

UN Requests Internal Probe into Corruption Claims Against Former Antigua Representative



United Nations, October 10 (CARIBBEANNEWS-RHC)-- United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has requested that the Organization's Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) launch an audit of the interaction between the UN and the Global Sustainability Foundation and the Sun Kian Ip Group, and the use of any funds received from these entities, according to a UN spokesperson.

The request follows news earlier this week of serious allegations by United States federal prosecutors against John Ashe, a former president of the UN General Assembly and former permanent representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the UN.

"The secretary-general is concerned about the serious nature of the allegations, which go to the heart of the work of the United Nations and its member states," said a statement issued by Ban's spokesperson.

"The secretary-general reaffirms that there will be no tolerance for any corruption at the United Nations or in the name of the United Nations," the statement continued. "He is committed to ensuring that funds received from such private entities were handled properly according to relevant UN rules and regulations."

According to the complaint filed in the Southern District of New York by FBI Special Agent Jason Alberts, payments were transmitted from China to Ashe as part of a scheme to promote the bribery of then prime minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Baldwin Spencer

Some \$170,000 were sent to Spencer in Antigua, Alberts said in his affidavit. These allegations prompted a statement from Spencer on Friday, claiming that any payments were “donations for the exclusive benefit of the United Progressive Party”.

According to Spencer, Ashe “gravely misrepresented the United Progressive Party government by implying that bribe money was necessary to gain an audience with me or my colleague ministers. That was never the case during the ten years of our administration.”

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