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**Office of Inspector General**  
**United States Department of State**

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ISP-I-23-13

Office of Inspections

March 2023

# **Inspection of Embassy Khartoum, Sudan**

BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS

UNCLASSIFIED



# HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

ISP-I-23-13

## What OIG Inspected

OIG inspected the executive direction, policy and program implementation, resource management, and information management operations of Embassy Khartoum.

## What OIG Recommends

OIG made 18 recommendations to Embassy Khartoum. In its comments on the draft report, the embassy concurred with all 18 recommendations. OIG considers all 18 recommendations resolved. The embassy's response to each recommendation, and OIG's reply, can be found in the Recommendations section of this report. The embassy's formal response is reprinted in its entirety in Appendix B.

March 2023

OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS

BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS

## Inspection of Embassy Khartoum, Sudan

### What OIG Found

- Embassy Khartoum operated under difficult conditions, which included challenges staffing U.S. direct-hire positions, a 7-week authorized departure, frequent and sometimes violent protests and demonstrations nearby, and a military takeover of the civilian-led government.
- The Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission generally modeled the Department of State's leadership and management principles, particularly to foster resilience and to model integrity.
- Embassy Khartoum had internal control shortcomings related to excess property, shipping containers, training, vehicle mishaps, bulk fuel management, uniforms, and personal protective equipment.
- The embassy had consular internal control shortcomings related to orientation and training, public signage, and the fraud prevention program.
- Embassy Khartoum had information management internal control shortcomings related to information security practices, dedicated internet networks, contingency planning, acquisition planning, mobile devices, and records management.

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## CONTEXT

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The United States established diplomatic relations with Sudan in 1956, following its independence from joint administration by Egypt and the United Kingdom. Sudan broke diplomatic relations with the United States in 1967 after the start of the Arab-Israeli War, but re-established relations in 1972. After Brigadier General Omar al-Bashir took power in a 1989 coup backed by Islamists, Sudan established links with international terrorist organizations, resulting in the U.S. designation of Sudan as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1993 and the suspension of embassy operations in 1996. Sudan was subject to U.S. sanctions because of its status as a State Sponsor of Terrorism and its record of human rights violations. In 2002, the United States reopened its embassy in Khartoum and in 2016, launched a new strategy toward Sudan, offering the government a path to normalize the bilateral relationship. By October 2017, the government of Sudan had made sufficient progress in areas such as counterterrorism and ending internal conflicts that the United States lifted most U.S. economic and trade sanctions.

A wave of popular protests in 2019 led to the ouster of President Bashir and the creation of a new transitional government. This transitional government signed a constitutional declaration and political agreement on August 17, 2019, that provided a framework for its operations. The transitional government took positive steps to expand human rights and religious freedoms, among other measures. In addition, the government reached agreements with various armed groups and signed the Juba Peace Agreement on October 3, 2020, which paved the way for resolving the conflict in Darfur and other conflict areas. In December 2020, the United States removed Sudan from the State Sponsors of Terrorism List. The Prime Minister also reshuffled his cabinet to incorporate representatives of the groups that signed the Juba Peace Agreement.

However, in October 2021, the Sudanese Armed Forces arrested the Prime Minister, dismissed the transitional government, and took power. Since then, Sudan has been ruled by a military-dominated government. This takeover prompted widespread and sustained public protests as well as condemnation from the international community, led by the United States. The United States paused all bilateral foreign assistance benefitting the government, instead focusing on encouraging the return to civilian rule through diplomatic efforts and maintaining pressure on military leaders.

Embassy Khartoum's FY 2022 Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) focuses on the following goals:

- Advance the transition to a civilian-led government and institutions.
- Support peace efforts and reforms in security and military institutions.
- Promote economic and banking reforms.
- Address the needs of marginalized, vulnerable, and underrepresented populations.

As the largest humanitarian aid donor to Sudan, the United States for decades has provided foreign assistance to the Sudanese people in response to a series of hardships caused by conflict, displacement, and natural disasters. U.S. assistance from FY 2010 to FY 2022 totaled more than \$3.4 billion. After the 2021 military takeover, the U.S. government paused new

obligations from the \$700 million one-time foreign assistance allocation due to concerns the funding would benefit the government. In FY 2022, total U.S. government humanitarian foreign assistance was \$558 million, with an estimated 14.3 million people in need.

At the time of the inspection, Embassy Khartoum had 115 U.S. authorized staff positions, although only 72 were filled. The embassy also had 658 locally employed (LE) staff members, which included 273 local guards, 1 eligible family member, and 3 personal services contractors. Of the 72 U.S. employees, 57 worked for the Department of State (Department), and 15 worked for other U.S. government agencies, including the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of Defense.

OIG evaluated the embassy's executive direction, policy and program implementation, resource management, and information management consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980.<sup>1</sup> OIG did not review Embassy Khartoum's security program during the inspection and plans to conduct that portion of the inspection at a later date.

## OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

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Embassy Khartoum operated in a very challenging environment that affected the embassy in different ways. Since 2014, the Department has categorized Embassy Khartoum as a Historically-Difficult-To-Staff post.<sup>2</sup> As a result, U.S. direct-hire employees receive four authorized rest and recuperation breaks during a 2-year tour, 25 percent danger pay,<sup>3</sup> 20 percent hardship differential,<sup>4</sup> 15 percent Service Need Differential,<sup>5</sup> and a 2,500 pounds consumables allowance.<sup>6</sup> In addition, only eligible family members and members of household 18 years of age or older can accompany U.S. direct-hire personnel to Khartoum.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> A post with more than 50 percent of its regular summer bidding cycle positions receiving fewer than three at-grade/in-skill-code bids at the time a snapshot review is taken is designated Most-Difficult-To-Staff for that cycle. A post receiving this designation for three of the last four regular summer bidding cycles is designated Historically-Difficult-To-Staff.

<sup>3</sup> Danger pay is additional compensation above basic compensation for service at designated posts where civil insurrection, terrorism, or war conditions threaten physical harm or imminent danger to all U.S. government civilian employees.

<sup>4</sup> Post hardship differential compensates employees for service in foreign areas where environmental conditions differ substantially from those in the continental United States and warrant additional compensation as a recruitment and retention incentive. The differential is paid as a percentage of basic compensation and can range from 5 to 35 percent.

<sup>5</sup> The Service Need Differential is an allowance of 15 percent of base salary for employees serving in Historically-Difficult-To-Staff posts with an at least a 20 percent hardship differential and a standard 2-year tour of duty. The allowance applies when the employee agrees to serve for a third year. The Department established the program in 2001.

<sup>6</sup> The Department's Office of Allowances designates a post with a consumables allowance when it is difficult to obtain locally foodstuffs for human consumption or items used for personal or household maintenance such as toiletries and nonhazardous cleaning supplies.

