



منظمة الموفقين والوسطاء والرقابيين الأفارقة  
 African Ombudsman and Mediators Association  
 Association des Ombudsman et Mediateurs Africains  
 Associação dos Ombudsman e Mediadores

# AFRICAN OMBUDSMAN Today

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## AORC welcomes new Director Adv. Arlene Brock

The African Ombudsman Research Centre is pleased to announce the appointment of Advocate Arlene Brock as the new Centre Director. Adv. Brock, who has a long-standing career in the areas of ombudsmanship and public service, brings years of valuable experience to this position. In 2005, after a competitive selection process, she was appointed as Bermuda’s first National Ombudsman for an eight-and-a-half-year term, where she became known throughout the world for her intrepid, effective and principled work.



Prior to becoming the Ombudsman for Bermuda, Adv. Brock taught mediation and facilitated strategic planning and union negotiations as a consultant with Conflict Management Inc., Cambridge, M.A., the corporate arm of the Harvard Negotiation Program.

Her prior career also included insolvency and reinsurance litigation in the private sector and employment arbitration, as well as work as a family magistrate in the public sector. Adv. Brock continues to serve on the first standing Judicial and Legal Services Committee that advises the

Governor of Bermuda on judicial appointments and discipline.

After demitting office in 2014, Adv. Brock became the first person on record from any of the U.K. Overseas Territories to receive the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Award. In this role, she contributed to the School of Law at Northeastern University, Boston, United States on panels, lectures and by mentoring graduate law students. She has also worked as a consultant to the Human Rights Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat on the issue of the role of National Human Rights and Ombudsman Institutions with respect to early and forced marriage.

Adv. Brock has established collegial relations with colleagues over the years through both the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association and the International Ombudsman Institute. She looks forward to joining AORC with its enormous potential to help raise the stature and effectiveness of Ombudsmen throughout the continent.

## CONTENTS

Interview with Mme Foziya Amin	2	Meet AORC’s Staff	6	Extension of the Comparative	
Comment from Prof. Reddi	3	Profile: Joseph Gnonlonfoun		Analysis of Legal Systems Study	9
Study Tour of Ethiopia Ombudsman		Ombudsman Of Benin	7	AORC Policy Brief	9
office to SA	4	Summary of the 13th Board Meeting	8	Upcoming Events	10
AOMA observes the 26th		Report on AORC Activities	8	Useful Phrases	11
AU Summit	5	Upcoming Arabic Training	9	Contact Details	12

**NOTICE:** AORC is in the process of updating its database. Please nominate someone from your office who will be the contact person between you and AORC/AOMA and forward their name and details to us as soon as possible. Send these to [lwelela@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:lwelela@ukzn.ac.za)

## An interview with Mme Foziya Amin, Chief Ombudsman for Ethiopia and President of AOMA



Information law. The mandate of the EIO encompasses: ensuring that administrative decisions do not contravene citizens' rights; receiving and investigating complaints; preventing and rectifying maladministration; and making recommendations. Mme Amin, who has qualifications in both law and leadership, took up the position of Chief Ombudsman in 2008 and was re-elected for a second term in 2015.

Being a relatively new institution, awareness of the concept of the Ombudsman in Ethiopia remains low among the general public, she explained, leading to resistance from the bottom, but also from the top – from within the government and the leadership. Raising awareness is therefore a top priority for Mme Amin and her team. The EIO employs a strategy of targeting and mobilising select groups, such as women, youth, teachers and higher government officials with training, often using the train-the-trainer method.

To reach the general public, the EIO makes use of electronic methods, such as TV dramas, radio broadcasting, the internet and advertising. In fact, the Ombudsman institution has its own inhouse Communications Department with writers who develop and write the scripts for these productions, ensuring that they incorporate relevant themes and materials into their storylines. The EIO then contracts professionals to produce these, establishing a mini studio in the office for them to work from. There is also a weekly newspaper column where relevant issues relating to their work are discussed and where information about the role of the institution is broadcast.

These initiatives appear to have paid off. An increase in public awareness is illustrated by the growing number of complaints received. In previous years, the EIO received between 1 000-3 000 complaints a year, said Mme Amin. This number has now increased to more than 13 000 complaints across all branches, illustrating the tangible impact of the work that they are doing.

As a developing country, the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman also plays an important role in balancing the need for economic development with the protection of human rights. In Ethiopia's rapidly expanding capital Addis Abba, infrastructural development has brought

the municipal government into conflict with some of its residents over the compensation offered for relocation from residential land earmarked for development.

