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Office of Inspector General
United States Department of State

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Office of Inspections

December 2023

Inspection of the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria

BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS

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HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Inspector General
United States Department of State

ISP-I-24-10

What OIG Inspected

OIG inspected the executive direction, policy and program implementation, and information management operations of the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria.

What OIG Recommends

OIG made 2 recommendations to the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria.

In its comments on the draft report, the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria concurred with 2 recommendations. OIG considers all 2 recommendations resolved. The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria's response to each recommendation, and OIG's reply, can be found in the Recommendations section of this report. The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria's formal response is reprinted in its entirety in Appendix B.

December 2023

OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS

BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS

Inspection of the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria

What OIG Found

- The Ambassador led the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna in a professional and collaborative manner.
- The mission plays an important support role in overseeing funding to the international organizations with which it works.
- After Russia's February 2022 full scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia's campaign of disinformation and disruptive behavior in conference sessions combined with the U.S. "no business as usual" policy, complicated efforts in all policy areas, adding to workload pressures for the mission.
- The mission's support to the International Atomic Energy Agency's response to urgent nuclear safety and security issues in Ukraine increased the work of the mission without a commensurate increase in staffing.
- The mission's records retirement practices did not comply with Department standards.

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CONTEXT

The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna (UNVIE) works with seven major organizations of the United Nations system and other organizations based in Vienna¹ to prevent nuclear proliferation, promote peace and security, develop safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and bolster the rule of law worldwide. UNVIE strives to build global consensus on conventional and nuclear disarmament, counterterrorism, rule of law, anticorruption, cybercrime, border security, and counternarcotics, among other goals. It supports more than \$300 million in U.S. contributions to international organizations based in Vienna. The Department of Energy, Department of Agriculture, U.S. Agency for International Development, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Department of State's (Department) Bureaus of International Organization Affairs; International Security and Nonproliferation; Arms Control, Deterrence, and Stability;² and International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs all contribute funding for activities of Vienna-based international organizations.

UNVIE receives more than 1,000 U.S. government and national laboratory visitors each year who participate in the work of Vienna-based international organizations or consult with UNVIE staff. The mission also supports more than 100 major policy meetings annually. With more than 18 international organizations and its decades-old "Spirit of Vienna" prioritizing consensus-based decisions, Vienna is a hub for multilateral diplomacy. UNVIE engages with nearly 120 diplomatic missions and the staff and leadership of the Vienna-based international organizations to maintain influence and advance U.S. positions in multilateral fora.

UNVIE is one of three U.S. missions in Vienna. The others are the U.S. Embassy in Austria (Embassy Vienna) and the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (USOSCE). The Department refers to the three missions as the Vienna Tri-Mission.

At the time of the inspection, UNVIE had 41 authorized Department U.S. direct-hire positions, 4 eligible family member positions, and 8 locally employed staff. UNVIE also had four attachés from the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and a Legal Adviser to assist UNVIE sections and the Front Office in navigating procedural and legal issues in multilateral fora. Embassy Vienna's Tri-Mission Joint Management Office provides management and information management support to both UNVIE and USOSCE. Embassy Vienna's Regional Security Office also supports all three missions. UNVIE and USOSCE share space on the top four

¹ The seven organizations are the International Atomic Energy Agency; the UN Office on Drugs and Crime; the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; the UN Office of Outer Space Affairs; the UN Commission on International Trade Law; the International Narcotics Control Board; and the UN Industrial Development Organization, of which the United States is not a member. In addition, UNVIE covers two Vienna-based export control regimes—the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement—as well as the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Laxenburg, Austria. These organizations are referred to collectively as Vienna-based international organizations.

² The Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance was renamed the Bureau of Arms Control, Deterrence, and Stability on November 13, 2023.

floors of the IZD Tower, a 39-story commercial office building located approximately 8 kilometers from Embassy Vienna's compound.

OIG assessed UNVIE's executive direction, policy and program implementation, and information management program consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980.³ Concurrent with this inspection of UNVIE, OIG also inspected Embassy Vienna and USOSCE.⁴ A related classified inspection report on the Vienna Tri-Mission includes discussion of the security program for the three missions, issues affecting the safety of mission personnel and facilities, and information management issues related to emergency communications and physical security of telecommunications equipment.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

OIG assessed UNVIE's leadership based on interviews, staff questionnaires, and OIG's review of documents and observations meetings and activities during the on-site portion of the inspection.

