



منظمة الموفقين والوسطاء والرقابيين الأفارقة

African Ombudsman and Mediators Association

Association des Ombudsman et Mediateurs Africains

Associação dos Ombudsman e Mediadores Africanos

# African Ombudsman *today*

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### CONTENTS

#### FEATURES ARTICLES

AOMA President Receives Medal of Merit.....	1
AOMA joins AU 50th anniversary Celebration.....	2
New member: Ombudsman of Niger.....	3

Editorial Comment.....	3
Word from the President.....	4
Profile: Public Complaints Commission of Nigeria.....	4
Tribute to Grace Phiri.....	6

#### REPORT BACK ON AORC AND AOMA MEETINGS

AOMA EXCO Meeting takes place in Burkina Faso.....	6
Report on AORC.....	11
Appointment of Director.....	11
Research .....	11
Training .....	11

#### GENERAL NOTICES

General Assembly.....	12
Next AOMA EXCO.....	12
Useful Phrases.....	12

### FEATURE ITEMS

#### AOMA President Receives Medal of Merit



It was towards the end of the AOMA Executive Committee Meeting held from the 18 - 20 June 2013 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, that Dr Paulo Tjipilica was presented with a Medal of Merit for his Presidency of AOMA. The award was conferred by the Mediateur du Faso, Mme Alima Traore, on behalf of the President of Burkina Faso, H. E. Blaise Compaoré.

While highlighting the contribution that AOMA has given to the maintenance of peace and security in Africa, Dr Tjipilica suggested that this distinction was a result of the work that Angola had been doing to give visibility and raise the profile of the Ombudsmen institution in Africa. The intention was to promote to the highest extent the importance of human rights, citizen's rights and duties, and good governance.

In recognition for all the efforts, Dr Tjipilica, on behalf of his structure, congratulated the Government, the President and the authorities of Burkina Faso for all efforts to resolve the crisis in Mali. He also expressed the support of the AOMA by welcoming the peace agreement that had been signed in this regard on the 19 of June 2013. This was done in the presence of AOMA representatives who were also on a mediation mission; which made Dr Tjipilica observe that, “Burkina Faso is the seat of reconciliation in Africa and it is in this same capital, Ouagadougou, that AOMA was created.”

He added that it this very important event that deserve to be commended, and congratulated the Malian government and its current Prime Minister, who was the Previous Ombudsman of Mali.

## AOMA JOINS AU 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



AOU 50th Anniversary

When the African Union (AU) commemorated its 50th anniversary on 25 May 2013 at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, it was a milestone whereat the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association (AOMA) joined participants from the rest of the world to participate in the activities. AOMA was represented by two teams led by the President of AOMA Dr Paulo Tjipilica, (Provedor de Justicia, Angola) and AOMA's Executive Secretary, Advocate Thuli Madonsela Public Protector, South Africa). The participation was partly in pursuit of the Memorandum of Understanding and Implementation Framework signed between the AU and AOMA in 2012, and the emerging partnership between the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and AOMA. In her presentation at the APRM Symposium, Advocate Thuli Madonsela invited the APRM to partnership in recognition of the common interest regarding good governance as an important factor in the pursuit of stable democracy and

development in the African continent. The APRM leadership welcomed the proposal and it was agreed that a follow up meeting would be held to concretise the partnership formalities. A key outcome of the 50th Anniversary celebration of the AU, which included a summit, is a continental vision for the next 50 years titled “Pan Africanism and African Renaissance - 2063.”

As a follow-through on his attendance at these celebrations, during the last week of October, Dr Tjipilica presented a paper at a Conference: 50 Years of Peace Building in Africa, hosted by the President of Cote d'Ivoire. The conference recognises the institution of the Ombudsman as one of the innovative avenues for peace, mediation and the resolving of conflicts in Africa.



Mr Amadou Cheiffou,  
Mediator of Niger

## New member: Ombudsman of Niger

This edition's featured Ombudsman office is that of Niger, AOMA's newest Member State.

