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**Statement by Brian Conroy, Counselor  
On Agenda Item 143: Administration of Justice  
at the  
Main Session of the Fifth Committee  
70<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly  
October 20, 2015**

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

From the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to Ms. Linda Taylor, Executive Director of the Office of the Administration of Justice, Mr. Johnston Barkat, Assistant Secretary-General and UN Ombudsman, and Mr. Babou Sene, Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective reports.

The United States supports a UN internal justice system that is transparent, impartial, and efficient. The system must be capable of resolving employment-based grievances and disputes, including disputes related to the imposition of disciplinary measures against staff and officials who have engaged in misconduct or in wrongful or actionable negligence in the performance of their duties and obligations.

By its resolution 61/261, the General Assembly decided to establish a new, independent, transparent, professionalized, adequately resourced and decentralized system of administration of justice to ensure respect for the rights and obligations of staff members and the accountability of managers and staff members alike.

We are grateful for the efforts to date by those who serve in the Administration of Justice system, as they serve tirelessly to facilitate speedy and fair outcomes to disputes. We welcome measures aimed at resolving cases informally and preventing litigation, through enhanced cooperation between the formal and informal parts of the justice system, and we encourage continued progress in this regard.

We recognize the important informal resolution work of the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services (UNOMS) as it partners with individual staff members and managers to address a wide variety of work-related concerns. By its resolution 68/254, the General Assembly reiterated its requests to the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly on the revised terms of reference for the Office, and we look forward to their finalization.

We are concerned that many cases brought before the administration of justice system are the result of performance management issues. As the administration of justice system and human resources management are interlinked, we would urge the Secretary-General to increase efforts to develop outreach and training resources for dispute resolution. Further efforts should also be aimed at improving the performance management system by increasing feedback between staff and their managers for early resolution of disagreements.

Management evaluations are a critical component of the internal justice system, as they help efficiently resolve disputes prior to litigation. Mindful of the caseload, we nevertheless remain concerned by the difficulty meeting the statutory deadlines for completing those evaluations. To cut down on the requests for management evaluations, greater efforts should be made to ensure that managers and staff members understand their rights and their obligations under the staff regulations and rules.

We appreciate the work of the United Nations Dispute and Appeals Tribunals, as they exercise powers in accordance with their respective statutes and consistent with relevant General Assembly resolutions, regulations, rules, and administrative issuances. We note in this regard the importance of developing a clear body of precedent, to which the tribunals adhere, and respect for the institutional roles of the General Assembly as the legislative organ, on the one hand, and the independent judges of the tribunals on the other hand. With this in mind, we welcome the establishment of the panel of experts to conduct an independent assessment of the system of administration of justice, and we look forward to the recommendations of the independent panel together with the report of the Secretary-General.

Furthermore, we look forward to engaging constructively with Member States in considering the report on the administration of justice and the resolution on this matter.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.