The municipality has its own legal mechanisms for resolving such complaints, and most of these are successfully dealt with here. But if all avenues are exhausted without success, the complaint is then taken to the Ombudsman. The EIO currently has a number of such cases dealing with compensation in process. Another challenge faced by the EIO as a young institution is the limited experience of staff in the field of ombudsmanship. This is where the networking and knowledge exchange opportunities afforded by Ethiopia's recent study tour of South Africa proved very useful, Mme Amin explained. The tour, which took place in December last year, brought ombudsmen and directors from the EIO's federal and regional offices to visit the Public Protector in South Africa. Learning about South Africa's enforcement mechanics was at the top of the agenda. In most countries, the mechanics are not there, she explained, but in South Africa, from intake to implementation, the Public Protector has a lot of experience.

South Africa is also unique because it has a quality control team for follow-up, another area of interest for the Ethiopian delegation. In addition, because the EIO has a mandate to

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implement the country's Access to Information law, the study tour provided valuable lessons for the delegation on how South Africa – as one of the best countries for access to information – implemented their legislation, and addressed the particular difficulties associated with it.

The African continent might face formidable challenges in the 21st century, but it is reassuring to see the strong leadership of Mme Amin and her fellow African ombudsmen in action, and their efforts to build the solid institutions needed for sustainable development and good governance. With such leadership and knowledge sharing among African ombudsmen, the future looks bright.

Africa is affected by human rights violations, conflict and war. There are positive developments taking place on the continent, with a movement towards a rights-based culture, but we still need strong institutions underpinned by a constitutional framework to bring about development and the strengthening of democracy. This is where the African Ombudsman as an institution has a very important role to play. These are the opening comments of H.E. Mme Foziya Amin, President of AOMA and Chief Ombudsman of the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman (EIO) as we sit down to discuss the work of her institution and some of the challenges and opportunities that it faces.

The Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman was established in 2000 by Proclamation 211/2000, which determines its powers and functions in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution. With its central office operating at the federal level, and its six regional branches extended across the country, the EIO is responsible for ensuring good governance and transparency, and also oversees the implementation of the Access to

### Comment from Professor Reddi (UKZN Dean and Head of School of Law)

It is a great privilege to host the African Ombudsman Research Centre here at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in the School of Law, where there is much opportunity for developing a mutually enriching research relationship between the two institutions. I have no doubt that 2016 is going to be a dynamic year for the Centre. With the transfer of funds from the PPSA to UKZN now complete, we have been able to advertise and appoint a Communication and Advocacy officer, and a new Director – Adv. Arlene Brock, the former Ombudsman of Bermuda, who is currently in the process of obtaining a work permit, and will join us in May this year. We should therefore be able to fill our staff quota within the next three months, paving the way for achieving our mandate and targets. We look forward, in particular, to hosting our first Arabic Ombudsman training programme, which will take place in Egypt in May of this year, and to developing linkages with other regional research institutions working in the areas of ombudsmanship, accountability and good governance.

The School of Law is excited to be working with the AORC, and looks forward to developing the capacity and work of the Centre in the future. Thank you for all support that has been received so far.



## Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman (EIO) visits South Africa on study tour



South Africa and Ethiopia might be separated by the vast geography of the African continent, but when a delegation of ombudsmen from this North African country visited South Africa on a study tour recently, there was much to talk about.

Taking place in early December last year, the tour offered the two countries the opportunity to share experiences in grievance redress mechanisms, implementation of access to information, and to discuss how the relevant organisations of their countries are managing to fulfil their respective mandates in relation to good governance issues. The World Bank and its partners supported the exchange as part of its Basic Services Program (PBS), which endeavours to create transparency and accountability through citizen engagement, to strengthen the grievance redress mechanisms in Ethiopia.

The 13-man delegation included expert directors and ombudsmen from three of Ethiopia's six regional branches, and was led by H.E. Ombudsman Dechase Usmail Ahmed of the EIO. He indicated that the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman and the Public Protector of South Africa facilitated and arranged meetings and presentations with senior officials, heads of departments and senior experts of relevant organisations such as Public Protector, the Public Service Commission, the Human Rights Commission and

the German development organisation GIZ as part of the study tour. The Ethiopian delegation was especially interested in learning more about the Public Protector South Africa's mandate structure and investigation processes, the grievance handling and complaints handling mechanisms at the Public Service Commission (PSC), and the South African Human Rights Commission's work on PAIA (promotion of access to Information Act), as well as the work of the Public Protector Gauteng's provincial office.