Officially welcomed into the AOMA fold as a full member, the Mediator of the Republic of Niger participated in the 10th Meeting of the Executive Committee, held from 18 – 20 June 2013 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The Mediator of the Republic of Niger and his collaborator were active, attentive and enthusiastic participants throughout its duration. Their contributions to the discussions were appreciated by all present.

The Nigerien delegation was led by the Mediator of the Republic of Niger, His Excellency Mr Amadou Cheiffou, who expressed to his African peers his commitment and willingness to respect the texts of the Association and to promote the ideals of the AOMA.

The Office of the Mediator of the Republic of Niger was established by Law no. 2008-36 of 10 July 2008 and was then instituted in the Constitution of the 6th Republic. Dissolved by the military coup of 18 February 2010, the Constitution was re-instated by Law no 2011-18 of 8 August 2011. This law was then modified on 27 May 2013 in order to reinforce the independence of the Mediator, to extend his mandate and to allow him to join international Ombudsman and Mediator associations with greater ease.

In terms of the aforementioned law, the Mediator of the Republic is an "independent administrative body who receives, according to the conditions stipulated in the law, complaints regarding the functioning

of State administrative bodies, local government, public institutions and any other body in the public service in its dealings with consumers."

The Mediator is appointed by the President of the Republic for a non-renewable term of 6 years and is chosen on the basis of being well-known for his/her moral integrity and for his/her expertise in economic, social and political matters. The mandate of the Mediator is irrevocable and he/she is given judicial immunity during his/her tenure.

The Mediator of the Republic of Niger is authorised to investigate the complaints of Nigerien citizens and to make the appropriate recommendations, submitting his/her recommendations to the President and Prime Minister. All citizens of the Republic of Niger, including the President, the Prime Minister, their deputies and the Presidents of Regional Councils, may submit a written complaint to the Mediator for investigation. This report is made public.

The current Mediator of the Republic of Niger is Mr Amadou Cheiffou, who was appointed to the post in August 2011.

Mr Cheiffou carried out his tertiary education in Senegal and France and has a Masters degree in Physical Science and a postgraduate diploma in Air Navigation Engineering. Mr Cheiffou served his country as Prime Minister from 26 October 1991 to 17 April 1993. He successfully organized the first multi-party elections of Niger since its independence. He was President of the Economic and Social Council (CESOC) from 2005-2009. He is also a well-known politician and, in 2004, established the Social Democratic Rally (RSD-Gaskiya) which he still serves as President today.

The Office of the Mediator of the Republic of Niger can be contacted on [mediateurniger@yahoo.fr](mailto:mediateurniger@yahoo.fr) or on +227 20 35 2138 or +227 20 75 21 44.

## Editorial Comment

It is a pleasure to bring you the 6th edition the African Ombudsman Today, our associations official newsletter. Witnessing AOMA grow from strength to strength has been a great joy. AOMA's footprint is growing rapidly in the continent, while membership is increasing despite losses occasioned, particularly by upheavals in Arab Africa. One of our significant milestones was the historic partnership with the African Union's Political Commission and the implementation framework for the main agreement. In pursuit of this partnership, and an emerging partnership with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), AOMA participated in the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the AU in Addis Ababa earlier this year.



Adv. Thuli Madonsela

The participation of our members at the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) Conference in November 2012 was also a growth point. AOMA's baby, the African Ombudsman Research Centre (AORC) also continues to grow in leaps and bounds. One of its milestones was the first ever comprehensive course on Ombudsman Practice offered at the University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa from 9 – 13 July 2012. More courses will be taking place shortly, including the Sharpen Your Teeth Course scheduled to take place from 11 - 16 November 2013, in Lusaka, Zambia. Research that will enhance our work as Ombudsmen and mediators is also in the pipeline. We are also proud of AOMA's growing footprint. We are grateful to and congratulate AOMA's First Vice President, the Ombudsman of Bukina Faso for successfully hosting our last EXCO in June 2013. I take this opportunity to congratulate Mme Alima Traore, the Mediateur du Faso, who will be receiving a Presidential Medal of Honour later this year. While on that note, we bid farewell to our former first Vice President from Mali who relinquished his position to become Acting Prime Minister in his country. Our focus, going forward, is the African Ombudsman Summit and EXCO to take place in South Africa in January 2014.