The Chief of Mission, who also serves as U.S. Ambassador to the Vienna Office of the United Nations and to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), arrived in January 2022. She previously held the same position from July 2016 to January 2017. A nuclear policy and arms control expert, she was Vice President for Materials Risk Management at the Nuclear Threat Initiative from 2018 to 2021 and served as the Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism and Threat Reduction on the U.S. National Security Council from 2009 to 2016. She is a co-founder of Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy, an organization dedicated to increasing the presence, visibility, and impact of women in nuclear security and nonproliferation.

The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, arrived in April 2023. Prior to his Vienna assignment, he was the Director for the Office of Western European Affairs and served as acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Western Europe and the European Union. Previous overseas assignments include Minister Counselor for Multilateral Economic and Political Affairs at the U.S. Mission to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva, DCM at Embassy Vilnius, Lithuania, and in Russia and South Korea. He served at UNVIE from 2003 to 2007 as the Deputy Chief of the United Nations Affairs Section.

Tone at the Top and Standards of Conduct

OIG's review of UNVIE operations and interviews with staff and Washington counterparts found that the Ambassador led the mission in a professional and collegial manner consistent with the

³ See Appendix A.

⁴ OIG, *Inspection of U.S. Embassy Vienna, Austria* (ISP-I-24-04, report not yet released); OIG, *Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe* (ISP-I-24-05, report not yet released).

Department's leadership and management tenets in 3 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 1214b.⁵ Department personnel and staff from other agencies told OIG they appreciated the Ambassador's direct and collaborative leadership style, and knowledge and connections across the interagency network in Washington. Mission staff perceived her as open, approachable, and engaged, and said she clearly sought to establish a welcoming tone in the Front Office.

The Ambassador was viewed across the board—in Washington, among UNVIE staff, and by counterparts at international organizations—as a leading authority in her field who was attentive to ethical standards and respected for her leadership in carrying out UNVIE's mission. OIG found that the Ambassador and DCM ensured mission staff were informed on ethics, gifts, and financial disclosure requirements. Employees also expressed appreciation for the awareness and concern shown by the Front Office regarding long working hours and maintaining a healthy work-life balance, although some noted the difficulty of putting this into practice given the tempo and demands of daily business at UNVIE, as described below.

The DCM, who arrived at the mission during the inspection, appeared to have established a good initial rapport with mission staff. Several staff members remarked favorably on his expressed interest in creating better working conditions and encouraging a healthier work-life balance. They also praised his initiative to make procedural changes to alleviate the heavy additional workflow brought on by Russia's February 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the announcement of the Australia-United Kingdom-United States (AUKUS) trilateral security partnership in September 2021.⁶

Although UNVIE staff clearly were motivated by the importance of their mission in support of Ukraine and the AUKUS initiative, they consistently reported long hours of overtime and a degree of exhaustion from the mission's relentless "battle rhythm" and the increased number of visits and requests from Washington without any additional personnel or resources. The Ambassador and the DCM told OIG they were aware of these issues and planned to request additional personnel in future mission resource requests. They said other efforts to ease the workload included streamlining paper processes, eliminating unnecessary meetings, and conducting a survey of UNVIE personnel to elicit other ideas to improve the work environment and mitigate stress. During the inspection, the Front Office shared the results of that survey with mission personnel, announced new workplace flexibility measures, and issued a message emphasizing the importance of taking care of people.

⁵ The Department's leadership and management principles outlined in 3 FAM 1214b are (1) model integrity, (2) plan strategically, (3) be decisive and take responsibility, (4) communicate, (5) learn and innovate constantly, (6) be self-aware, (7) collaborate, (8) value and develop people, (9) manage conflict, and (10) foster resilience.

⁶ The AUKUS security partnership is an initiative of the governments of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States to deliver on two goals: to provide "Australia with a conventionally armed, nuclear powered submarine capability at the earliest possible date, while upholding the highest non-proliferation standards . . . [and to] develop and provide joint advanced military capabilities to promote security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region."

Execution of Foreign Policy Goals and Objectives

OIG's review of UNVIE operations and interviews with staff and Washington counterparts confirmed that the Ambassador led the mission in accordance with 1 FAM 013.2a to exercise full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all U.S. executive branch employees, and 2 FAM 113.1c(7) to obtain support for U.S. policies and positions. Support for Ukraine and coordination with European allies in this effort dominated UNVIE priorities since the lead-up to Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022 discussed later in this report. Washington counterparts and mission personnel credited the Ambassador with spearheading these efforts and helping to thwart Russia's attempts to sow division and misinformation among UN member nations. Department leaders and those of other agencies told OIG the Ambassador was respected and influential in policymaking decisions in Washington and within UN and the IAEA circles in Vienna, which contributed to the advancement of U.S. policy goals on Ukraine. Among other policy successes, they cited the mission's coordination of collective walkouts by Western allies during presentations by Russia's delegation at the UN and developing statements to counter false narratives by Russia's government.