Despite these incentives and allowances, one of the Department's and Embassy Khartoum's greatest challenges is attracting bidders to fill Foreign Service positions, particularly mid-level positions. For example, during 2021 and 2020, the Department filled the embassy's 26 mid-level positions with a combination of 3 "out of cone" officers,<sup>7</sup> 3 Civil Service employees serving on excursion tours,<sup>8</sup> and 10 Foreign Service officers and specialists in stretch assignments,<sup>9</sup> including 5 First-and-Second Tour (FAST) officers. The inability to attract bidders to fill some Foreign Service positions led to long-term staffing gaps in the embassy's Political-Economic, Public Diplomacy, and Consular Sections. The Public Diplomacy Section sustained a staffing gap of 20 months or more for two of its three U.S. direct-hire positions. Similarly, the Political-Economic and Consular Sections sustained long-term gaps of more than 1 year. The impact of these staffing gaps is described more fully in the Political-Economic, Public Diplomacy, and Consular Sections of this report.

Besides staffing issues, Embassy Khartoum also confronted several disruptions to its operations: the COVID-19 pandemic that started in March 2020; the October 25, 2021, military takeover that led to an authorized departure of U.S. direct-hire staff from October 27 to December 13, 2021; and at times violent street protests and demonstrations against the military from October 2021 to May 2022 that caused staff to be sent home on short notice. Embassy staff told OIG that these factors, along with an increased operations tempo due to the Department's recent policy focus on Sudan, resulted in fatigue, burnout, and low morale among many U.S. direct-hire employees. Meanwhile, in addition to the political instability, the LE staff dealt with inter-communal violence, increasing crime, inadequate health care, and triple digit inflation, all of which negatively affected their focus on embassy-related duties.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTION**

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OIG assessed Embassy Khartoum's leadership based on interviews, staff questionnaires, reviews of documents, and OIG's observations of meetings and activities during the inspection.

### **Tone at the Top and Standards of Conduct**

The Ambassador, a member of the Senior Foreign Service, assumed leadership of Embassy Khartoum on August 24, 2022. Prior to arriving in Khartoum, he served as the Department's Acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Acting Special Envoy to the Global Coalition to Defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. He previously served as Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary of State. The Ambassador replaced the former Chargé d'Affaires, who served in that

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<sup>7</sup> The expression "out of cone" refers to bids, assignments, and service in skill codes other than an employee's primary skill code.

<sup>8</sup> The Civil Service to Foreign Service Hard-to-fill program allows interested tenured Civil Service employees to bid for temporary assignments in Foreign Service positions that do not have sufficient numbers of Foreign Service bidders. It is designed to help meet critical Foreign Service staffing needs, as well as to provide opportunities for Civil Service career development and mobility.

<sup>9</sup> A stretch position is when a Foreign Service employee is assigned and works in a position that is graded above or below their Rank-In-Person.

role from February to August 2022. The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), also a member of the Senior Foreign Service, arrived in August 2020. Previously, she served as Counselor for Consular Affairs at Mission Turkey.

OIG found the Front Office generally modeled the Department's leadership and management principles outlined in 3 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 1214b,<sup>10</sup> particularly to foster resilience and to model integrity. For example, during his initial weeks at Embassy Khartoum, the Ambassador met with the LE and FAST staff, and Marine Security Guards to connect with employees. Additionally, 5 days after his arrival, the Ambassador conducted an embassy-wide town hall in which he emphasized that although all elements of the embassy might not view a matter in the same way, what was important for him was the need for embassy staff to work collegially and with integrity and mutual respect. The DCM hosted LE staff at her residence for two dinners marking local religious holidays. The Ambassador held an October 24, 2022, town hall in which he presented the results of studies surveying the morale of U.S. direct-hire and LE staff. Discussion at that event centered around the stress factors in Sudan and at the embassy that made everyday life difficult for employees and featured steps the embassy had taken or could take in the future to ameliorate those concerns.

However, OIG found that the DCM at times did not meet 3 FAM 1214b(4) and (6) principles on communication and self-awareness. Embassy staff told OIG that while well-intentioned, the DCM could be a polarizing element within the embassy community due to how she expressed herself, which on occasion sapped some employees' morale. For example, U.S. direct-hire employees stated that in conversations with the DCM, she at times remained focused on her predetermined course of action and did not consider alternatives offered by staff. Some employees told OIG that this dynamic generated unwanted anxiety on their part and, in a few cases, resulted in U.S. direct-hire staff avoiding interactions with the DCM. However, other U.S. direct-hire staff told OIG that they found ways to forge a productive working relationship with her. The DCM told OIG she realized that she had a direct style of communication and that she defaulted to it when she was pressed for time as she sought solutions to challenges affecting operations or the embassy community at large. The DCM told OIG she would strive to improve her communication and listening skills.

## **Execution of Foreign Policy Goals and Objectives**

In the aftermath of the October 25, 2021, military takeover, the embassy revised its ICS to reflect changed U.S. objectives following Sudan's move away from civilian rule. In accordance with 18 FAM 301.2-4d, the Front Office articulated its new goals in a May 4, 2022, updated ICS. The ICS revision used an interactive process that included the entire Country Team, with a facilitator working with agencies and sections to produce a consensus document.

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<sup>10</sup> The Department's leadership and management principles outlined in 3 FAM 1214b include (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.

Similarly, OIG found that upon his arrival, the Ambassador, assisted by the DCM, fulfilled his responsibility under 2 FAM 113.1b to oversee the embassy's strategic activities. He followed up on the four ICS strategic goals through internal embassy meetings. For example, the Front Office met weekly with USAID, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations temporary duty staff, and the Political-Economic Section to coordinate democracy and governance activities. Separately, the Front Office engaged in frequent outreach to Sudanese and diplomatic stakeholders to facilitate agreement on free and fair elections needed to usher in a new civilian government. This initiative built upon diplomatic efforts by the Bureau of African Affairs' Assistant Secretary and the previous Chargé and constituted the Ambassador's principal policy focus during his first 2 months at the embassy. Washington interlocutors expressed their appreciation for the Ambassador's reports of his engagements with civil society and other stakeholders, and they noted that the quantity of embassy reporting on these issues had increased since his arrival.

### **Adherence to Internal Controls**

The Front Office oversaw the FY 2022 Annual Chief of Mission Management Control Statement of Assurance in accordance with 2 FAM 022.7(1) and (5), which require chiefs of mission to develop and maintain appropriate systems of management control of their organizations. OIG reviewed the embassy's supporting documentation for the Statement of Assurance, which showed that sections reviewed internal controls as required and identified no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. Although the Statement of Assurance affirmed that the embassy complied with requirements related to information systems security officer duties and contingency planning in the Statement of Assurance, OIG found these duties were not carried out, which should have constituted a post-level significant deficiency in the Statement of Assurance. Additionally, as discussed later in this report, OIG found internal control issues in grants management, consular management, general services management, facility management, and information management.

OIG confirmed the DCM carried out regular reviews of the Consular Section chief's nonimmigrant visa adjudications, as required by 9 FAM 403.12-1 and 9 FAM 403.12-2a and b. In addition, OIG confirmed that the Front Office maintained a comprehensive gift registry that generally met the requirements of 2 FAM 964.