Blessings!

Adv. Thuli Madonsela  
Executive Secretary - AOMA

## Word from the President

On the 18th of June, 2013, our sister Grace PHIRI left us untimely, leaving behind two daughters and a big family of colleagues, both in Zambia and all over Africa, where her work for AOMA had touched more than one.

As we commend the consistent work done by the Secretariat in successfully publishing our 6th edition of the AOT Newsletter, we wish to salute and honour Grace PHIRI as one of the silent, sometimes backstage actors whose daily work has made the AOMA venture such a success until today.

Across the African continent, in all 39 Member States, our offices staff members work on daily basis to support us, Ombudsman and Mediators, in taking our dreams and vision for a prosperous and well governed Africa to an international stage. Their contributions and the sacrifices they make when they travel with us are essential to whatever achievements we can boast about today. Grace fought

valiantly and took her last breath as she was travelling to Ouagadougou, where she was meant to faithfully assist once again the Ombudsman of Zambia, who is also our Regional Coordinator for Southern Africa.

AOMA has tried to support Grace's family in their time of loss and sorrow, to the best of our ability. This is equally an opportunity for us, leaders of this continent wide endeavor, to reflect on the support of our personnel and pay them appropriate tribute, starting from the late Grace PHIRI.

The loss of Grace hit us all by surprise and left us in pain. However, we can still find comfort in the recent achievements by the Association, both within our internal governance priorities as well as in respect with our cooperation with Member States, in the light of the recent firm commitment of H.E. President COMPAORE towards higher advocacy for AOMA within the AU's decisional structures. This is reflected in the

Preamble and Resolution 1 of 19 June 2013, at the last EXCO Meeting. Our coordinated efforts, no matter how much each one of us is bringing to the table, have started yielding fruits. The office of the President of AOMA commends and honours, at this occasion, the performance of each one of the key role players. We still have a long way to go, but as long as we stick to our vision and support one another, every step we go can only take us closer to our vision.

We believe in AOMA's vision and together, there is no reason we shall not succeed.

**Paulo TJIPIICA**  
President of AOMA  
Provedor de Justiça  
Angola



## Profile: Ombudsman Office of Nigeria - Public Complaints



Hon. Justice George I. Uloko  
CHIEF COMMISSIONER, PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMISSION  
NIGERIA

The 14th day of March 2012 witnessed a milestone and turning point in the annals of the Public Complaints Commission (Nigerian Ombudsman). On that day the President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and Chairman of the National Assembly, David Mark, in a special session, inaugurated the Chief Commissioner and 37 other Commissioners of the Public Complaints Commission.

The tenure of the last Commissioners ended in 1999 and, due to a clause in the Commission's Act CAP P37 LFN, Commissioners could not be appointed until last year when the Nigerian Senate took these steps.

The task of rebuilding and repositioning the Commission has been daunting, considering its decaying infrastructure, low morale of staff, inadequate funding, and low public profile. As soon as they came on board, the Commissioners swung into action. Courtesy visits were paid to critical stakeholders - Leadership of the National Assembly, the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, the Chief Justice of the Federation and the Director General of the Budget Office, among others. These visits bore fruit as the budget of the Commission was increased from a paltry N2.5bil to about N6bil.

The perception of the Commission by Nigerians began to change, to become that of a functional and efficient ombudsman. This is as a result of the increased awareness campaigns both in the mass media and the traditional media. The Commission tried to create awareness through advocacy visits to media organizations, focus group meetings and town hall meetings in the States of the Federation.

Progress can also be seen by the successes achieved in terms of the number of cases resolved. Whereas between 1999 and 2011, the Commission received a total of 230,828 cases, resolved 140,703 while 90,000 were still being investigated at the end of 2011. In 2012 alone, the number of cases brought before the Commission more than doubled as a result of increasing awareness of the Commission's activities and confidence building mechanism put in place by the Commission.

