Sixth Committee

Agenda Item 141: Administration of Justice at the United Nations

October 16, 2012

Steven Hill, Counselor, U.S. Mission to the United Nations

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In 2008, the United Nations General Assembly established an independent, transparent, professionalized, adequately resourced and decentralized system of administration of justice. This was not only a landmark achievement for the administration of justice at the United Nations but also a major milestone in the ongoing process of reform at the United Nations. The new United Nations Dispute Tribunal and the United Nations Appeals Tribunal, together with a number of other innovative reforms, have already had a significant positive impact on the transparency, fairness, efficiency, and accountability of the United Nations personnel system.

My delegation is impressed by the professionalism and productivity of the new system of administration of justice, and wants to particularly thank the Judges and all of the UN staff who work on these issues for their tireless efforts. They have all contribut~d to making the new system a success. However, as the General Assembly recognized in the comprehensive review of the system held during the 66th Session both here in the Sixth Committee and in the Fifth Committee, the system is still evolving.

There are a number of issues that remain to be addressed, including those on which the General Assembly made specific requests in resolution 66/237. In this regard, we appreciate the reports of the Secretary-General (A/67/265 and A/67/349), Internal Justice Council (A/67/98), and Ombudsperson (A/67/172) for helping identify these issues and for providing a great deal of background information and, in some cases, recommendations for our consideration as we deal with them. We note that many of these matters mentioned and,

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but also note the Secretary-General's call for additional consideration ofthe complex issues involved in these discussions.

Finally, we appreciate the Secretary-General's compilation of the practice in certain national legal systems as well as comparable administrative tribunals of international organizations on the award of punitive damages. Given the relatively low number of responses received on national practice, additional information on this subject would be useful as we continue to monitor the awards made by the UN system.

We look forward to participating actively in discussions within the Committee on these subjects.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.