Washington counterparts also gave the Ambassador and UNVIE staff high marks for their management within the IAEA of the sensitive negotiations leading up to the AUKUS security partnership announcement in March 2023 of the optimal pathway for Australia's acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines. Interagency counterparts and Department policymakers praised the mission leadership and staff for their resilience and adaptability in responding to these new challenges, and for the mission's timely responses and reporting to Washington. They also raised the mission's strategic management of relationships with UN and the IAEA counterparts on issues, such as the Artemis Accords on outer space, which is described later in this report, that did not have the immediacy or high visibility of Ukraine or AUKUS but were nonetheless important for long-term U.S. interests.

At the time of the inspection, the mission was in the process of updating its Integrated Mission Strategy (IMS). Although there is no Department requirement for an IMS for multilateral missions, staff noted that such strategy documents can be useful. As of August 2023, the mission updated its 2018–2022 IMS to reflect changing priorities arising from new developments, including AUKUS and Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Adherence to Internal Controls

UNVIE completed the Annual Chief of Mission Management Control Statement of Assurance process in August 2022, in accordance with Department guidance in 2 FAM 022.7, 2 FAM 024d, and cable 22 STATE 85378.⁷ The mission did not identify any material weaknesses or deficiencies. Additionally, the mission updated the designated officers list during the inspection, in compliance with Department guidance.⁸ OIG also determined that the Front Office

⁷ Cable 22 STATE 85378, "Instructions for Reporting Templates in your FY 2022 Statement of Assurance," August 22, 2022.

⁸ 2 FAM 113.3a.

maintained a gift registry as required and coordinated and consulted with the tri-mission's Joint Management Office when questions regarding ethical or legal issues arose.⁹

Deputy Chief of Mission Did Not Attend ICASS Council Meetings

OIG found that the previous UNVIE DCM had not attended tri-mission International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS)¹⁰ Council meetings, as required by 6 Foreign Affairs Handbook (FAH)-5 H-222.2a. As the Ambassador's representative, the DCM is required to attend all ICASS Council meetings to ensure oversight and accountability for administrative management. Failure to participate in ICASS meetings prevents the DCM from ensuring that UNVIE receives the appropriate level of administrative service provided through the Joint Management Office platform. The new DCM told OIG that he was aware of this requirement and planned to attend future ICASS Council meetings.

Security and Emergency Planning

OIG interviews and document reviews showed that the Ambassador and the DCM fully supported the mission's security program, in accordance with 3 FAM 1214b(3) and (7) to take responsibility and collaborate, and 2 FAM 113.1c(5) to develop policies and programs to protect U.S. officials abroad and their dependents. OIG found the Ambassador and the DCM led by example in participating in fire and security drills, as required in 12 FAH-1 H-762a, and urged mission personnel to fully participate as well. Additionally, the Vienna Tri-Mission Regional Security Office resumed in-person security briefings and on-premises security drills in October 2022 following their suspension during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

OIG found that the mission's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program and commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) principles conformed with Department standards in 2 FAM 1511.1a, the Department's leadership principles in 3 FAM 1214b(6), and the Secretary's guidance on diversity and inclusion in cable 21 STATE 60514.¹¹ EEO and DEIA notices were regularly distributed to mission staff and prominently displayed in communal spaces in the IZD Tower. At the time of the inspection, UNVIE had no pending EEO cases.

OIG interviews and surveys indicated the Ambassador, a founding member of the International Gender Champions chapter in Vienna, was a proponent of DEIA values. Many UNVIE staff members commended her for the attention she gave to these issues and the way she

⁹ 2 FAM 962.7 and 2 FAM 963.

¹⁰ The International Cooperative Administrative Support Services, or ICASS, is the principal means by which U.S. Government agencies share the cost of common administrative support services at most diplomatic and consular posts overseas. Through the ICASS working capital fund, service providers recover the cost of delivering administrative support services to other agencies at overseas missions.

