

Statement on behalf of the African Group

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AGENDA ITEM 150
11 October 2022

Chairperson,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group.

The African Group would like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the Administration of Justice at the United Nations contained in documents ~~7/15/17~~ and A/77/156.

Chairperson,

The African Group attaches great importance to an independent, impartial, transparent, and professionalized administration of the justice system within the United Nations. We are convinced that the latter will contribute to a responsible management of administrative disputes of United Nations personnel.

unnecessary litigation and is cost effective. Thus, we encourage continued recourse to the informal resolution of work-related disputes. In this context, we are pleased to note that the increased use of mediation by the Office in appropriate cases has contributed to successfully resolving issues without having resort to litigation.

The Group commends the United Nations Justice System for persisting despite the immense challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The United Nations Justice System continued to function using flexible work arrangements in order to ensure business continuity, cognizant of the added value of in-person presence.

We take note of the recommendation of the Internal Justice Council to appoint the Presidents of the Tribunals for seven-year terms and note the diverse views of the Dispute Tribunal, the Appeals Tribunal and the Secretariat.

The group is also pleased to see a decrease in the backlog of pending cases by the United Nations Dispute Tribunal.

Chairperson,

The Group notes with concern that field personnel continued to carry the highest number of caseload, as they face both hardship and stress related to the nature of their contractual status.

Measures taken by the Secretary-General to strengthen the work of the Office of Legal Assistance to better support staff, particularly those working in the field, are a welcomed step in ensuring access to the United Nations internal justice system.

The Group reiterates its appreciation for the combined support provided by the Office of Legal Affairs and the Office of Internal Oversight Services, including by providing them sound dispute and appeals toolkits. It remains important that applicants who decide to be self-represented have all the necessary information to successfully file a case and be confident to have a fair and satisfactory outcome.

In the same vein, and while acknowledging the current financial constraints on the