### **Security and Emergency Planning**

The Front Office's leadership of the security and emergency preparedness programs was consistent with the Department's guidelines in 12 Foreign Affairs Handbook (FAH)-1 H-762a. The Ambassador signed 12 security directives since his arrival and met with the Regional Security Officer weekly and on an ad hoc basis to review the security program. In addition, the embassy updated its emergency action plan in March 2022, and posted links to the plan and security directives on the embassy intranet site. Responses to OIG's questionnaires showed that most U.S. direct-hire and LE staff members were familiar with the emergency action plan, knew what to do in case of an emergency, and participated in security drills. As noted earlier, OIG will conduct the security portion of the inspection at a later date.



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

OIG found that the embassy's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) practices were consistent with 3 FAM 1514c(2) and 21 STATE 60514.<sup>11</sup> Embassy staff members told OIG the Ambassador and the previous Chargé emphasized the importance of EEO programs, diversity, and inclusion in town halls and meetings. In accordance with Department guidance, the embassy issued a management notice advising staff on the procedures for reporting allegations of harassment and contacting an EEO counselor. In September 2022, the embassy held mandatory training for all U.S. direct-hire and LE staff on preventing harassment. The embassy also appointed two LE staff EEO liaisons and posted EEO materials in English and Arabic in the chancery and annex building. The Front Office supported events organized by the embassy's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Council that included U.S. direct-hire and LE staff, and the former Chargé hosted a council presentation at her residence. In 2022, the council held events for Women's History, National Disability Employment Awareness, and Pride months and sponsored films on immigration and Afro-American and Latino culture.

## **Developing and Mentoring Foreign Service Professionals**

OIG found the Front Office oversaw the embassy's FAST program, as required in 3 FAM 2242.4,<sup>12</sup> for the 12 FAST employees assigned to Khartoum. FAST personnel told OIG that, in the wake of the military takeover in October 2021, the authorized departure from October to December 2021, and COVID-19 surges in January 2021 and January 2022, the FAST program fell into disarray. However, embassy staff told OIG that the former Chargé revitalized the program, appointing two program co-coordinators in spring 2022. In October 2022, early in his tenure, the Ambassador hosted FAST personnel for dinner at his residence. The DCM met regularly with the two FAST co-coordinators, and in June 2022 she hosted a reception at her residence for embassy entry-level personnel and their counterparts from other embassies located in Khartoum. Embassy personnel reported that the Front Office provided FAST personnel with opportunities to take notes at Country Team meetings and serve as control officers for ambassadorial travel and other official visits. In addition, FAST employees organized several professional development events, such as sessions on drafting reports and emotional resilience. Despite the resumption of the FAST-oriented activities, in an OIG survey of the embassy's FAST officers, some personnel rated the program favorably; however, other FAST employees rated the program fair or poor due to insufficient mentoring by the DCM or section heads.

## **POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

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OIG assessed Embassy Khartoum's policy and program implementation work performed by the Political-Economic, Public Diplomacy, and Consular Sections, and the embassy's coordination of

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

<sup>12</sup> This section of the FAM was updated in November 2022, after fieldwork for this inspection concluded. The new citation is now 3 FAM 2242.5 with no change in the requirements.

foreign assistance programs. OIG found the embassy generally met Department requirements for policy and program implementation. However, OIG made recommendations to address issues in the Public Diplomacy and Consular Sections, as discussed below.

## **Political-Economic Section**

OIG reviewed the Political-Economic Section's leadership and management, policy implementation, reporting and advocacy, and Leahy vetting<sup>13</sup> and found the section generally complied with Department standards. OIG also determined that the embassy's reporting and diplomatic engagement supported ICS and Department goals. Specifically, OIG reviewed a selection of 52 embassy cables sent between January and October 2022 and found reporting to be relevant and appropriately sourced. Although Washington consumers told OIG that the section's reporting generally was useful, some stakeholders also commented that, in the past, the embassy sent some of its reporting by emails with limited distribution, rather than by cable, which allows for wide distribution. Some stakeholders also stated that the section's contacts were too narrow and needed to include representatives from more diverse elements of society. However, according to Washington end-users, in the months leading up to the inspection and with the arrival of the new Ambassador, the quantity and quality of the section's reporting increased. For example, the section issued fewer than 20 cables as a monthly average from January to August 2022 but doubled that number in September and October 2022.

In addition to cable reporting, the section compiled the embassy's end-of-day notes and situation reports prepared during the frequent demonstrations against the military regime. Both products elicited positive feedback from Washington consumers. Based on interviews with Washington stakeholders and interagency partners in Khartoum as well as OIG observations of interagency meetings, OIG determined that the section also demonstrated good interagency cooperation. For example, the section participated in weekly meetings with the Front Office and USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives to share information about efforts to support a political transition to a civilian-led government.

Despite the improvement in the section's reporting, OIG found a lack of organization within the section, which led to missing or delayed demarches to the host government. The section chief attempted to address this problem by instituting daily meetings and reinstating a defunct tasker tracking system. However, at the same time, the Ambassador's arrival and an increased focus on the political transition process led to a number of requests for the Political-Economic Section staff to produce written products on short deadlines. In addition, whenever embassy operations moved to the Alternate Command Center during periods of political unrest, the political-economic officers generally were designated to staff the center and prepare situation

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<sup>13</sup> The Leahy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 prohibits the United States from furnishing certain assistance to a unit of a foreign security force if the Department has credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. Leahy vetting is the process of determining if the Department has credible information that units or individuals proposed to benefit from certain assistance have committed a gross violation of human rights. See 22 U.S.C. § 2378d and 9 FAM 303.8-5(B). The Department also helps implement a similar law applicable to "amounts made available to the Department of Defense" for assistance to foreign security forces. See 10 U.S.C. § 362.

reports. Both the section chief and the Front Office attempted to institute a better system for distributing this work, typically by redistributing some tasks. However, some officers and the Front Office told OIG they still needed to further rebalance portfolios to ensure appropriate workload distribution.

## **Public Diplomacy**

OIG reviewed the embassy's public diplomacy operations, including educational and cultural programs, grants administration, program implementation, media engagement, reporting, section leadership, and strategic planning. OIG found that chronic staffing challenges as well as the security environment resulting from the October 2021 military takeover directly affected the Public Diplomacy Section. Although the section had three authorized U.S. direct-hire positions, the Cultural Affairs Officer, on her second entry-level tour and first in-cone assignment, led the section as the acting Public Affairs Officer. The previous section chief, who completed her 2-year tour and departed the embassy during the inspection, spent most of her tour as the only U.S. direct-hire employee in the section. In addition, although the section had eight authorized LE staff positions, three LE staff members had 1 year or less of service, and there was one LE staff vacancy.

OIG also found that the political stalemate and resulting security environment made it difficult for the section to conduct regular outreach and monitor grants programs both in Khartoum and elsewhere Sudan. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of both American Spaces,<sup>14</sup> which further hampered public diplomacy programming.

