





The informal resolution of conflicts is one of the most crucial elements of the system of administration of justice, helping in particular to avoid expensive and time-consuming litigation. It minimizes the negative impact of conflicts and mitigates associated risks. We welcome the activities of the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services in this regard and support its efforts in advancing and encouraging the use of informal conflict resolution. We note the 7% increase in the number of cases that the Office of the Ombudsman opened in 2014, and we recognize that the increased rate of referrals signals a heightened awareness of the benefits of mediation as a conflict resolution mechanism.

As far as the Management Evaluations concerned, we note with appreciation the high number of complaints disposed of every year. We commend the MEU for the work done. The fact that a large majority of MEU decisions were eventually confirmed in whole or in part by the Tribunal is a good indicator of the accuracy of the decisions taken by the Unit. We also welcome the fact that the MEU systematically tries to identify requests that have potential for settlement through informal resolution, and attempts to settle those cases in such manner whenever appropriate.

In this regard, all the components of the system must be aware that alternative resolution of disputes and non-judicial settlement must be encouraged and efforts to avert litigation should not be spared. The institutionalization of good practices by the Management Evaluation Unit and mainstreaming and disseminating the jurisprudence of the Tribunal have an essential role in shaping administrative and management practices. This is also important to enable the Office of Staff Legal Assistance to better provide preventive legal advice and prevent unmeritorious claims at the outset.

Concerning the UN Dispute Tribunal, we note that the number of new cases increased by 42% compared to the last period, and that an increasing number of cases are pending. However, the report of the Secretary-General shows that this increase is linked to requests related to decisions that affect large numbers of staff members, and that apart from those requests the number of cases received has otherwise stabilized. We would welcome information from the Secretariat on the mechanisms available within the Tribunal system to deal with decisions leading to many staff complaints.

Concerning the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services, we urge the Office to promulgate its revised terms of reference, as requested in the General Assembly Resolution 69/203.

I will now turn to some issues addressed in the Secretary-General's report A/70/187.

We see the mainstreaming of good performance management practices, as confirmed or corrected by the case law of the Tribunals, and proactive case management by the Tribunals as an essential element. In particular, we underline the importance of good communications. We commend the work done so far in various areas of the UN administration of justice system including the lessons learned exercises and the good work of the Office of Staff Legal Assistance. We encourage the full implementation of lessons learned and the issuing of lessons learned guides as soon as possible.

We note that in paragraph 135 of its report, the Secretary-General considers that, at this point, it

We thank the Secretary General for the answers provided in his report with regard to the issue of accountability where violations of rules and procedures have led to financial loss. We note that to date, no instances where a financial loss resulted from gross negligence have been identified, and that the Organization continues to monitor the outcomes in order to refine the measures taken towards personal accountability.

Mr. Chairman,

We commend the staff of OSLA to whom staff members turn for advice and whose counsel helps to avoid mistakes and misunderstandings, and ultimately a lot of unnecessary work time. OSLA remains