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6th Committee

“Agenda item 152: Administration of Justice at the United Nations”

Statement by Liselot Egmond

Legal Adviser of the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations

NEW YORK, 15 October 2020

Mr./Madam President,

Thank you for giving me the floor, and let me first align myself with the statement made by the European Union on behalf of the EU.

At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the Activities of the Office of the UN Ombudsman and Mediation Services and on the Administration of Justice at the United Nations. Let me also thank the Internal Justice Council for their report, as well as for all the work they have done during their term, and the recommendations they have made to improve the administration of justice at the UN.

2019 marked the tenth anniversary of the Administration of Justice at the UN. Several elements in the respective reports, steps that have been taken, give us reason to celebrate last year's anniversary and achievements of the system. However, we also note that there is still progress to be made. We would like to highlight the following two elements.

Report on the Administration of Justice

First, the Kingdom of the Netherlands notes the increase in judgments delivered by UNDT for the year 2019. Even though there still is a significant backlog, this is a welcome positive development.

We thank President Da Silva Bravo for the work that has been done and the speed with which she implemented the case disposal plan throughout 2019.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is confident that the functioning of the UNDT will continue to further professionalise and improve and we will continue to engage on this matter.

Second, with regard to the Report of the UN Ombudsman and Mediation Services

The services offered by the UN Ombudsman provide a safe, accessible and cost effective way, for all staff members to discuss any kind of workplace-related concern. We note with appreciation the work of the UN Ombudsman, including the work of the regional ombudsman offices and their visits to field missions.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands appreciates the pilot project that offers access to informal dispute-resolution services to non-staff members and supports the continuation of this pilot. We follow with interest the initiatives aimed at improving the prevention and resolution of disputes involving non-staff personnel and look forward to their expeditious development.

We thank the UN Ombudsman for the statistical overview of cases and trends, which also gives us insight into the issues raised by non-staff personnel. We note that the issues raised by non-staff members essentially concern the same issues as put forward by UN staff members.

[Conclusion]

The Kingdom of the Netherlands emphasizes the importance of a strong, efficient and well-functioning internal administration of justice system, which can be accessed by both staff and non-staff. We continue to follow developments with great interest and look forward to further improvements being made.

I thank you Mr/Madam President.