Overall, despite these challenges, OIG determined public diplomacy operations and programs generally complied with Department standards and guidance and supported the embassy's ICS goals, except in grants management, as discussed below.

### ***Public Diplomacy Grant Files Did Not Meet Department Standards for Documentation***

OIG reviewed 20 of Embassy Khartoum's 65 grants<sup>15</sup> issued from October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2022, and found grant files lacked some of the documentation required by the Federal Assistance Directive.<sup>16</sup> Specifically, OIG found that 18 of 20 grant files lacked monitoring

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<sup>14</sup> American Spaces are Department-operated or- supported public diplomacy facilities, providing digitally enhanced physical platforms for effective engagement with foreign audiences in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives.

<sup>15</sup> OIG reviewed the files for 20 public diplomacy grants (total value \$412,132) out of a universe of 65 grants (total value \$432,003) with activity from October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2022. OIG selected all grants valued at more than \$10,000 along with a random selection of additional grants representing the full range of grant types, including grants to individuals, property grants, and fixed award grants, etc.

<sup>16</sup> The Federal Assistance Directive establishes internal guidance, policies, and procedures for all domestic and overseas grant-making bureaus, offices, and posts administering federal financial assistance. It is updated annually by the Department's Bureau of Administration, Office of the Procurement Executive. Grants reviewed by OIG were subject to the Federal Assistance Directive, Version 4.0, effective October 1, 2019, through October 20, 2020; the Federal Assistance Directive, Version 5.0, effective October 21, 2020, through October 7, 2021; and Federal Assistance Directive, Version 6.0, which took effect on October 8, 2021.

and evaluation, sole source justification, or documents required for closeout.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, OIG found that although files contained payment documentation, 6 of the 20 files reviewed were missing evidence of monitoring, 6 files were missing a final written assessment of the program or grantee reports, and 8 files were missing close-out documentation. In addition, the Department's Office of Procurement Executive told OIG that the section did not close out 45 grant files as required. Section staff told OIG that chronic staffing gaps in U.S. direct-hire positions and multiple LE staff retirements prevented the section from completing grants documentation, uploading required forms into the State Assistance Management System, and mastering the learning curve of grants management. However, despite these issues, OIG determined the section used grants funds as intended and had clear objectives that directly supported the embassy's ICS goals. Effective grants management reduces the chances of loss or misuse of U.S. government funds and helps ensure the grants meet program objectives.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Khartoum should document its public diplomacy grants in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

## **Consular Operations**

OIG reviewed Embassy Khartoum's consular operations, including consular leadership, management controls, U.S. citizen services, crisis preparedness, visa processing, and fraud prevention programs. In the 31 months prior to the inspection, the Consular Section experienced significant U.S. direct-hire and LE staffing gaps, with both authorized consular officer positions filled for only 4 of the 31 months. Three of the seven LE staff members left the section in the last 3 months of 2021, with an 8- to 9-month gap in each position before replacements were hired.

The staffing gaps occurred concurrent with growth in the demand for U.S. passports and Consular Reports of Birth Abroad. In FY 2022, requests for Consular Reports of Birth Abroad increased 58 percent compared to FY 2021, and applications for U.S. passports increased 12 percent. Because of staffing limitations and the requirement to give priority to services for U.S. citizens, the section limited nonimmigrant visa processing primarily to emergency and official cases. The section also developed a backlog in immigrant visa applications.

Despite these challenges, Embassy Khartoum's consular staff conducted consular operations consistent with Department standards. During the inspection, the Consular Section chief disabled consular systems user roles that exceeded those recommended for certain users, in accordance 7 FAH-1 H-662b. He also encouraged LE staff to identify problems, propose solutions, and develop more effective work practices. OIG concluded that Embassy Khartoum's consular programs generally complied with guidance contained in 7 FAM, 9 FAM, 7 FAH, applicable statutes, and other Department policies, except as described below.

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<sup>17</sup> Office of the Procurement Executive, Federal Assistance Directive, October 2021. See Chapter 4, Section D, "Monitoring and Reporting;" Chapter 4, Section D.2., "Performance Progress Report;" and Chapter 5, Section C, "Grants Officer Responsibilities."

***Consular Section's Fraud Prevention Program Did Not Comply With Department Standards***

OIG found that the Consular Section's Fraud Prevention Program did not fully comply with Department standards. Specifically, the section did not develop a written fraud prevention strategy (7 FAH-1 H-943.7a and 7 FAH-1 H-941.1c), did not conduct an annual visa validation study of non-referral cases (7 FAH-1 H-943.6-2b), and did not submit a Country Fraud Summary for 2021 (7 FAH-1 H-943.6-1b). The consular manager told OIG the section had not met these requirements because he has been the sole consular officer for most of his tour, and he prioritized the U.S. citizen services workload as required. Failure to complete mandatory planning and reporting requirements increases the risk that the section will not identify fraud cases and trends and that time and effort devoted to fraud prevention will be allocated improperly.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Khartoum should conduct its consular fraud prevention program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Consular Section Lacked a Written Orientation and Training Program***

OIG found that the Consular Section did not have a written orientation and training program for new employees, backup consular officers, and temporary duty consular officers. Instead, the section had an ad hoc library of outdated standard operating procedures that lacked step-by-step instructions based on Department guidance and best practices. As such, the library's procedures did not constitute a clear, complete, and systematic orientation and training program as required by 7 FAH-1 H-645.2a. The consular officer told OIG that the absence of the second consular officer for more than a year made it difficult to spend time on a comprehensive orientation and training program and update standard operating procedures. Without such a program, consular staff will have difficulty acquiring and maintaining proficiency and providing proper customer service.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Khartoum should develop and implement a written consular training and orientation program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Embassy's Public Entrance Lacked Required Signage***

OIG found that the embassy's public entrance for consular visitors did not have legible outside signs or notices with information about consular services, such as normal operating hours, telephone numbers for consular information and emergency after-hours services, and embassy internet addresses. Guidance in 7 FAH-1 H-263.8b states that consular sections should use outside signs to provide directions and information about consular services to visitors. The consular manager was aware that the outside sign had been badly weathered by intense sunlight and windblown sand and had assigned staff to address the issue. Without providing accurate information at the section's public entrance, those seeking emergency and other services may be misdirected.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Khartoum should install signage at the Consular Section’s public entrance with all information required by Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

## **Foreign Assistance**

OIG found that Embassy Khartoum took steps shortly before the inspection to improve foreign assistance coordination with bureaus and agencies operating programs in Sudan. Previously, the embassy held periodic staff meetings during which foreign assistance was one of several agenda items discussed and used ad hoc emails and calls to coordinate its foreign assistance programs to comply with 1 FAM 013.2k(6) and 2 FAM 113.1c(3) and (4). However, it did not have regular meetings exclusively devoted to coordinating the full range of its foreign assistance activities. In addition, coordination was inconsistent and did not span the full range of foreign assistance activities.

