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On Agenda Item 147: Administration of Justice
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[As Delivered]

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The United States would like to thank Ms. Alayne Frankson-Wallace, Executive Director, Office of Administration of Justice, Ms. Shireen Dodson, UN Ombudsman and Head of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services, and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the ACABQ, for their respective reports.

Madam Chair,

The United States is a strong supporter of an effective administration of justice system that provides independent redress to an array of cases. The system's effectiveness is largely dependent on the informal and formal mechanisms in the resolution of disputes for staff and non-staff. As such, we commend and support the Office of Administration of Justice efforts to increase outreach, both at Headquarters and in the field, in order to improve the collective understanding of the tools available when disputes arise. We echo the Advisory Committee's view on the importance of the informal system and note that resolving a dispute at its inception is the most effective and efficient way of creating a harmonious work environment.

Madam Chair, although the number of cases coming before the Dispute Tribunal remained stable in 2017, there was a decrease in the number of judgments issued by the UNDT, the lowest level since the inception of the system in 2009. The Advisory Committee attributed this to the decreased agility of the Tribunal. We look forward to further information on this trend.

Additionally, my delegation commends the proposal of a pilot program to provide access for non-staff to some of the system's dispute resolution tools. We welcome the Secretary-General's leadership in this area.

This session offers an opportunity to strengthen the AoJ system and to enhance its independence, including ensuring judgments are in line with GA decisions. A well-functioning AoJ system is essential to ensuring that the UN employs and retains high-performing staff. The United States looks forward to working with all member states in reaching consensus on this important agenda item.

Thank you, Madam Chair.