diomandé (standing) addressing workshop participants on the development of a training curriculum for Mauritanian prison personnel in Nouakchott. Credit: UNODC

MONUSCO

Carried out from September to December, this deployment further advanced ongoing prison reform efforts in the DRC through, inter alia, the development of a roadmap for the implementation of the newly promulgated national Prison Act. The engagement of JCSC also contributed to the identification of arrangements to sustain crucial corrections support tasks beyond the existence of MONUSCO and the inclusion of key corrections-related elements in the joint Disengagement Plan of the Government and the United Nations in the DRC.



JCSC Corrections Officer Moussa Diomandé (second from left) and the DRC Vice Minister of Justice at Luzumu Detention Centre attending the handover ceremony of newly built prison cells. Credit: MONUSCO

Institutional Development/Legal Reform

BINUH

This deployment, carried out between October and December, provided support to the Mission in reviewing and updating Haitian prison regulations with a focus on high-risk prisoners. The deployment also focused on the design of a prisoner classification tool and the training of prison personnel on its use. The support provided is part of the Mission strategy to tackle the increasing gang-related crime and to strengthen the Haitian penitentiary system in the context of the planned deployment of a Multinational Security Support Mission.



JCSC Corrections Officer Oscar Ouedraogo (left) with senior officer of Haitian prison service during a tour of Port-au-Prince central prison. Credit: BINUH



UNSMIL

Since December, JCSC has been supporting the engagement of UNSMIL with the Libyan Attorney General. In this context, JCSC deployed to Tunis and attended a conference organized by UNSMIL on strengthening the capacity of the Libyan detention system. The conference discussed the management of detainees in accordance with human rights and international principles, as well as safety and security procedures and crisis management in detention facilities. Following the conference, JCSC is supporting UNSMIL in assisting the Attorney General to improve performance and combat corruption through conducting an expeditious modernization of the public prosecution.



JCSC Judicial Affairs Officer Mohamed Youssef (first from left) in group photo with Libyan Corrections Managers and UNSMIL Human Rights, Transitional Justice and Rule of Law Service colleagues. Credit: UNSMIL

Assessments and Analysis

MINUSCA

In this deployment, which took place between June and August, JCSC provided analysis and identified lessons learned regarding the implementation of the CAR prison demilitarization strategy, prisoner health policy and social reintegration strategy, all of which were supported by MINUSCA. The assessment now informs the international community's current and future support for the implementation of these initiatives, which remain a cornerstone for the professionalization of the penitentiary service of CAR.



JCSC Corrections Officer Oscar Ouedraogo (left) meeting with the Director of Cabinet/Ministry of Justice on the prison demilitarization strategy implementation. Credit: MINUSCA

Assessments and Analysis

CTED

JCSC participated in a country assessment trip to the DRC undertaken by CTED. The aim of the deployment, which took place between June and July, was to assess the country's response capacity to terrorism threats. The internal country assessment report will contain specific recommendations for the DRC to further enhance the capacity of national rule of law institutions to prevent and effectively combat terrorism-related challenges.



JCSC Corrections Officer Moussa Diomandé (middle) interacting with Beni Prison Director during CTED delegation visit. Credit: MONUSCO

Other Activities

In May, JCSC attended the sixth African Correctional Services Association (ACSA) conference in Dakar to engage with policymakers and corrections practitioners on sustainable prison health and global trends. The conference helped JCSC to enhance its service offer for its United Nations clients in this regard. JCSC could also strengthen partnerships with UNODC, UNOWAS and UNDP/Senegal.

In August, the OROLSI Standing Capacities gathered for a two-day retreat in Mesagne (Italy) to take stock of achievements and discuss challenges and opportunities in an environment characterized by a reduction in the number of United Nations peacekeeping operations and an increase in demand for the Standing Capacities. Potential future business models and financing modalities were presented and discussed, as well as strategic opportunities for enhanced cooperation, including through increased joint deployments.



JCSC Team Leader Carsten Weber with SPC Chief Ann-Marie Orlor and Chief Standing Capacity on Security Sector Reform and Governance Mpako Foaeng at Standing Capacities' Strategic Retreat in Mesagne (Italy). Credit: JCSC

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