Non-humanitarian assistance funding more than doubled from FY 2020 to FY 2021 due to supplementary funding provided through Title IX.<sup>18</sup> Humanitarian assistance increased by \$81 million (from \$453 million to \$534 million) during this same period. This growth in funding made it more important to have a formal coordination mechanism, but embassy staff told OIG that staff shortages and turnover in personnel led to the lack of a consistent coordination mechanism. OIG has found, through its inspection work, that insufficient coordination on foreign assistance programs raises the risk of program duplication, lack of alignment with ICS goals, and inadequate monitoring.

With the arrival of the new Ambassador, the embassy took steps before and during the inspection to improve foreign assistance coordination with Department bureaus and other agencies operating programs in Sudan as required in 1 FAM 013.2k(6), which says chiefs of mission have a significant role in directing and supervising the implementation of all programs authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act. The embassy held its first Ambassador-led, expanded Democracy and Governance and Conflict Mitigation Assistance meeting during the inspection. Embassy staff also told OIG that, although they did not hold coordination calls on humanitarian assistance at the time of the inspection, they would restart a regular coordination call with the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, USAID, and relevant embassy staff. As a result of the embassy’s renewed focus on foreign assistance coordination, OIG did not make a recommendation to address this issue.

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

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OIG reviewed operations and internal controls in financial management, general services, facility management, human resource management, the health unit, and the Community

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<sup>18</sup> Title IX of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2021 authorized \$700 million in supplementary funds for Sudan. Due to the military takeover, the U.S. government decreased the amount of funding to \$280 million. Title IX is also known as the “Middle East Partnership for Peace Act of 2020.”

Liaison Office. During the inspection, the embassy corrected multiple internal control issues identified by OIG. Specifically, the embassy:

- Conducted required safety training and medical checkups for professional and incidental (self-drive) drivers under chief of mission authority and entered data into the Fleet Management Information System (14 FAM 433.4a-e and 14 FAM 433.5a-e).
- Prepared annual performance evaluations for all contracts and orders exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold of \$250,000 and submitted them using the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (14 FAM 244.2c and Federal Acquisition Regulations 42.1501 and 42.1502).
- Performed unannounced monthly cashier reconciliations (4 FAM 397.1-2a and b).
- Updated and re-issued the LE staff handbook (3 FAM 7155a).
- Posted no smoking signs during the receiving process for fuel (Motor Pool Procedures Overseas, Section 3.1a).

Staff attributed the Management Section's internal controls shortcomings to a combination of four factors: lack of awareness of Department standards; COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, including social distancing, maximum telework, and limits on in-office presence; situational telework instituted to ensure staff security during frequent protests and demonstrations; and residual backlogs resulting from significant staffing gaps in 2021. Despite these challenges, OIG found the embassy's Management Section generally implemented processes and procedures in accordance with Department guidance, with the exceptions in facility management and general services described below.

## **Facility Management**

### ***Embassy Khartoum Did Not Fully Use a Leased Warehouse in Darfur***

OIG found that Embassy Khartoum did not fully use a leased warehouse facility in the Darfur region of Sudan. According to 15 FAM 512.1a and 15 FAM 132, embassies must review U.S. government-owned and capital-leased properties annually to identify those excess to requirements, not fully utilized, or uneconomical to retain based on 17 factors outlined in 15 FAM Exhibit 510. The embassy leased the property for 5 years in 2013, during a period of the U.S. government's active engagement in the Darfur region and renewed it for an additional 5 years in 2018. The property consisted of a 600-square meter compound with a 252-square meter building designated as a warehouse and staffed with 16 local guards and driver/administrative assistants. The embassy also maintained assets and staged eight vehicles at the site despite using the facility only sparingly. Embassy staff told OIG that the leased facility was underused, and they estimated annual maintenance, utilities, and security costs for the facility at \$50,000, with staff salaries at approximately \$630,000. Termination of the lease for this property would allow the Department to put funds of approximately \$50,000 to better use and to reposition the LE staff so they can be used more efficiently.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Khartoum should either implement a plan to fully use the leased facility in El Fashir, Darfur, or terminate the lease for the facility, return U.S.

government assets and vehicles to the embassy and put up to \$50,000 to better use.  
(Action: Embassy Khartoum)

## **General Services**

### ***Embassy Khartoum Did Not Manage Property in Accordance With Department Standards***

OIG found that the embassy did not document all nonexpendable property transfers in the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS), as required by 14 FAM 425.3-6.<sup>19</sup> This guidance states that the relocation, reutilization, or redistribution of nonexpendable property, such as furniture, computer equipment, and appliances, must be authorized and recorded in ILMS. Additionally, 14 FAM 414.5 states that the accountable property officer must ensure that effective internal requisitioning and issuing procedures are established and enforced to document nonexpendable property transactions.

OIG found 101 items that were transferred out of the warehouse to staff residences without a DS-584 Nonexpendable Property Transaction. OIG also conducted a spot check on four items from the warehouse inventory in ILMS and found one item was transferred without a DS-584 form; a second item could not be located. These practices are contrary to property accountability controls in 14 FAM 411.4 that require accountability for personal property by providing a complete audit trail for property transactions from receipt to final disposition. A lack of awareness of Department standards, limitations on in-office presence because of COVID-19 and political protests, and the authorized departure in fall 2021 contributed to this problem. At the time of the inspection, staff members were in the process of establishing procedures to document past and future transfers of property. Failure to document property transfers is an internal control weakness that may lead to fraud or theft.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Khartoum should document all nonexpendable property transfers in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

### ***Embassy Did Not Have Authorization for Use and Occupancy of Shipping Containers***

OIG found that the staff used shipping containers on the embassy compound as permanent storage space without authorization. The Department issued guidance in September 2018 and again in October 2021<sup>20</sup> stating that it does not support the use of shipping containers as occupied structures or to accommodate functional space needs. In accordance with 15 FAM 641b(10), missions must obtain prior approval from the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations for the procurement, placement, or construction of nonpermanent structures,

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<sup>19</sup> ILMS is an integrated web-based system that encompasses all Department supply chain functions in one system. ILMS is designed to upgrade Department supply chain management by improving operations in areas such as purchasing, procurement, warehousing, transportation, property management, personal effects, and diplomatic pouch and mail.