Reflecting on the tour, delegates explained how the EIO team appreciates the enforcement mechanisms of the Public Protector of South Africa and how it investigates and redresses maladministration issues. The team reported that executive bodies are obligated to submit an implementation plan to the Public Protector in cases where the Public Protector's finding reveals that the executive body is guilty of maladministration, which would make the implementation and follow-up of the institution easy and effective.

The delegation concluded that the experience sharing and knowledge gained from the study tour was priceless, and suggested that South Africa's strong and well structured system could be adopted in Ethiopia. They commended the Public Protector's decision compliance mechanisms, the trust it builds among citizens, and its efforts in improving accessibility.

African Ombudsman and Mediators Association (AOMA) President and EIO Chief Ombudsman Foziya Amin agreed, emphasising that African Ombudsman and Mediators should share experiences from their continent and sub-regions under the umbrella of AOMA and the African Ombudsman Research Center (AORC), so as to strengthen the existing institutions as per minimum standards. Such experience sharing is vital in building capacities, she stressed.

## AOMA observes the 26th AU Summit

Placing Africa, its people, and their basic human rights at the centre of the policy agenda through cooperation and dialogue was the key message emerging from the 26th African Union summit, held earlier this year. The theme for the summit was '2016: African Year of Human Rights with a particular focus on the Rights of Women'. Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman's Chief Ombudsman and President of African Ombudsman & Mediators Association (AOMA) Mme Foziya Amin attended the event with the capacity of observer status, representing AOMA.

### Placing Africa, its people, and their basic human rights at the centre of Agenda 2063

The Summit, which took place at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, brought together policymaking organs of the Union, representatives from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the Private Sector, the Diaspora, partner organisations, continental and international media and dignitaries, as well as invited guests worldwide, to discuss the upcoming challenges faced by the continent. In her welcoming remarks to the 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, said that Africa must continue to place its people and their basic human rights at the centre of Agenda 2063.

"This includes our people's rights to education, to food and nutrition, to healthcare, to safe water, sanitation and energy, to join in peace, to be safe from violence and extremism, to reach their full potential, in addition to the right to association, to free speech, to freedom of the media



and to be protected from discrimination on any grounds. We are making progress, but our pace is very slow. We must use 2016 as a platform to advance these human rights of all the inhabitants of our continent, in their full diversity, as we work together to create the Africa we want," she stressed.

### Dialogue is the key

H.E. Idriss Deby Itno, President of Chad and the newly elected Chairperson of the African Union, brought the 26th Ordinary Session of the African Union to an end with his appreciation of the environment and atmosphere of the Summit, which was peaceful. He also thanked the Assembly for their recommendations in respect of the fight against terrorism in Africa. Chairperson Deby appealed to all member states to take the issues that undermine the development of Africa seriously. He stressed that dialogue is the key. In addition, he called on the African Union to strengthen its efforts to find ways of bringing peace to Burundi and South Sudan. "We cannot tolerate violence, which kills thousands of Africans and leaves them displaced. Let us all be vigilant and listen to the cries of our people."

In addition to ensuring the implementation this year's theme for the Summit by AU Member States, the new AU Chairperson will also have to mobilise the continent to implement the AU Agenda 2063 with the view to placing Africa as a key player in the world arena.

“We cannot tolerate violence, which kills thousands of Africans and leaves them displaced. Let us all be vigilant and listen to the cries of our people.” – H.E. Idriss Deby Itno, President of Chad

## Meet AORC's Staff

The AORC and the School of Law at UKZN are pleased to announce two new appointments:



### DIRECTOR OF AORC

Adv. Arlene Brock, former Regional Vice-President (Caribbean & Latin America) of the International Ombudsman Institute, will join AORC in May. Adv. Brock, who was the first national Ombudsman for Bermuda, is known to AOMA members and the global ombudsman community as a visionary 'builder of institutions' with a passion for best practices in the oversight of good governance. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from McGill University, JD/LL.B. from Osgoode Hall Law School and Masters of Law from Harvard Law School. In addition to a prior career as a litigator and Family Court judge, she has taught mediation around the world with Conflict Management Inc. (corporate arm of the Harvard Negotiation Project).



### ACTING DIRECTOR

Dr. Annie Devenish is a scholar, researcher and project manager. She earned her Bachelor and Masters degrees (cum laude) from UKZN and her PhD in History from Oxford University. Her research interests focus on gender, development and democracy in the global South, the history of feminism, and identity politics in the context of political transition. Dr. Devenish will serve as the Acting Director until Adv. Brock arrives.