These successes have been possible due to the collective efforts of the Commissioners. For example on assumption of duty last year, the Chief Commissioner of the Commission assigned eight committees of the Commissioners to help formulate policies that would facilitate the rebuilding efforts.

Firstly the departments in the Commission were increased from just three to eight, to meet with the current realities and to compensate for the neglect of the last thirteen years. Secondly a personnel auditing of the staff is in progress, not only to determine the number of staff in the Commission but also, to place them properly in such a way as to achieve the mandate of the Commission.

There are thirty-seven State Offices of the Commission in each State of the Federation and five to six area or zonal offices in each state. It is being proposed to create offices in all the seven hundred and seventy-four Local Government Areas in the country by 2014. This it is expected will bring the Commission closer to the proverbial 'Little Man' who may not be in a position to get redress in the conventional courts. If this goes into effect as envisaged, it will further enhance the profile of the Commission.

Cardinal to the achievements of the Commission's mandate is capacity building. In the last three years, the Commission commenced with the training of its Staff. Some were sent on overseas training so that they too could impart the knowledge acquired to others through the Train-the-Trainer method. Others received training on investigation techniques and understanding the ombudsman ethos. There were trainings in public relations and ICT applications as well. The effect is that the internal understanding of the international ombudsman practice has been enhanced and both staff and the leadership are now in the right stead to synergise and achieve the desired outcome.

The Commission is a member of the 'Inter-Agency Task Team' that comprises of all the anti-corruption agencies. It was agreed that the Secretariat of Safe Reporting of Corruption, an initiative aimed at protecting Whistle Blowers should be domiciled in the Commission since it has the structure to implement the objectives of the body. Moreover embedded in the Commission's Act is the ability to protect the Whistle-Blower. (See Section 5 of the Act). This makes it the most suitable of all the other agencies to host the Secretariat.

In the task of rebuilding the Nigerian Ombudsman, assurances of support and co-operation have been coming in from these sister agencies and other institutions in the fight to restore order and justice within the Nigerian polity. The National Assembly, the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, the Nigerian Inspector General of Police, the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) have all pledged their readiness to collaborate and, or aid the Nigerian Ombudsman in the actualization of its mandate. Recently the ICPC and the NHRC agreed to form a synergy with the Nigerian Ombudsman aimed at establishing an academy for purposes of joint staff training especially in areas of investigation and capacity building.

Support and encouragements have been pouring in from critical stakeholders such as President of the Senate and Chairman of the National Assembly

## Tribute to Grace Phiri

*Ms Grace Phiri, who was the Investigations Officer at the Zambian Commission for Investigations, died on Tuesday, 18 June 2013 in Paris en route to the AOMA Exco Meeting in Burkina Faso. She was traveling with the Investigator General of Zambia, Mrs Caroline Sokoni.*

*Ms Phiri, who was 41 years old, leaves behind her two daughters, aged 11 and 15 years. Her funeral took place at 9h00 on Friday, 12 July at the Reformed Church of Zambia. At the funeral, her daughters read her favourite psalms, her brother talked on her life achievements, short speeches were made by members of the AOMA delegation, Mrs Sokoni and Mr Mbuzi (CEO in the Zambian Ombudsman Office).*

*Despite the short notice, AOMA was represented at the funeral by:*

- 1. First Vice President, Mrs Alima Traore, Mediateur du Faso;*
- 2. Mr Themba Mthethwa, CEO – OPP, South Africa;*
- 3. Mme Florence Kabore, Office of Burkina Faso Ombudsman ;*
- 4. Mr Pierre Ndagirwa, International Advisor to the AOMA President, Dr Tjipilica;*
- 5. Mr Manuel da Costa, Head of Department, Office of Ombudsman, Angola;*
- 6. Adv Ishara Bodasing, Acting Director, AORC.*

*The church service was followed by the burial and laying of wreaths. The AOMA delegation participated in the latter. The AOMA delegation later visited the home of Ms Phiri's family, expressing their condolences and provided a donation to Ms Phiri's mother. A gift was presented to the daughters on behalf of the Public Protector, South Africa. Ms Phiri was in her third year of part time study, and an active member of her Church. She served the Zambian Commission for Investigations for sixteen years. She will be remembered by the AOMA community for her unwavering support to Mrs Sokoni and her participation at AOMA meetings.*



