

**5<sup>th</sup> AOMA Ex Co Meeting, 18-19 June 2013**

**Ouagadougou, BURKINA FASO**

**Regional Report (Indian Ocean) by the Ombudsman of Mauritius**

I wish to start by informing you that our efforts to bring the Comoros on board the Ombudsmanship vessel may have started to see the light of day. Let me explain: last month a delegation comprising the Honourable Members of the Parliament of Comoros led by the President of the National Assembly and other senior officials were in Mauritius on an exchange programme. During their stay the Honourable President of the National Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Hamidou BOURAHNE and the Honorary Consul, Mr. Djae Said Salim, called on me on 10 May for a courtesy visit. In the course of our discussions I floated the idea of the need for and importance of a citizens' complaint-handling institution like our Ombudsman or Mediator in the Comoros. They showed encouraging interest in the idea whilst at the same time expressed their concern about the financial implications. I also briefed them about our Association i.e. AOMA and its objectives and activities and also about AORC and tried to encourage them by telling them that democracy and respect for the rights of citizens have no price.

The President stated that he would consult the authorities of his country and eventually invite the Mauritian Ombudsman to his country in order to further brief the authorities of his country. I replied that the best way to go about it would be to invite first and foremost our President and the Executive Secretary and that I would gladly accompany them although I believe that our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President should also form part of the delegation, being from a French-speaking country as the Comoros. By the way I think we should ask our Secretariat, perhaps through AORC, to send to the Honourable President of the National Assembly a copy of the statutes of AOMA in the french language, either in its present form or as subsequently amended, together with an accompanying letter, also in French, which would make reference

to the exchange he had with me in May of this year. I believe it would be a good follow up on the discussions we had before any kind of visit is undertaken.

On 31 May last I received a personal letter from the President in which he expressed his sincere thanks for our friendly reception and indicated that he had felt a similar approach by our two countries in the need for the promotion of exchanges and solicited our support in favour thereof.

At this stage therefore I am taking the liberty to file a copy of that letter and wish to inform you that I have, in a recent correspondence, informed the President of my move.

Furthermore, as a follow up on what I stated in my Regional Report filed in Luanda in March of this year, I submitted my Annual Report for the year 2012 on 19 April last to the President of the Republic of Mauritius and a copy thereof has been tabled before our National Assembly. In the course of that year we had a very important number of complaints from inmates of our prisons. As far as possible corrective measures were taken in cases which disclosed maladministration.

Lastly I would like to inform you that, in line with our government's policy to improve and speed up service-delivery by the Administration to our citizens, an amendment has been brought to our Ombudsman Act whereby a time limit is imposed on all departments/authorities to respond to complaints by our citizens and queries from the Ombudsman and that failure to comply would be sanctioned as appropriate.

### Madagascar

The institution of the Médiateur of that country celebrated its 20 years of existence on 20 April of this year. A representative of the AOMF was dispatched there and gave a talk on the role of the Médiateur in a democracy.

Unfortunately the political situation is still very unstable and difficult but the Médiateur pursues her efforts in favour of the citizens of her country by trying to improve service-delivery of the Administration.

The Médiateur of Madagascar informs me that she is also willing to make an effort as regards the Comoros but due to lack of means she is awaiting the green lights from the President of AOMA.

At the end of the day I sincerely hope that in a not too distant future the setting up of a Médiateur in the Comoros will become a reality and thereafter hopefully a member of our family of Ombudsman and Mediators.

### Seychelles

As for Seychelles, there is nothing new to add to what was in my previous Regional Report.

**(S.M. HATTEEA)**  
**Ombudsman of the Republic of Mauritius**