¹¹ Cable 21 STATE 60514, "Policy Statements on Diversity and Inclusion and Equal Employment Opportunity and Harassment," June 11, 2021.

incorporated DEIA awareness into the business agenda whenever possible. Mission staff said that DEIA is not just a “set piece” but an integral part of overall mission strategy. The mission leads the Multilateral Committee of the Tri-Mission DEIA Council that is actively supported by the Ambassador and held meetings and activities on a regular basis.

Developing and Mentoring Foreign Service Professionals

OIG surveys and interviews revealed that programs for mentoring and professional development of tri-mission First- and Second-Tour (FAST) personnel were intermittent and lacking in a systemic, formalized structure required in 3 FAM 2713b.¹² OIG found that while UNVIE and tri-mission leadership provided some individual guidance and mentoring, the Vienna Tri-Mission’s FAST program had been dormant since the COVID pandemic. Although there was a nascent effort underway by a few FAST officers to re-establish a program of activities, FAST personnel and other tri-mission staff described the current program as insufficient and a “box-checking exercise.” The lack of an active, structured FAST program limits employees’ ability to sharpen critical skill sets, and for Foreign Service officer and specialist career candidates to demonstrate the ability to serve successfully across the normal career span.

Recommendation 1: The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, in coordination with Embassy Vienna, should implement a structured First- and Second-Tour professional development program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: UNVIE, in coordination with Embassy Vienna)

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

OIG assessed UNVIE’s policy and program implementation work performed by the mission’s IAEA Section, the United Nations Affairs (UNA) Section, the Multilateral and Technical Affairs (MTA) Section, and the Public Diplomacy Section. As discussed below, OIG determined the mission’s four sections generally met Department requirements for policy and program implementation. Additionally, OIG found UNVIE staff played a significant supporting role in ensuring oversight of funds to the international organizations in Vienna. Finally, staff and stakeholders told OIG that Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and the resulting diplomatic repercussions greatly increased the workload of the mission without a commensurate increase in staff. This led to some activities, such as reporting, reviewing program documentation, and contact work, receiving less attention than warranted. These two additional observations are also described in more detail below.

International Atomic Energy Agency Section

UNVIE’s IAEA Section collaborates with the IAEA and other partners to strengthen the international safeguards systems and promote global nuclear security and safety, as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. OIG reviewed the IAEA Section’s leadership and management, policy implementation, and reporting and found the section generally met Department

¹² At the time of the inspection, USOSCE did not have any FAST personnel.

standards. Washington stakeholders praised the section's work, telling OIG they recognized UNVIE's increased workload due to Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine and work on the non-proliferation aspects of the AUKUS security partnership. In particular, the section worked intensely with the IAEA and member countries to assure them that the AUKUS partnership's development of nuclear-powered, conventionally armed submarines would be in line with the highest nuclear non-proliferation standards. Additional examples of the mission's collaboration with the IAEA on Ukraine are detailed later in this report.

The IAEA Section staff told OIG that the increased workload without additional staff led to significant overtime and burnout. Staff also stated that the increased workload led to an inability to complete other responsibilities, such as careful review of the IAEA program documents, reporting beyond spot reports or summaries of conferences, and outreach to other delegations, especially among the developing countries.

Mission Recognized Need to Reduce Paper Required for Meetings and to Streamline the Clearance Process for Memoranda and Cables

Washington stakeholders and staff noted the unique structure of UNVIE's IAEA Section, with its combination of Department Foreign Service and Civil Service staff and Department of Energy and Nuclear Regulatory Commission subject matter experts. This unique structure provides the section with depth and breadth of expertise. However, it also means that the section's staff have different drafting and oral communication styles partly based on the different cultures of their parent agencies but mostly based on individual style. Because of this, and in combination with the heavy workload noted above, staff told OIG of their desire to reduce the amount of paper required for meetings and to streamline the clearance process for memos and cables. Both the IAEA Section Counselor and the Front Office said they would continue to look for ways to reduce paper-related workload while maintaining the quality of written products and information sharing within the section, as well as between the section and the Front Office.

United Nations Affairs Section

The UNA Section covers those international organizations in Vienna not directly related to nuclear or arms control issues, including the UN Office at Vienna, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Narcotics Control Board, and the UN Commission on International Trade Law. OIG reviewed UNA's leadership and management, policy implementation, and reporting and found that the section generally met Department standards.