### FRANKY LWELELA

In addition, AOMA and AORC are indebted to Franky Lwelela, who has been with AORC as an intern, then Communication and Advocacy Officer since 2013. Mr. Lwelela has been instrumental and dedicated to ensuring that AORC tasks have progressed during the past years, especially for the transition from the Office of the Public Protector to UKZN. Mr. Lwelela has a Bachelors degree in Social Sciences, majoring in Information Systems and Technology and Internet Studies at UKZN; and an FET Certificate in Informatics and Office Management (DRC). He is currently doing a postgrad diploma in Management at UKZN. Prior to joining AORC, he was the Data Manager at UKZN INNOVATION for two years, and Area Manager for Vuvuzela Communication (an IT Consulting and Software design Organisation in KwaZulu-Natal) for two years.

## Profile

### Joseph Gnonlonfoun – Mediator of Benin



longstanding career in public service. In addition to being a former Minister of Justice for Benin, he was also an adviser to the High Authority for Audio-visual and Communication, a close collaborator with the preceding Mediator the Republic, Albert Tévoédjrè, and a retired magistrate.

At the ceremony held in October 2013 to mark his assumption of the administration, he described mediation for him as primarily the search for peace and serenity. He explained further that the existence of an Ombudsman is justified among others by the need to "streamline and improve the relationship between the citizen and his government".

He added that their administration needed a rejuvenation to be an administration of development. His predecessor, Albert Tévoédjrè, was very moved by the calibre of the guests who attended the ceremony, as well as the determination of his successor and expressed his wishes to see the institution grow, prevail and better execute its missions.

Former Minister of Justice Joseph Gnonlonfoun was appointed Mediator of the Republic of Benin in September 2013 by the Head of State and the Council of Ministers. He succeeded Professor Albert Tévoédjrè.

The Mediator of the Republic of Benin is governed by Law No. 2009-22 of 11 August 2009 and is responsible for receiving complaints administered on the operation of central government departments, decentralised authorities and public institutions.

The Mediator studies them in order to provide equitable solutions, suggests proposals to the Head of State for the normal functioning and efficiency of public services, and contributes in general to the improvement of the rule of law and administrative governance (Article 8 of Law No. 2009-22 of 11 August 2009).

Gnonlonfoun, who was born in 1943 in Porto-Novo and is a married man and father of three children, has a



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## Summary of the 13th AORC Board meeting



The 13th AORC Board meeting took place on the 24th of February 2016 at the Centre's offices based at the University of Kwazulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa. In attendance were Board members Mme Foziya Amin, Ombudsman of Ethiopia; Dr Paulo Tjipilica, Provedor de Justica of Angola; Mme Alima Traoré, Mediator du Faso; and Managay Reddi Dean and Head of the Law School. The meeting was chaired by Advocate Thulisile Madonsela, the Public Protector of South Africa. Apologies were received from Judge Edmond Cowan, Ombudsman of Sierra Leone, and Prof. John Mubangizi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of UKZN.

After the chair's opening of the meeting and welcome to the delegates, Mme Foziya Amin, President of AOMA, took the floor to talk about the importance of Ombudsman institutions on the African continent for the promotion of development and good governance. This was followed by Prof. Reddi, who spoke on behalf of the DVC and Head of the College of Law and Management, outlining progress made to date with the transfer of funding for AORC from the PPSA to UKZN. The first issue for discussion on the agenda was the finalisation of the co-option of Board members. Here, it was approved that all Board members would be co-opted as per the resolution taken in the previous Board meeting. Next up was the proposal for the AORC to provide financial and technical support to the 5th AOMA General Assembly

and the 50th Anniversary of the Ombudsman in Africa. The meeting provisionally agreed that funding support could be offered, if provided for in the AORC strategic plan as funded by DIRCO. When it came to discussing the following item on the agenda, which was another proposal for AORC to finance AOMA regional meetings, the same decision was again reached. It was agreed that support would be provisional, depending on it being provided for in the AORC strategic plan, as funded by DIRCO.

An update on the handover to UKZN and the recruitment of new staff was presented next. This was followed by the introduction of the AORC Progress Report to DIRCO. The new acting Director of the Centre Dr Annie Devenish then presented a short report on the AORC current activities, which included preparations for the Centre's first upcoming Arabic training, and the readiness of the Centre to move forward with the extension of the comparative analysis of legal systems study, as well as the enforcement and implementation of mechanisms of ombudsman decisions study. Final points of discussion included the African Ombudsman newsletter and the need for the development of an AORC specific curriculum to guide training processes. The meeting closed with all participants feeling optimistic about the tasks ahead and ready to move forward on these.