Ms Grace Phiri

## AOMA EXCO Meeting takes place in Burkina Faso

The Executive Committee of the AOMA gathered from 18 – 19 June 2013 at the LAICO Hotel, Ouagadougou, for an Exco meeting. The meeting's aim was to deal with matters related to the daily management of AOMA's activities; the Audited Financial Reports of the Association; the role of the AOMA in the Malian crisis; the cooperation between AOMA and the African Union (AU); as well as the preparation of the 4th General Assembly's Meeting.

In his capacity as Mayor of the town of Ouagadougou, Mr Marin Casimir ILBOUDO pronounced a welcome address as the official opening ceremony began. H.E. Mr Beyon Luc TIAO, the Prime Minister of Burkina Faso was key note speaker at the opening.

The Executive Committee Members held discussions on the following matters:

- i. President's report
- ii. Executive Secretary's report
- iii. Draft Audited Financial statements
- iv. Regional Representatives reports
- v. Framework of AU/AOMA cooperation
- vi. The situation in Mali, the CAR and Malawi and the role of the AU/AOMA in the efforts for reconstruction and stabilisation
- vii. MOU between AOMA and IOI
- viii. The Constitution of AOMA
- ix. Preparations for the 4th AOMA General Assembly Meeting
- x. Membership of AOMA – new members and honorary members

The Resolutions adopted at this meeting will give great impetus to AOMA's drive to enhancing good governance on the continent, forging relations with other, like-minded organisations and promoting the institution of ombudsman.



## Resolutions of the 5th Meeting of the Executive Committee of AOMA 18 – 19 June 2013, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

The Members of the Executive Committee of the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association (AOMA) gathered from 18 – 19 June 2013 at the LAICO Hotel, Ouagadougou, for an Executive Committee meeting;

Having received the report on the previous meeting of the Executive Committee held in Luanda, Angola, from 18 – 20 March 2013;

Considering the report of the President of AOMA on his recent activities and the need for more efficient cooperation with international organisations sharing our values;

Considering the report of the Executive Secretary of AOMA and the subsequent discussions of the Members which emphasized the need to improve governance and reduce poverty;

Considering the Members' desire to improve the coordination and management of AOMA's meetings and activities;

Taking into account the content of the reports from the West African, Southern African and Indian Ocean Regions;

Having reviewed the state of affairs with regard to the cooperation between AOMA and the African Union Commission;

Taking into account the situation in some of AOMA Member countries, namely the Central African Republic and the Republic of Mali as well as the role that AOMA can play with regard to the crisis that these countries are facing;

Having acknowledged the content of the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding between AOMA and the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI);

Noting the invitation of the African Peer Review Mechanism to collaborate in the monitoring and strengthening of good governance structures in the continent in support of the African Renaissance;

Noting with great sorrow the sudden passing, in an aeroplane bound for Paris, of Mrs Grace PHIRI, Assistant to the Ombudsman of Zambia, Mrs Caroline Sokoni, while they were traveling from Lusaka to Ouagadougou in order to attend the current meeting;

Reassured by the firm support voiced by His Excellency Mr Blaise COMPAORE, the President of Burkina Faso, and by his commitment to encourage his peers to support AOMA's efforts, with the view to creating and strengthening the Ombudsman institution in Africa;

***Have taken the following decisions by resolutions:***

1. An advocacy document will be drafted and presented to the President of Burkina Faso to facilitate putting into place his engagement with his peers.

2. On the tabled reports

a. The minutes of the previous Executive Committee Meeting, held in Luanda from the 18 – 20 March 2013 were adopted subject to amendments, herewith attached as Annexure "A".

b. The reports of the President, the Executive Secretariat and the Regional Coordinators for West African, Southern African and Indian Ocean Regions were adopted. Furthermore, in order to encourage other regions to submit their report on a regular basis, the African Ombudsman Research Centre (AORC) shall develop a template for the harmonization of regional reports which must be circulated to all regions.