Washington stakeholders lauded the UNA Section's work, especially its support of various disparate Department and interagency experts, noting the partnership between the Department and UNA staff. For example, UNVIE has been a key partner in the U.S. government's efforts to form a global coalition to combat the trafficking of illegal synthetic drugs, including fentanyl. The mission identified allies, working to highlight that this was not a "U.S. only problem." The section also helped negotiate resolutions on forensic lab sharing, as well as resolutions to place seven substances under international control. Additionally, the UNA

Section promoted discussions of ways to classify and control precursor chemicals, or those substances used in the production of synthetic drugs.

However, UNA Section staff told OIG that the heavy workload associated with visiting delegations and negotiations, made even more difficult by friction with countries such as Russia and Iran, meant that section staff put in long hours and were unable to do more strategic planning or reporting, or conduct the level of outreach to other delegations they see as in line with U.S. national strategy. During the inspection, for example, the UNA Section Counselor rescheduled a quarterly strategic planning session three times because other, more pressing business arose.

Multilateral and Technical Affairs Section

UNVIE's MTA Section works to advance U.S. priorities on the prevention of nuclear weapons testing; ballistic missile non-proliferation; civil, nuclear, and conventional weapons export controls; and the peaceful uses of outer space. OIG reviewed MTA's leadership and management, policy implementation, and reporting and found that the section generally met Department standards.

Washington agencies praised the work of the section. One example they cited was MTA's work to broaden support for the Artemis Accords, increasing the number of signatories from the original 8 in October 2020 to 27 by June 2023.¹³ The Accords not only support principles for sustainable use of outer space, but they are a valuable tool for diplomatic outreach. In a related area of space diplomacy, the section arranged the visit of an expert to discuss what the United States was doing to deal with negative effects from "mega-constellations" of satellites, demonstrating that the United States is paying attention to the concerns of other countries. However, one Washington office told OIG that because the MTA Section transmitted what it termed "great information" on trends in the People's Republic of China's actions within the Vienna-based international organizations via video calls or emails, rather than in cables, not all interested offices benefited from that knowledge. OIG discussed this with the MTA Section Counselor and the Front Office, and the mission agreed to increase cable reporting in this area.

Public Diplomacy Section

OIG reviewed the Public Diplomacy Section's strategic planning and reporting, section leadership, resource and knowledge management, grants administration, and media engagement. Consistent with the specialized targeted audiences of a multilateral mission, the section did not manage any American Spaces¹⁴ and implemented only one U.S. government

¹³ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), in coordination with the Department, established the Artemis Accords in 2020, together with seven other founding member nations. The accords reinforce the commitment by the United States and signatory nations to the Registration Convention and the Rescue and Return Agreement, as well as best practices and norms of responsible behavior that NASA and its partners support, including the public release of scientific data.

¹⁴ American spaces are Department-operated or -supported public diplomacy facilities that host programs and use digital tools to engage foreign audiences in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives.

exchange program with a small number of participants. In interviews with OIG, Washington stakeholders commended the section for its effective messaging and programs. Overall, OIG determined UNVIE's public diplomacy operations and programs generally complied with Department standards.

OIG reviewed all four grant files (total value \$394,465) issued from October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2022, and found they complied with the Department's Federal Assistance Directive.¹⁵ OIG determined that the grants had clear objectives that directly supported the mission's goals.

OIG found that the Public Diplomacy Section did not use the Department's mandatory social media management tool, Hootsuite,¹⁶ to manage the mission's multiple social media platforms. Instead, the section used an alternative recommended by another overseas post that it assumed had Department approval. Because the section began using Hootsuite during the inspection, OIG did not make a recommendation to address this issue.

Public Diplomacy Section Reinforced Visual Diplomacy Training

UNVIE's Public Diplomacy Section created the "Golden Wurst" Award to reinforce the section's annual visual diplomacy training it conducts for employees and to encourage employees to take high quality photos of events for use on the mission's social media platforms. The award, developed by the section's social media manager, is given monthly to the best photo taken by a mission staff member and posted on UNVIE's social media platforms. During the award presentation, the section displays all submissions, describes the elements that made the top image a winner, and presents the winner with an inexpensive trophy purchased locally. By designing this low-cost incentive, the section created buy-in with employees and a friendly and fun competition that reinforced with mission staff the need to share responsibility for photography because the section, like most public diplomacy sections, is unable to provide photography support for every event even when fully staffed. Section staff told OIG that since the first award was given in December 2022, they have already seen an improvement in the quality of photos.

