



**New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations
Te Aka Aorere**

United Nations General Assembly: Sixth Committee, 77th session

**CANZ Statement delivered by New Zealand,
Second Secretary Zoe Russell**

11 October 2022

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I have the honour today to speak on behalf of Australia, Canada, and my own country, New Zealand.

CANZ countries have recognised the importance of a transparent, impartial, independent and effective internal justice system at the United Nations since the commencement of the administration of justice system in 2009. An effective, adequately resourced administration of justice system anchored in the principles of due process and access to justice is essential for the organisation to be able to deliver its objectives. CANZ thanks the Secretary-General, the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services and the International Justice Council for their reports, which are a valuable resource for Member States.

CANZ countries express our appreciation for the work undertaken by all staff involved in the administration of justice system in the context of the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and for the efforts identified in the Secretary-General's report to ensure that the justice system has continued to function effectively using flexible work arrangements in this environment.

We commend the productivity of the United Nations Disputes Tribunal (UNDT) and the United Nations Appeals Tribunal (UNAT) in achieving a significant reduction in the backlog of pending cases without compromising the quality of judgments rendered, as noted by the Internal Justice Council in its report, despite the unique stresses posed by the pandemic. CANZ takes note of the further recommendations to promote efficiency, including: the appointment of a dedicated President for the UNAT and the UNDT who would be preselected by the Council and recommended to the General Assembly for selection; and the creation of a training programme for judges.

The Office of the Ombudsman and Mediation Services has identified systemic issues that underpin workplace conflict, noting in particular that the lingering effects of the pandemic have compounded these issues for staff. CANZ countries are pleased in this context to see that the Office is taking seriously the important issues of mental health and personal needs of non-staff. We also welcome the efforts made by the Office to improve the working environment, including through a focus on prevention and fostering a culture of dialogue and connection. A healthy working environment is essential to ensure that the organisation is able to uphold its own ideals and values.

CANZ countries remain concerned about the harm that is caused by discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. We acknowledge the extensive efforts under way to address racial and gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the organisation, and efforts to promote diversity, equality, inclusion and equity, including the strategic action plan of the Secretary-Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat. We welcome future recommendations on enhancements to the administration of justice system in this regard.

We remain concerned about the risk of retaliation as a persistent problem in the organisation recommendations on raising awareness on the whistle-blowing policy and protections against retaliation and hope that more will be done in this regard.

It is up to all Member States and the UN to work together to ensure the development of a transparent, fair, impartial and efficient system of administration of justice. CANZ countries will continue to engage constructively with Member States on this important issue. Thank you.