3. On the cooperation with other international organisations

a. The Memorandum of Understanding between AOMA and the IOI has been adopted, subject to corrections on the language and logo/acronym in the signed document.

b. The Executive Committee hereby authorises the delegation of powers to the some of its members for approaching organisations such as the Commonwealth Secretariat (Ombudsman of Namibia), the International Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF) (Ombudsman of Cote D'Ivoire), the Community of the Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) (Provedor de Justica of Angola), the United Nations and the European Union (Public Protector of South Africa and Provedor de Justica of Angola) in order to explore the possibilities for cooperation in pursuing AOMA's goals.

EXCO BURKINAFASO, JUNE 2013



c. Appropriate measures shall be taken in order to cooperate with the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the protection and promotion of Human Rights (ICC) in Geneva as well as the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) and involve them in future activities of AOMA.

#### 4. On management, communication, training and coordination

a. Administrative and Treasury Functions should be separate. In order to achieve this, an Administrative Secretariat and a Treasurer's Positions shall be established and this should be addressed in the Constitutional review.

b. Meeting documents must be translated and circulated in advance, so that discussions can focus on pertinent matters.

c. The acronym "AOA" must be removed from all official communications, letterheads and from the logo. An explanatory note of the symbols and colours of the logo is herewith attached as Annexure "B".

d. The Executive Committee is concerned about the extended delay with regards to the filling of the vacant post of Director of the AORC and recommends that the Board of Directors of the AORC establish that the end of October will be the final deadline by which time the post must be filled.

e. The decision of the Executive Committee to separate the functions of the AOMA Secretariat from those of the AORC must be effected immediately and this separation must be reflected in the constitution which is currently being revised.

f. Training should take place within the regions, to facilitate networking and sharing of information.

g. The Executive Secretary shall contact Mr André Marin, the Ontario Ombudsman, about reconsidering his decision not to come to West Africa for security reasons to conduct a "Sharpen Your Teeth" course.



## 5. On the 4th General Assembly Meeting

a. The 4th General Assembly Meeting shall be held in Addis Ababa, at the African Union Head Quarters as suggested by the AU delegation during the previous Executive Committee Meeting held in Luanda from 18 – 20 2013.

b. The President of AOMA must inform the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the decisions taken by the Executive Committee concerning the 4th General Assembly Meeting in writing with a copy to all Executive Committee Members.

c. A high level delegation, comprising the President, the 1st Vice President and the Executive Secretary will go to Addis Ababa, as soon as possible and depending on the availability of the AU Commission Chairperson, in order to begin discuss the modes of preparation.

d. The 4th General Assembly Meeting will be held between the months of February and April 2014, depending on the AU's agenda. The Executive Secretary must confirm these dates.

e. A letter responding to his correspondence dated 2 May 2013 shall be sent to the Ombudsman of Kenya in order to clarify the decision taken by the Executive Committee in Luanda.

## 6. On the cooperation between AOMA and the AU

a. The AU/ AOMA Cooperation Framework, for the putting into place of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two parties, must include for each deliverable clear timeframes, responsible entities for its being put into place and estimated costs.

b. A task force led by Mr Ndagirwa (Office of the Angola Ombudsman) and Mr Okoko-Esseau (AU Commission for Political Affairs), and assisted by Mr Mthethwa (Office of Public Protector, South Africa) and Adv Bodasing (AORC), shall finalise the Cooperation Framework Action Plan for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the AU and the AOMA. The Action Plan to which will be annexed by an explanatory note on the concept of Shared Values.

c. Collaboration between AOMA and the African Peer Review Mechanism will be developed in order to monitor AU agreements pertaining to governance and the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals 2015.

d. The EXCO authorises the Executive Secretary to organise discussions with the African Peer Review Mechanism.