Support for U.S. Contributions and Other Funding

OIG determined UNVIE exercises a supporting role in overseeing funding to the international organizations with which it works. Funding to these organizations consists of a mix of voluntary

¹⁵ The Department's Federal Assistance Directive (FAD) establishes internal guidance, policies, and procedures for all domestic and overseas grant-making bureaus, offices, and posts within the Department of State administering Federal financial assistance. It is updated annually by the Department's Bureau of Administration.

¹⁶ Cable 16 STATE 62026, "Registering in the Social Media Practitioners Directory," June 1, 2016.

contributions,¹⁷ assessed contributions,¹⁸ and federal assistance, such as grants and cooperative agreements, as shown in Table 1, below. In accordance with Department guidance,¹⁹ it is at the discretion of the grants officer whether to require performance or financial reporting for voluntary contributions. Although assessed contributions generally do not require individualized reporting from the recipient,²⁰ all organizations in Vienna that receive U.S. contributions submit reports to their member states, and they consult extensively with U.S. donor agencies. With respect to grants and cooperative agreements, as well as discretionary reporting for voluntary and assessed contributions, monitoring responsibilities reside with grants officers in bureaus that fund these awards rather than with UNVIE staff.

Despite UNVIE staff having limited direct responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation, OIG found they play important roles in ensuring oversight of funding to the international organizations in Vienna. For example, MTA staff participate in the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty Organization's Preparatory Commission²¹ meetings, as well as budget and administration committee meetings, which include internal oversight issues related to these organizations. Additionally, during the inspection, OIG observed a meeting of the IAEA's Program and Budget Committee, in which UNVIE representatives discussed the organization's progress in ethics training and participated in deliberations on the organization's annual audit report and audit plan. Furthermore, the mission's IAEA Section staff often provide a first opinion on the feasibility or the technical requirements of a project, discussing options with the IAEA staff, and ensuring clear communication between the United States and the IAEA. UNVIE staff also participated in quarterly program reviews between the IAEA staff and the interagency Washington, D.C.-based offices responsible for managing the funds. The UNA Section participates in discussions of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime's financial and governance committee related to governance issues, overall program reviews, proposed budgets, and budget policy issues, such as how to compute cost recovery charges on projects carried out with voluntary contributions.

UNVIE staff cited several practices funding agencies undertake that help ensure accountability. These included extensive use by Department bureaus and other funding agencies of project-

¹⁷ A voluntary contribution is discretionary financial assistance provided pursuant to a contribution authority. It provides funds to organizations to directly support the activities of the organization or the general budget and operations of the organization. While these funds may advance specific activities and goals of the U.S. government, the central purpose of the award is to enable the organization to carry out its activities. See FAD (October 2022), Chapter 3, Section K. 2.

¹⁸ An assessed contribution refers to funding provided to meet annual obligations of membership in international multilateral organizations, typically pursuant to treaties ratified pursuant to the advice and consent of the Senate or otherwise authorized by specific acts of Congress. Such contributions are not considered Federal financial assistance. See FAD (October 2022), Chapter 3, Section K. 3.

¹⁹ FAD (October 2022), Chapter 3, Section K. 2, "Reporting."

²⁰ FAD (October 2022), Chapter 3, Section K. 3, "Reporting."

²¹ The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization was set up in 1996, with its headquarters in Vienna, Austria. It is an interim organization tasked with building up the verification regime for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in preparation for the treaty's entry into force, as well as promoting the treaty's universality.

based funding that enable greater visibility into the use of U.S. funds. For example, for programs funded with voluntary contributions through the IAEA, staff from U.S. agencies recruit and hire U.S. experts on behalf of the IAEA and assist in identifying suitable equipment to meet identified needs, ensuring close U.S. involvement in the programming of funds.

Table 1: U.S. Contributions and Other Funding to Vienna-Based International Organizations

Contributions and Other Funding by Agency and Recipient	Assessed Contributions*	Voluntary Contributions and Other Funding*	Total*
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization Preparatory Commission	\$ 12,227,796.00	\$ 1,948,675.00	\$ 14,176,471.00
U.S. Department of State	\$ 12,227,796.00	\$ 1,948,675.00	\$ 14,176,471.00
International Atomic Energy Agency	\$ 107,425,467.85	\$ 152,211,177.20	\$ 259,636,645.05
U.S. Department of Agriculture		\$ 542,235.00	\$ 542,235.00
U.S. Department of Energy		\$ 66,995,690.20	\$ 66,995,690.20
U.S. Department of State	\$ 107,425,467.85	\$ 79,373,252.00	\$ 186,798,719.85
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission		\$ 5,300,000.00	\$ 5,300,000.00
United Nations Industrial Development Organization		\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 2,500,000.00
U.S. Agency for International Development		\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 2,500,000.00
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime		\$ 109,542,019.31	\$ 109,542,019.31
U.S. Agency for International Development		\$ 149,026.56	\$ 149,026.56
U.S. Department of Energy		\$ 470,585.00	\$ 470,585.00
U.S. Department of State		\$ 108,922,407.75	\$ 108,922,407.75
Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies	\$ 565,000.00		\$ 565,000.00
U.S. Department of State	\$ 565,000.00		\$ 565,000.00
Grand Total	\$ 120,218,263.85	\$ 266,201,871.51	\$ 386,420,135.36