<sup>20</sup> Cable 18 STATE 98976, "Shipping Containers and Portable Structure Use and Occupancy Requirements," September 27, 2018; cable 21 STATE 103606, "FY 2022 Bureau of Overseas Building Operations Financial and Operational Guidance," October 8, 2021.



including modular or prefabricated units, or dispose of the containers. Embassy employees told OIG that the compound lacked adequate storage space. The use of uncertified shipping containers is not an approved method of permanent storage and increases the risk of damage to Department property.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Khartoum should dismantle and remove its shipping containers and portable structures in accordance with Department requirements or obtain authorization from the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to use them as permanent storage. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

### ***Forklift Operators Lacked Required Refresher Training***

OIG found that the embassy's forklift operators did not take refresher training in operating, maintaining, and storing powered industrial trucks, such as forklifts. Three operators last took training in 2009 and a fourth last took training in 2014. In accordance with 14 FAH-1 H-313.6-2c and d and 14 FAH-1 H-313.4a(2), forklift operators must be properly trained in operating, maintaining, and storing forklifts or other powered industrial trucks and take refresher training at least every 3 years. Embassy staff told OIG they were unaware of this requirement. Failure to ensure proper employee training creates a potential workplace safety hazard.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Khartoum should comply with Department training standards on the use of powered industrial trucks, such as forklifts. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

### ***Embassy Did Not Consistently Report Motor Vehicle Mishaps***

Embassy Khartoum did not consistently report Class C and Class D<sup>21</sup> motor vehicle mishaps in the Department's Mishap Reporting System (MRS) as required. Guidance in 15 FAM 964.4-2a and in the Department's Motor Pool Procedures Overseas guide states that the Post Occupational Safety and Health Officer will immediately investigate all Class C and Class D mishaps and report them to the Department's Office of Safety Health and Environmental Management using MRS within 30 days of occurrence. The Post Occupational Safety and Health Officer will also use MRS to ensure appropriate corrective actions are tracked and implemented. The embassy prepared form DS-1664 (Overseas Motor Vehicle Mishap Report), which is required for reporting property damage related to a motor vehicle accident, for 11 vehicle mishaps with damage less than \$1,500 in the summer and fall of 2022 but later incorrectly determined that damage under \$1,500 did not merit entry into MRS. Failure to report all mishaps distorts data in MRS regarding vehicular safety and driver performance.

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<sup>21</sup> A Class C mishap results in a total cost of property/real estate/environmental damage of \$1,000-\$49,999 or an illness or injury that results in medical treatment beyond first aid, loss of consciousness, lost time from work, restricted duty, or temporary transfer to a different job or releases of hazardous materials (other than at the Class A or Class B level) that result in contamination of the inside or outside environment. 15 FAM 964.2(3). A Class D mishap results in a total cost of property/real estate/environmental damage is less than \$1,000 or an illness or injury that results in first aid treatment, but no lost time from work, restricted duty, or temporary transfer to a different job. 15 FAM 964.2(4).

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Khartoum should comply with Department guidance on mishap reporting. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Embassy Did Not Manage Bulk Fuel Operation in Accordance With Department Standards***

OIG found the embassy did not manage its bulk fuel operation in accordance with Department standards. Specifically, a receiving clerk did not receive and inspect promptly all fuel deliveries, as required by 14 FAM 413.1 and 14 FAM 413.3a. Instead, a facility management employee monitored these fuel deliveries, but he was not designated as a receiving clerk, as required by Section 3.1b of the Department's Motor Pool Procedures Overseas guide. Additionally, the fuel pump meters were not calibrated to accurately reflect fuel usage, as required by Section 3.3b of the guide. Furthermore, embassy staff did not test fuel tanks for water before and after delivery, in accordance with Section 3.1c(3) of the guide. Embassy staff told OIG these issues occurred because of a lack of management oversight resulting from a lack of awareness of Department standards and staffing gaps. Failure to implement adequate management controls over bulk fuel operations increases the risk of mismanagement and theft.

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Khartoum should manage its bulk fuel operation in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Embassy Did Not Properly Account For and Control Uniforms and Personal Protective Equipment***

The embassy did not account for and control uniforms and personal protective equipment issued to its staff as required. Guidance in 14 FAM 446.1a requires that uniforms and personal protective equipment and clothing be accounted for and controlled in either the ILMS expendables management system or the ILMS loanable property module. Section staff told OIG this oversight occurred because of staffing gaps and lack of training. Failure to account for expendable property in the Department's approved property record system increases the risk of mismanagement and theft of embassy property.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Khartoum should use the Integrated Logistics Management System to track all uniforms and personal protective equipment in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

## **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

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OIG reviewed Embassy Khartoum's information management operations, including classified, unclassified, and dedicated internet network (DIN)<sup>22</sup> computer operations; physical protection of IT resources; classified communications security; emergency communications preparedness; telephone programs; and mail services. The maximum telework posture instituted during the COVID-19 pandemic, compounded by situational telework required to keep staff safe during

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<sup>22</sup> A dedicated internet network is dedicated internet access from an internet service provider on a Department-owned and -operated discrete non-sensitive unclassified local area network that is not connected to any other Department system.

months of street protests and demonstrations, adversely affected information management internal controls and information security stances. Despite these challenges, Information Management Unit staff supported the embassy's computer and communications needs. To counter the operational disruptions due to loss of internet access during the military takeover, the staff contracted a secondary satellite communications circuit at the alternate command center. The staff also worked with the Department's Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM) to install classified computing and communications capabilities at the alternate command center. OIG determined the embassy's information management operations generally complied with Department standards. However, OIG identified issues requiring attention, as discussed below.

### ***Information Systems Security Officers Did Not Perform All Required Duties***

Embassy Khartoum's information systems security officers (ISSO) did not perform all required systems security duties. Specifically, OIG found the ISSOs did not:

- Review user access annually to verify it was still needed or had been updated (12 FAH-10 H-112.1-3b and c).
- Review and analyze DIN audit logs (12 FAH-10 H-122.5-2).
- Ensure DINs were not used to process Sensitive But Unclassified information (5 FAM 872.2a and 12 FAH-10 H-112.8-3(4)).
- Verify only locally and Department approved hardware operated on the embassy DIN. (5 FAM 872.3)
- Check mobile devices for compliance with Department standards (12 FAH-10 H-163.3(8) and 12 FAH-10 H-164.3(12)).

OIG determined these issues occurred because the designated ISSOs did not plan time for ISSO duties but focused instead on customer service delivery, especially during the 7-month disruption in 2021 caused by the military takeover. Furthermore, the designated alternate ISSOs did not have the required ISSO accounts to perform these duties until a regional ISSO from IRM brought it to their attention immediately before the onsite portion of this inspection.<sup>23</sup> OIG issued management assistance reports in May 2017 and December 2020<sup>24</sup> that highlighted widespread Department failures to perform ISSO duties. Failure to perform required ISSO responsibilities leaves Department networks vulnerable to potential unauthorized access and malicious activity.

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<sup>23</sup> ISSOs are required to use ISSO accounts to maintain separation of ISSO functions from systems management duties. According to National Institute of Standards and Technology, separation of duties includes "ensuring that security personnel who administer access control functions do not also administer audit functions." See NIST Special Publication 800-53, Revision 5, page 36.

<sup>24</sup> OIG, *Management Assistance Report: Non-Performance of Information Systems Security Officer Duties by Overseas Personnel* (ISP-17-24, May 2017); OIG, *Management Assistance Report: Continued Deficiencies in Performance of Information Systems Security Officer Responsibilities at Overseas Posts* (ISP-21-07, December 2020).