## 7. On the situation in Mali, the Central African Republic and Malawi

a. A letter must be sent to the African Union Commissioner, H.E. Dr Aisha Abdullahi, to determine what efforts are already underway to assist the Central African Republic and the Republic of Mali, and how AOMA can play a role.

b. AOMA, with the assistance of AORC, shall explore the possibilities of organising a summit with the African Union Commission's Department of Political Affairs, the African Union Commission's Department for Peace and Security and the African Peer Review Mechanism, in order to assess the situations of the Ombudsman institutions in Mali, the Central African Republic and other countries in conflict or transition.

c. A letter of encouragement shall be sent to Bishop Paulin Pomodimo, who was the Mediator of the Central African Republic until the recent political changes, and to the office of the Mediator of the Republic of Mali, by the President of AOMA, asking for an update on their situations.

d. A letter shall be sent to the authorities of the Central African Republic and the Republic of Mali, encouraging them to retain their ombudsman institutions in their post-transitional regimes.

e. AOMA shall work with the African Union Commission on any eventual intervention such as Electoral Observation Missions.

f. The Executive Committee deplores the situation of harassment and intimidation imposed to the Ombudsman of Malawi, Hon. Justice Tujilane Chizumila (Mrs) and urges the Malawian authorities to take all necessary measures to ensure her protection and her independence while exercising her functions.

g. A delegation comprised of the President of AOMA, the Executive Secretary and the Ombudsman of Namibia must visit Lilongwe, Malawi and report back to the Executive Committee on the current state of affairs.

## 8. On AOMA's membership

a. The membership application by the Mediator of the Republic of Niger has been accepted by the Executive Committee.

b. The South African Banking Ombudsman's application for a seat on the Executive Committee as an ex officio Member has been accepted and a letter to this effect will be sent to him by the Executive Secretary.

c. AOMA shall follow up on the discussions between the Regional Coordinator for the Indian Ocean and the authorities of the Comoros on the possible creation of the Ombudsman Institution in the Comoros.

## 9. On the finances

- a. The Audits of AOMA and AORC should be for the financial year ending on 31 March of every year.
- b. The Financial Reports should be summarised and presented in American dollars.
- c. The AOMA finances must be audited from its inception.
- d. The Executive Secretary should submit a report on the status of members in good standing with regards to their membership fees for the purpose of their voting powers at the General Assembly Meeting.
- e. The Executive Secretary should ask those members who are in arrears to pay before the next General Assembly Meeting.

## 10. On the legal status of AOMA

- a. The Constitutional review, taking into consideration both French and English contributions and confirming the name change from AOA to AOMA, shall be finalised before September 2013.
- b. The new Constitution shall provide for the ratification by Members states.
- c. Every Member shall make efforts to obtain the official recognition of AOMA as an international organisation, by their respective governments.

## 11. On the Honorary Titles to be awarded to the former Members and Partners of AOMA

- a. All AOMA Members are encouraged to submit to the Executive Secretary their nominations of former members and partners who deserve special recognition.
- b. The final list of proposals must be compiled by the Secretariat and submitted to the Executive Committee before

being presented at the General Assembly for approval.

- c. The nomination criteria to be followed in identifying eligible candidates shall be developed and distributed among AOMA members.

## 12. On the passing of Mrs Grace PHIRI, assistant to the Ombudsman of Zambia

- a. The Executive Committee Members express their deepest condolences to the Ombudsman of Zambia, Mrs Caroline Sokoni, her staff members and to the bereaved family. Letters of condolence must be sent to Mrs Sokoni and the family of the deceased to this effect.
- b. A delegation led by Mrs Alima Deborah Traoré, the 1st Vice-President of AOMA, shall attend the funeral on behalf of the Association.

13. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place in Cape Town, South Africa in December 2013, the exact date to be confirmed by the Executive Secretary by the end of July 2013. This meeting will be the 11th since the creation of AOMA.

## REPORT ON AORC

# Appointment of Director

The post for Director: AORC was advertised. It is anticipated that a new Director for the Centre will be appointed before the end of the year. Further enquiries on this can be directed to the Office of the Public Protector, South Africa.

## Research

The AORC has commenced with research into a comparative analysis of legal systems among AOMA members. This comparative analysis will seek to reveal what the challenges and strengths are of the various Ombudsman offices in Africa; what are the areas of differences and similarities amongst them; and what can be done to introduce a degree of harmony with the aim of developing normative standards for the AOMA members. The core objective of this analysis is to inform AOMA's future strategy and planning processes.