* FY 2022 obligations in U.S. dollars.

Source: OIG generated from data provided by the Bureau of International Organization Affairs.

Effect of Russia's February 2022 Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine on the Mission's Work

Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine meant that U.S. embassies and missions, including in multilateral fora, implemented a policy of "no-business as usual."²² The Bureau of International Organization Affairs and UNVIE staff told OIG that following Department instructions, the mission delivered statements denouncing Russia's actions and coordinated walkouts at

²² It is the policy of the U.S. government to denounce Russia's aggression in Ukraine and demand its cessation in international fora, along with international partners. See Department of State, "U.S. Multilateral Leadership on the Crisis in Ukraine," March 5, 2022, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-multilateral-leadership-on-the-crisis-in-ukraine/>.

international meetings with like-minded nations, principally European, when the Russian Federation delegation promoted disinformation during its national statements. This complicated the regular but important business of the international organizations and added considerably to UNVIE's workload. The diplomatic fallout of the invasion contributed to a lessening of cooperation with Russia that in some cases began before February 2022, including on nuclear issues related to Iran.

Mission staff also noted a certain "Ukraine fatigue," especially from developing countries that questioned why so much time and resources were concentrated on one country when they also had problems. Mission staff told OIG they worked with the Bureau of International Organization Affairs to tailor Ukraine-related talking points to emphasize where Russia's actions impinged on the missions of the international organizations in question and thus injured all member countries. In addition, they said the multilateral focus of the 2022 National Security Strategy²³ should be helpful in countering "Ukraine fatigue." For example, UNVIE and the IAEA worked to increase the visibility of peaceful uses of nuclear energy among member states including developing countries.²⁴ The mission's highlighting of U.S. contributions to these efforts was useful in countering Russian narratives that the United States and European countries only care about "Western" countries.

Finally, the mission did substantial work helping Washington agencies liaise with the IAEA to respond to Ukrainian requests for experts and equipment to assist Ukraine's nuclear regulator, nuclear operator, and other stakeholders to support nuclear safeguards, safety, and security throughout Ukraine. UNVIE also engaged with the IAEA leadership on the difficult issue of trying to decrease the chances of a catastrophic event at the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant without legitimizing Russia's illegal claim on the plant.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Concurrent with the inspection of Embassy Vienna, OIG reviewed UNVIE's computer network operations, information systems and administration of mobile computing devices, mail and pouch services, cyber security practices, records management, telephone, and emergency communications systems. OIG determined UNVIE's information management program and services generally met the mission's day-to-day computing and communications needs, with one exception described below.

²³ The 2022 National Security Strategy lays out the Biden Administration's vision and priorities for positioning the United States to meet challenges and opportunities to promote U.S. security and prosperity in the international context. See White House, National Security Strategy, October 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Biden-Harris-Administrations-National-Security-Strategy-10.2022.pdf>.

²⁴ These "peaceful uses" include enhancing food security, providing potable water, and combatting zoonotic diseases and cancer therapy, especially for countries with limited cancer treatment options.

Records Retirement Practices Did Not Comply With Department Standards

UNVIE's records retirement practices did not comply with Department records management standards. According to the Records and Archives Management Division, UNVIE began retiring its IAEA Section program records in 2018, but it had not retired program records for the other sections—UNA, MTA, and Public Diplomacy—since 1976. In addition, although UNVIE has been retiring chief of mission records since 2015, the mission did not retire any chief of mission records prior to 2015, and DCM records had never been retired. Department standards in 5 FAM 451b and c require overseas posts to maintain an active, continuing records retirement program that ensures records are retired in accordance with records disposition schedules. OIG determined this internal control issue occurred because mission employees were unfamiliar with records retirement requirements. The lack of an effective records retirement program increases the risk of loss of important data and historical records that could affect the Department's and the mission's ability to conduct policy analysis, decision making, and archival research.