## Report on AORC Projects

### A review of AORC training achievements to date

With its mandate to provide a supportive structure for Ombudsmen offices across Africa, training to facilitate the development, strengthening and promotion of African Ombudsman institutions through mutual support, co-operation and joint activities, form an essential component of AORC's activity programme.

Drawing from the findings of the needs assessment conducted in 2011, AORC has developed several training courses, including *Pilot Ombudsman Training*, *Sharpening your Teeth*, *Investigator's Training (train the trainer)*, *The ways by which the Ombudsman works – Award in Ombudsman Practice and Training on Corporate Governance*. To date, 146 ombudsmen and officials from 26 African countries have been trained in English, French and Portuguese.

### Report back on Portuguese Training December 2014

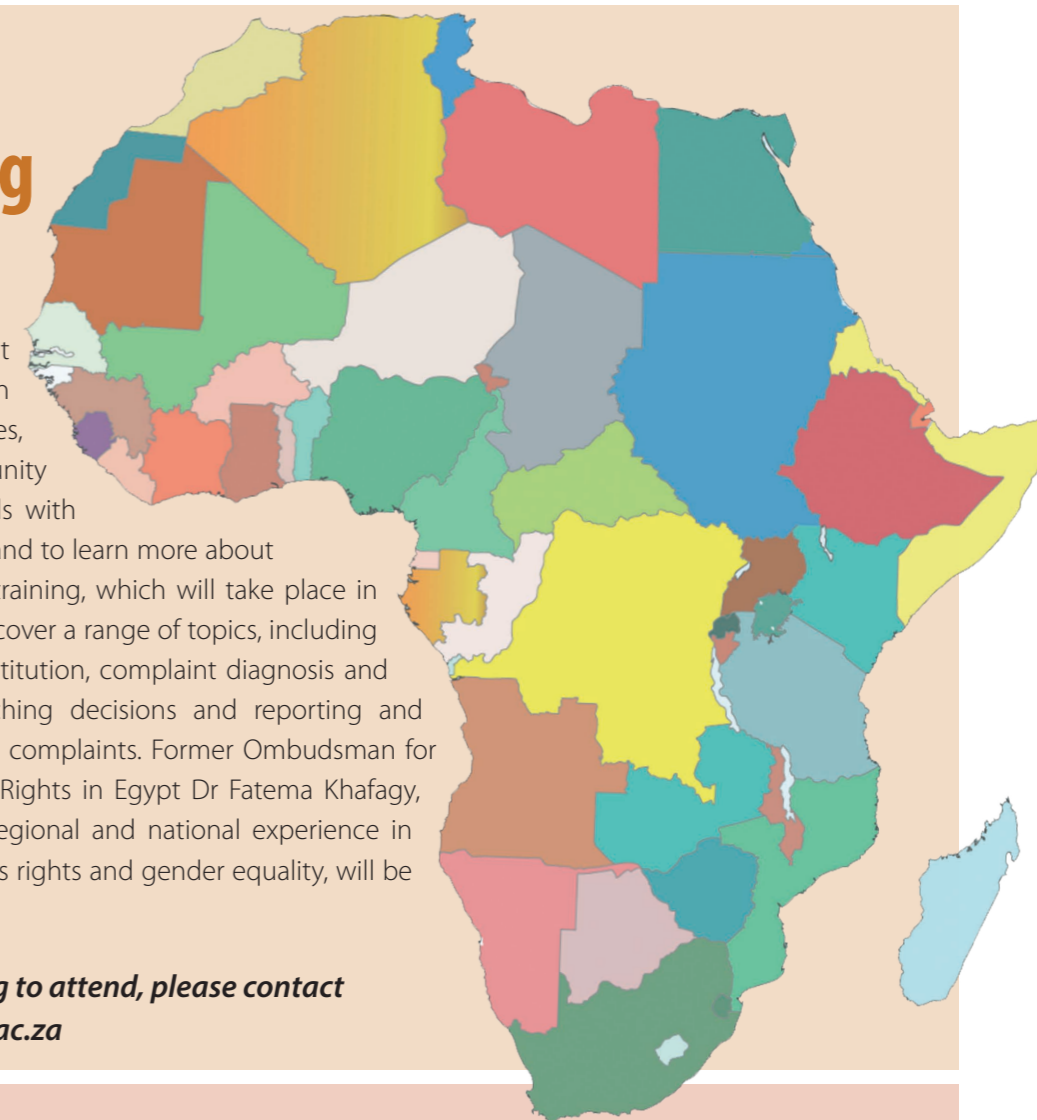
From 8-12 December 2014, fourteen ombudsmen and officials from Angola and Mozambique gathered at UKZN in Durban, South Africa for AORC's five-day training course entitled *The ways by which the Ombudsman works – Award in Ombudsman Practice*. Under the guidance of trainers José Álvaro and Rosa Vieira Neves, participants were taken through topics such as managing conflict, managing difficult behaviour, decision-making and report writing, critical thinking and investigative reasoning. The majority of participants benefited from the opportunity the training provided for sharing of experiences and learning with fellow ombudsmen, and showed a willingness to apply and adapt the acquired knowledge to their country's own work environment.