A survey questionnaire has been disseminated to all AOMA members and will be followed by in-depth interviews with a sample of members.

As part of another project, the Secretariat has also put out a call to members for contributions of case reports, so that we can create a database of jurisprudence. This will be a useful source of reference to our members.

Furthermore, a database of CV's of Ombudsman who are members of AOMA has been created, and is available on the website. This gives a sense of the expertise within the

Association.

The AORC has also put out a call for nominations of suitable candidates to sit on its Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will be AORC's intellectual think tank: they will serve as a sounding board, a source of ideas and expertise - and contribute to the business well-being of the AORC. The members should represent a diverse range of skills and experience in areas such as research, training, law, finance and human resources; and who understand the concept of ombudsman and will view AORC's work with a fresh eye.

Some of the functions of the Advisory Board will include:

- Provide general strategic direction for the conduct and further development of the collaboration of AORC and UKZN in terms of their MOU;
- Identify and consider proposals and projects for future training, research and advocacy;
- Act as a reference group for projects that are being rolled out.

## Training

The AORC is embarking on a joint initiative with the Investigator – General of Zambia and the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) to offer “Sharpen Your Teeth” training to members of AOMA. The training will be offered in French from 11 – 13 November 2013, and in English from 14 – 16 November 2013, in Lusaka.

The AORC is also offering a 5-day training course for French-speaking investigators in Ombudsman offices. The training will run from 16 – 19 November 2013, in Lusaka.

For those who have not yet registered, you are encouraged not to miss these golden opportunities to hone your investigative and report-writing skills.

Please watch this space for a Train the Trainer course, and Investigations training course for Portuguese-speaking members scheduled for early 2014.

## GENERAL NOTICES

## General Assembly

At the last AOMA Exco meeting held in Ouagadougou, it was decided that the 4th General Assembly Meeting of AOMA shall be held in Addis Ababa, at the African Union Head Quarters as suggested by the AU delegation during the previous Executive Committee Meeting held in Luanda from 18 – 20 March 2013. The President of AOMA will inform the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on this decision. A high level delegation, made of the President, the 1st Vice President and the Executive Secretary will be visiting Addis Ababa in order to begin discuss the modalities of preparation. The next General Assembly will take place between February and April 2014, depending on the agenda and activities of the African Union.

## AOMA EXCO

It was also decided at the last Exco in Ouagadougou, that the next AOMA Exco shall be held early this December, in Cape Town. For further information on this, the AOMA Secretariat can be contacted in the Office of the Public Protector, South Africa.

## Useful Phrases in Three Languages(Travel)

ENGLISH	FRENCH	PORTUGUESE
Arrivals	Les arrivées	Chegadas
Departures	Les départs	Partidas
Check-in	L'enregistrement	Registo
Customs	La douane	Alfandega
Ground floor	Rez-de-chaussée	Rés do Chão
I am on a business trip	Je suis en voyage d'affaires	Eu estou em uma viagem de negócios
Here is my business card	Voici ma carte de visite	Aqui está o meu cartão de visita
I am staying for one week	Je reste une semaine	Eu vou ficar por uma semana
These are my suitcases	Voici mes valises	Estas são as minhas malas
I have nothing to declare	Je n'ai rien à déclarer	Não tenho nada a declarar
I need a porter	J'ai besoin d'un porteur	Eu preciso de um porteiro
Where is the hotel?	Où est l'hôtel?	Onde fica o hotel?
Do you take foreign credit cards?	Est-ce que vous acceptez les cartes étrangères?	Você aceita cartões de crédito estrangeiros?
What time should I arrive?	A quelle heure faut-il arriver?	Que horas devo chegar?
Can I take this bag as hand luggage?	Est-ce que je peux prendre ce sac en cabine avec moi ?	Posso levar este saco como bagagem de mão?

## CONTACT THE AORC SECRETARIAT

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منظمة الموفقين والوسطاء والرقابيين الأفارقة

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