Recommendation 2: The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna should retire records in accordance with Department records management standards. (Action: UNVIE)

RECOMMENDATIONS

OIG provided a draft of this report to Department stakeholders for their review and comment on the findings and recommendations. OIG issued the following recommendations to the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna. The mission's complete responses can be found in Appendix B. The Department also provided technical comments that were incorporated into the report, as appropriate.

Recommendation 1: The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, in coordination with Embassy Vienna, should implement a structured First- and Second-Tour professional development program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: UNVIE, in coordination with Embassy Vienna)

Management Response: In its November 29, 2023, response, the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna concurred with this recommendation.

OIG Reply: OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna implemented a structured First- and Second-Tour professional development program in accordance with Department standards.

Recommendation 2: The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna should retire records in accordance with Department records management standards. (Action: UNVIE)

Management Response: In its November 29, 2023, response, the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna concurred with this recommendation. The mission noted an expected completion date of April 2024.

OIG Reply: OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna retired records in accordance with Department records management standards.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

Agency/Section/Title	Name	Arrival Date
Chiefs of Mission:		
Ambassador	Laura S.H. Holgate	1/2022
Deputy Chief of Mission	Howard Solomon	4/2023
Chiefs of Sections:		
International Atomic Energy Agency	Lucy Chang	7/2022
United Nations Affairs	T. Barry Fullerton	8/2022
Multilateral and Technical Affairs	George Mathews	6/2022
Joint Management Office	Timothy Hanway	8/2021
Public Affairs	Amy Steinmann	8/2021
Regional Security	Brendan Murray	7/2022
Other Agency Representatives:		
Department of Energy	Michael Mazur	12/2020
Department of Energy	Andrew Hallock	8/2021
Department of Energy	Andrea Duskas	10/2021
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	Mugeh Afshar-Tous	8/2020

Source: Generated by OIG from data provided by the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna.

APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

This inspection was conducted from March 13 to August 16, 2023, in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2020 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspections Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the Department and the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM).

Objectives and Scope

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chief Executive Officer of USAGM, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and USAGM. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:

- **Policy Implementation:** whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved and U.S. interests are accurately and effectively represented; and whether all elements of an office or mission are being adequately coordinated.
- **Resource Management:** whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and economy; and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- **Management Controls:** whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; and whether instances of fraud, waste, or abuse exist and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

Methodology

OIG used a risk-based approach to prepare for this inspection. OIG conducted portions of the inspection remotely and relied on audio- and video-conferencing tools in addition to in-person interviews with Department and other personnel. OIG also reviewed pertinent records; circulated surveys and compiled the results; and reviewed the substance of this report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, and organizations affected by the review. OIG used professional judgment and analyzed physical, documentary, and testimonial evidence to develop its findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations.

This report was conducted consistent with the Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Ukraine Response and subsequent report to Congress on joint oversight released in March 2023 by the Inspectors General of the Departments of State, Defense, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

APPENDIX B: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

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TO: OIG – Arne Baker, Acting Assistant Inspector General for Inspections

FROM: Timothy Hanway, Management Counselor

SUBJECT: Response to Draft OIG Report – Draft OIG Report – Inspection of the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna

The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna has reviewed the draft OIG inspection report. We provide the following comments in response to the recommendations provided by OIG:

OIG Recommendation 1: The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, in coordination with Embassy Vienna, should implement a structured First- and Second-Tour professional development program in accordance with Department standards.

Management Response: *The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna concurs with the recommendation by OIG to implement a structured First- and Second-Tour professional development program. UNVIE will coordinate with Embassy Vienna who started implementation of the program with a draft mission statement, program outline, and launch held on September 5, 2023.*

OIG Recommendation 2: The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna should retire records in accordance with Department records management standards.

Management Response: *The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna concurs with the recommendation. The IRM section will coordinate with the Department's Records Management Program to bring UNVIE into compliance. The Mission has also volunteered participate in a pilot program put in place by the Records Management Program office. IRM will issue updated Records Management Policy and push to bring sections into compliance by the end of the first quarter of 2024.*

UNCLASSIFIED

ABBREVIATIONS

AUKUS	Australia-United Kingdom-United States
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DEIA	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
FAST	First- and Second-Tour
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IMS	Integrated Mission Strategy
MTA	Multilateral and Technical Affairs
UNA	United Nations Affairs
UNVIE	U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna
USOSCE	U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

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