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Khartoum should complete all information systems security officer responsibilities in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Embassy Did Not Secure, Monitor, or Correctly Register Its Dedicated Internet Networks***

Embassy Khartoum did not secure, monitor, or correctly register its DINs with IRM in accordance with 5 FAM 872.1 and 12 FAH-10 H-152.1. OIG found the DINs operated with unauthorized network devices, firewall, and computers. In addition, OIG found personally identifiable information stored on a DIN laptop, contrary to 5 FAM 872.2 and 12 FAH-10 H-112.8-3(4). Furthermore, the information management staff did not seek approval from the Department's Wi-Fi Governance Boards to operate wi-fi DINs at the embassy compound and the alternate command center as required in 12 FAH-10 H-152.1. Lack of staff oversight and regular ISSO monitoring contributed to these deficiencies. Not securing and monitoring the DINs increases vulnerability to cyberattacks.

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Khartoum should register its dedicated internet networks with the Bureau of Information Resource Management. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Khartoum should implement steps to secure and monitor its dedicated internet networks. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Information Technology Contingency Planning Did Not Meet Department Standards***

Embassy Khartoum did not complete and test either its unclassified or classified contingency plans, as required by 12 FAH-10 H-232.3-1b(1-3). Department guidelines require management to develop and test IT contingency plans annually for effectiveness and to determine the embassy's readiness to execute them during unplanned system outages or disruptions. At the time of the inspection, the Information Management Unit was waiting for input from other sections to complete the unclassified plan before sending it to embassy leadership for approval and prior to testing the plan. For the classified plan, staff members focused on responding to the operational disruptions caused by the military takeover and lacked sufficient time to update and test that plan. Inadequate contingency planning and testing prevents information management managers from mitigating the risk of system and service disruptions.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Khartoum should complete information technology contingency plans for the unclassified and classified networks and test the plans in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Embassy Did Not Develop an Acquisition Plan for Cost-Effective and Efficient Information Technology Needs***

Embassy Khartoum did not develop an acquisition plan to limit excessive procurement of IT equipment. According to 14 FAM 412, personal property, including IT assets, must not be acquired unless a bona fide need exists. OIG observed excess mobile devices, computers, monitors, radio, repeaters, and network equipment in storage and office spaces. For example,

unit staff showed OIG six radio repeaters bought in 2015 at a cost of \$176,000 stored in their shipping containers with no implementation plan. In addition, OIG observed boxes of unused excess network and power testing tool sets worth \$139,000. Staff members told OIG that the previous unit managers procured the items, and they were unaware if an acquisition plan was developed to show bona fide need. Recognizing the excess items in stock, the incumbent Information Management Officer started processes to assess needs and potential use for some of the excess items. Without an acquisition plan for IT needs, managers cannot ensure that the embassy's technology needs are met in the most effective, economical, and timely manner.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Khartoum should develop an acquisition plan for its information technology needs in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Unit Did Not Implement Adequate Internal Controls for Inventory and Management of Mobile Devices***

The Information Management Unit did not implement adequate internal controls for the inventory and management of mobile devices, such as cell phones, tablets, iPads, and laptops, as required in 12 FAH-10 H-163.1a(3) and 12 FAH-10 H-164.1a(8). OIG found mobile devices stored in office desk drawers and cabinets with no physical access control. Additionally, the unit staff responsible for the inventory, issuance, and tracking of these devices did not follow the Department's standards when managing the devices. OIG reviewed a sample of DS-584 Non-Expendable Property Transaction forms and found that the embassy did not require approving officers to sign the forms. In some cases, neither the recipients nor the property issuers signed the forms, as required in 14 FAM 414.3. Additionally, the staff responsible for the inventory and management of mobile devices acknowledged they did not keep accurate records of mobile devices in the ILMS Loanable Property Module when issuing and tracking the devices. Staff told OIG they lacked adequate training and guidance to manage the issuance, tracking, and disposal of mobile devices. Inadequate inventory controls create the potential for fraud and mismanagement of government property, as well as a security vulnerability.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Khartoum should implement standard operating procedures for managing and tracking mobile devices as required by Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

***Records Management Program Did Not Comply With Department Standards***

Embassy Khartoum's records management program did not comply with Department standards in 5 FAH-4 H-312.1b and 5 FAH-4 H-312.2 for records oversight and retirement. Specifically, OIG found the embassy did not retire records on schedule. For example, the embassy had not archived principal officer and program paper records since 1995 and archived only a limited number of electronic records in 2019 and 2020. In addition, diplomatic notes were not archived as required in 5 FAH-1 H-621e. Additionally, some Political-Economic officers did not archive WhatsApp text messages. OIG issued management assistance reports in September

2020 and June 2022<sup>25</sup> that highlighted deficiencies in records management, including records retirement, across the Department. Without a records management program that complies with Department standards, the embassy is vulnerable to inefficient information retrieval and potential loss of critical documentation.

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Khartoum should implement a records management program that complies with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

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<sup>25</sup> OIG, *Management Assistance Report: Deficiencies in Overseas Records Management* (ISP-20-25, September 2020); and OIG, *Management Assistance Report: The Department of State's Records Retirement Process* (ISP-22-20, June 2022).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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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 Embassy Khartoum. The embassy's complete response can be found in Appendix B. The embassy also provided technical comments that were incorporated into the report, as appropriate.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Khartoum should document its public diplomacy grants in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum documented its public diplomacy grants in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Khartoum should conduct its consular fraud prevention program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum conducted its consular fraud prevention program in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Khartoum should develop and implement a written consular training and orientation program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum developed and implemented a written consular training and orientation program in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Khartoum should install signage at the Consular Section's public entrance with all information required by Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum installed signage at the Consular Section's public entrance with all information required by Department guidance.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Khartoum should either implement a plan to fully use the leased facility in El Fashir, Darfur, or terminate the lease for the facility, return U.S. government assets and vehicles to the embassy and put up to \$50,000 to better use. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it will terminate the rental agreement for the leased facility at El Fashir.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum terminated the lease for the El Fashir, Darfur facility, returned U.S. government assets and vehicles to the embassy, and put up to \$50,000 to better use.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Khartoum should document all nonexpendable property transfers in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum documented all nonexpendable property transfers in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Khartoum should dismantle and remove its shipping containers and portable structures in accordance with Department requirements or obtain authorization from the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to use them as permanent storage. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum dismantled and removed its shipping containers and portable structures in accordance with Department requirements or obtained authorization from the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to use them as permanent storage.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Khartoum should comply with Department training standards on the use of powered industrial trucks, such as forklifts. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)



**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of March 2023.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum complied with Department training standards on the use of powered industrial trucks, such as forklifts.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Khartoum should comply with Department guidance on mishap reporting. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum complied with Department guidance on mishap reporting.

