



PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

MR. KAVOY A ASHLEY

PERMANENT MISSION
OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Agenda Item 152 – Administration of Justice

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THURSDAY, 15TH OCTOBER 2020

NEW YORK

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on Agenda Item 152 – Administration of Justice, on behalf of the Government of Jamaica.

As this is the first time that Jamaica will take the floor, do allow me to extend congratulations to you and the rest of the Bureau on your appointment to this post. You can be assured, Mr. Chair, of Jamaica's support throughout the session.

We also commend the Executive Director for the Office of Administration of Justice, Judge Alayne Frankson - Wallace for her capable stewardship of the Office throughout the course of the period under review.

Mr. Chair,

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/75/162 and its addendum on "The Administration of Justice at the United Nations", as well as his report on "The activities of the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services", in document A/75/16. We further take note of the report on "The Internal Justice Council on Administration of Justice at the United Nations" (contained in document A/75/154).

Mr. Chair,

Adherence to the rule of law and, in particular, respect for the role of independent, transparent and professionalized legal systems, are at the heart of Jamaica's foreign policy principles and have been a hallmark of our governance over the years.

For this reason, we recognize the efforts made over the period under review towards ensuring the continued professionalization, and enhanced transparency and efficiency of the system that provides for the Administration of Justice at the United Nations, in accordance with relevant General Assembly Resolutions (61/261, 62/228 and 63/253).

Jamaica firmly supports all measures intended to strengthen the administration of justice, and to improve its effectiveness at the managerial and operational levels. In particular, we emphasize our support for efforts to ensure that well-established principles of law, such as separation of powers and judicial independence, govern the management of the system of administration of justice. These fundamental principles are critical to the success of the system. We are mindful that fidelity to these principles must be matched by a commitment to ensuring the highest standards of accountability within the Organisation.

Mr. Chair,

Jamaica attaches great importance to a well-functioning administration of justice system, one which operates in a manner consistent with the rule of law and due process. This is

fundamental to ensuring respect for the rights and obligations of all staff members, as well as their accountability and that of their managers.

The effective and efficient processing and administration of disputes, using both formal and informal systems, are central to the ability of the Organization to fulfill its core mandates to promote peace and security, human rights and development.

For this reason, Jamaica commends the UN Dispute Tribunal on its enhanced efficiency during 2019. According to the Secretary-General's Report, the UNDT increased its overall number of case disposals by 36 per cent; from 285 in 2018, to 389 in 2019. The Dispute Tribunal also issued more judgements compared to 2018.

We also commend the work of the Management Evaluation Unit of the Secretariat, which continues to play a crucial role in providing resolution to staff members. It is noted that during the last session, the overwhelming majority of requests for management evaluations submitted in the secretariat did not proceed to the UNDT, which reflects positively on the work of the unit.

Special commendation is also in order for the officials in the AOJ system for their professionalism and the dedicated manner with which their duties were discharged during this difficult period of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Despite the numerous challenges, the system was able to maintain the operations of the Tribunals by virtual means.

Amended Rules of Procedure of the Dispute Tribunal and Appeal Tribunal

Mr. Chair,

My delegation recalls resolution 74/258, paragraph 27, which welcomed recommendation 9 on judicial efficiency and accountability. The General Assembly urged the Dispute Tribunal and the Appeals Tribunal to review and amend their respective rules of procedure, subject to the approval of the Assembly. This, with a view to streamlining and harmonizing their approach to case management, including by ensuring that the first judicial action in a case is taken no later than 90 days from the date on which an application is filed.

It is noted that in response to this request, the Dispute Tribunal adopted amendments to its rules of procedures on 8th June 2020, which have been presented in Annex II to the Report of the Secretary-General. My delegation looks forward to the completion of this process, towards the enhanced efficiency of the Internal Justice Council.

Conditions of Service and Appointment requirements of the Members of the IJC

Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation recalls the request of the General Assembly to the Secretary-General to provide an overview of, and recommendations on the conditions of service and appointment requirements of the Members of the Internal Justice Council, for consideration by the General Assembly. This request is supported by my delegation, which believes that this will add another layer of transparency to the nomination process of candidates for judicial appointment.

In closing, Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica remains committed to the process of institutionalization of sound management practices, and is confident that the jurisprudence, working methods and rules of procedures applicable in the administration of justice at the UN will combine to build confidence in the operations of the Organization going forward.

I thank you.