

Statement at the 77th General Assembly Sixth Committee
Agenda Item Number 149: Administration of Justice
Elizabeth Grosso, Attorney-Adviser
United States Mission to the United Nations
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Thank you, Chair.

I'd like to begin by thanking the Secretary-General, the Internal Justice Council, and the Office of the United Nations Ombudsperson and Mediation Services for their reports. These are an invaluable resource for member states on this agenda item, which includes many detailed issues for our consideration. The United States also expresses our continued appreciation to all of the staff (and non-staff) involved in the administration of justice at the UN. Their efforts make the UN a better place to work and ensure that it embodies its values inside and out; values like fairness and inclusion, as well as excellence.

We appreciate the continued progress made over the reporting period on some of the key reforms that the Sixth Committee has advocated in recent years. In the formal system of dispute resolution, we are pleased to see the continued productivity of the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) and UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT). The UNDT was again able to significantly decrease its backlog, and particularly the number of cases pending for more than 400 days. This success was enabled both by the hard work of tribunal staff, and by the valuable flexibility that the model of half-time judges, and remote work has provided, allowing leadership to dynamically assign judges to the geographic areas of greatest need. We hope that both the UNDT and UNAT can continue to build on this momentum to surmount the lingering challenge of case backlogs.

We welcome the updated case management system that goes hand in hand with the publicly available case tracking dashboard as well as the highly anticipated launch of the new caselaw portal and electronic digest of all tribunal judgments. These are resources that lawyers in this room have long requested, and will be a valuable tool for litigants and the public. Transparency of the system is critically important so that UN staff, their representatives, and the General Assembly can better understand how the tribunals are carrying out administrative justice.

Equally critical is the informal system of dispute resolution that seeks to prevent and resolve staff conflicts before they mature into formal disputes. We continue to appreciate the work of the Office of the UN Ombudsperson and Mediation Services, and hope that awareness and utilization of mediation continues to grow. The Management Evaluation Unit and Office of Staff Legal Assistance (OSLA) have also continued important work in helping to resolve requests before they reached the litigation stage, which is a crucial part of maintaining efficiency and effectiveness of the entire system.

Thank you, Chair.