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Khartoum should manage its bulk fuel operation in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum managed its bulk fuel operation in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Khartoum should use the Integrated Logistics Management System to track all uniforms and personal protective equipment in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum used the Integrated Logistics Management System to track all uniforms and personal protective equipment in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Khartoum should complete all information systems security officer responsibilities in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum completed all information systems security officer responsibilities in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Khartoum should register its dedicated internet networks with the Bureau of Information Resource Management. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum registered its dedicated internet networks with the Bureau of Information Resource Management.

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Khartoum should implement steps to secure and monitor its dedicated internet networks. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum implemented steps to secure and monitor its dedicated internet networks.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Khartoum should complete information technology contingency plans for the unclassified and classified networks and test the plans in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of March 2023.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum completed information technology contingency plans for the unclassified and classified networks and tested the plans in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Khartoum should develop an acquisition plan for its information technology needs in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum developed an

acquisition plan for its information technology needs in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Khartoum should implement standard operating procedures for managing and tracking mobile devices as required by Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum implemented standard operating procedures for managing and tracking mobile devices as required by Department standards.

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Khartoum should implement a records management program that complies with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** In its February 20, 2023, response, Embassy Khartoum concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Khartoum implemented a records management program that complies with Department standards.

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

Title	Name	Arrival Date
<b>Chiefs of Mission:</b>		
Ambassador	John Godfrey	8/2022
Deputy Chief of Mission	Amber Baskette	8/2020
<b>Chiefs of Sections:</b>		
Management	William Nix	9/2021
Consular	Michael Gritzbaugh	10/2021
Political	Justin Williamson	11/2021
Economic	Robert Newsome	9/2020
Public Affairs	Cynthia Faby	11/2020
Regional Security	Ryan Renuart	6/2021
<b>Other Agencies:</b>		
Department of Defense	Joseph Walker	9/2021
U.S. Agency for International Development	Mervyn Farroe	8/2021

**Source:** Generated by OIG from data provided by Embassy Khartoum.

## APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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This inspection was conducted from August 29 to November 17, 2022, 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 reviewed pertinent records; circulated surveys and compiled the results; conducted interviews with Department and on-site personnel; observed daily operations; 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.

## APPENDIX B: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

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*Embassy of the United States of America*

February 20, 2023

UNCLASSIFIED

THRU: Bureau of African Affairs – Molly Phee, Assistant Secretary

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

FROM: Embassy Khartoum – John Godfrey, Ambassador

SUBJECT: Response to Draft OIG Report – Inspection of Embassy Khartoum, Sudan

Embassy Khartoum has reviewed the draft OIG inspection report. We provide the following comments in response to the recommendations provided by OIG:

**OIG Recommendation 1:** Embassy Khartoum should document its public diplomacy grants in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation. The Public Diplomacy section has completed the process for documentation and proper recording of each grant, as set forth in 10 FAM 230. We continue to monitor each and every grant award and will ensure proper closeout procedures are followed on an ongoing basis. In addition, we have enrolled our cleared Americans in official training (PY260 – Financial Management Assistance), which will be completed by the end of March 2023.

**OIG Recommendation 2:** Embassy Khartoum should conduct its consular fraud prevention program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation. The publishing of a second validation study is imminent, and the program will be in compliance.

**OIG Recommendation 3:** Embassy Khartoum should develop and implement a written consular training and orientation program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation and has developed and published the programs

**OIG Recommendation 4:** Embassy Khartoum should install signage at the Consular Section's public entrance with all information required by Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation and is replacing and updating existing signage according to a pending work order

**OIG Recommendation 5:** Embassy Khartoum should either implement a plan to fully use the leased facility in El Fashir, Darfur; or terminate the facility, return U.S. government assets and vehicles to the embassy, and put up to \$50,000 to better use. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation to terminate the rental agreement for the leased facility in El Fashir. The lease expires in August 2023, and all affected Locally Employed Staff have been officially notified of potential Reduction in Force actions in accordance with the Mission's Local Compensation Plan. Additionally, all motor vehicles have been returned to the Embassy and GSO will host one or more auctions to dispose of unneeded assets.

**OIG Recommendation 6:** Embassy Khartoum should document all nonexpendable property transfers in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation. MGT/GSO has reviewed existing Post policies to ensure all current and future nonexpendable property transfers are in compliance with Department standards.

**OIG Recommendation 7:** Embassy Khartoum should dismantle and remove its shipping containers and portable structures in accordance with Department requirements or obtain authorization from the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to use them as permanent storage. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation. Post Management is initiating a Statement of Work to build-out the existing Warehouse and Facilities structure to replace the existing shipping containers and portable structures. Post estimates it could take up to one year to obtain OBO approvals, funding, and appropriate building permits.

**OIG Recommendation 8:** Embassy Khartoum should comply with Department training standards on the use of powered industrial trucks, such as forklifts. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation. Embassy sponsored forklift training is scheduled for March 2023.

**OIG Recommendation 9:** Embassy Khartoum should comply with Department guidance on mishap reporting. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

**OIG Recommendation 10:** Embassy Khartoum should manage its bulk fuel operation in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

**OIG Recommendation 11:** Embassy Khartoum should use the Integrated Logistics Management System to track all uniforms and personal protective equipment in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

**OIG Recommendation 12:** Embassy Khartoum should complete all information systems security officer responsibilities in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)



**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

**OIG Recommendation 13:** Embassy Khartoum should register its dedicated internet networks with the Bureau of Information Resource Management. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

**OIG Recommendation 14:** Embassy Khartoum should implement steps to secure and monitor its dedicated internet networks. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

**OIG Recommendation 15:** Embassy Khartoum should complete information technology contingency plans for the unclassified and classified networks and test the plans in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy's unclassified IT contingency plan was implemented on February 7, 2023, and tests of the plan were conducted in February 2023. The Embassy's classified IT contingency plan is expected to be finalized no later than March 2023.

**OIG Recommendation 16:** Embassy Khartoum should develop an acquisition plan for its information technology needs in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

**OIG Recommendation 17:** Embassy Khartoum should implement standard operating procedures for managing and tracking mobile devices as required by Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

**OIG Recommendation 18:** Embassy Khartoum should implement a records management program that complies with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Khartoum)

**Management Response:** Embassy Khartoum concurs with the recommendation.

The point of contact for this memorandum is Deputy Chief of Mission Amber Baskette.

## ABBREVIATIONS

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DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DIN	Dedicated Internet Network
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
FAST	First- and Second-Tour
ICS	Integrated Country Strategy
ILMS	Integrated Logistics Management System
IRM	Bureau of Information Resource Management
ISSO	Information Systems Security Officer
MRS	Mishap Reporting System
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

## OIG INSPECTION TEAM MEMBERS

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Bruce Williamson, Team Leader

Timothy Wildy, Team Manager

Wylita Bell

Isabella Detwiler

Martha Fikru

John Hardman

Glen Keiser

Barnaby Walsh

### **Other Contributors**

Dolores Adams

Leslie Gerson

Caroline Mangelsdorf



# HELP FIGHT

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[WPEAOmbuds@stateoig.gov](mailto:WPEAOmbuds@stateoig.gov)