## Upcoming Arabic Training

– May 2016

The AORC will be holding its first training course for investigators in Arabic-speaking ombudsman offices, and looks forward to this opportunity to share new knowledge and skills with Ombudsman offices in the region and to learn more about their experiences and needs. The training, which will take place in Egypt from 9-13 May this year, will cover a range of topics, including the history of the Ombudsman institution, complaint diagnosis and planning, investigation skills, reaching decisions and reporting and remedial action, and learning from complaints. Former Ombudsman for the National Council for Women's Rights in Egypt Dr Fatema Khafagy, who has extensive international, regional and national experience in the areas of human rights, children's rights and gender equality, will be conducting the training.

**If you are interested in applying to attend, please contact  
Franky Lwelela: [lwelela@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:lwelela@ukzn.ac.za)**



## Extension of the Comparative Analysis of legal systems study

The first phase of data collection for the Extension of the Comparative Analysis of legal systems study is currently underway. An additional eight countries have been selected and the questionnaire has been distributed to participating offices. The project research team will be meeting over the next few weeks to finalise the country visits for the second phase of the data collection.

## AORC Policy Brief

AORC is also pleased to announce the publication of its first policy brief: A guideline of best practices for African Ombudsman offices, which will be coming out at the end of March.

# Upcoming Events

AORC UPCOMING EVENTS					
AORC TRAININGS					
TRAINING	OBJECTIVES	TARGET	DURATION	OUTCOMES	DATE
Arabic Pilot Ombudsman Training	To improve the capacity of AOMA, the ombudsman and ombudsman offices	Arabic speaking countries in Africa	5 days	- Understanding the background to the ombudsman function	May 2016
Portuguese Sharpen Your Teeth	To improve the capacity of AOMA, the ombudsman and ombudsman offices	Portuguese speaking countries in Africa	3 days	Indepth understanding of how to carry out systematic investigations	To be confirmed
Arabic Sharpen Your Teeth	To improve the capacity of AOMA, the ombudsman and ombudsman offices	Arabic speaking countries in Africa	3 days	Indepth understanding of how to carry out systematic investigations	To be confirmed
French Train The Trainer Course: Ombudsman Practice	To improve the capacity of AOMA, the ombudsman and ombudsman Offices	French speaking countries in Africa	2 days	-Understating of how people learn -Facilitation skills -The learning environment -Practice sessions	To be confirmed
Portuguese Train The Trainer Course: Ombudsman Practice	To improve the capacity of AOMA, the ombudsman and ombudsman Offices	Portuguese speaking countries in Africa	2 days	-Understating of how people learn -Facilitation skills -The learning environment -Practice sessions	To be confirmed
Arabic Train The Trainer Course: Ombudsman Practice	To improve the capacity of AOMA, the ombudsman and ombudsman Offices	Arabic speaking countries in Africa	2 days	-Understating of how people learn -Facilitation skills -The learning environment -Practice sessions	To be confirmed
Regional workshops and Need Assessment (all regions of AOMA) in 2016 (date to be confirmed)					

AORC RESEARCH	
RESEARCH	START DATE
1. Comparative Analysis Study extension	April 2016
2. Enforcement of Ombudsman decision	To be confirmed
3. Regional Need Assessment Study	May 2016

# Useful Phrases

ENGLISH	FRENCH	PORTUGUESE
Where is the dining room?	Où est la salle à manger?	Onde está a sala de jantar?
What time is breakfast?	À quelle heure est le petit déjeuner?	Que horas é o pequeno-almoço?
Lunch	Dejeuner	Almoço
Dinner	Diner	Jantar
Is this halaal?	Est-ce halal?	É este halal?
Please may I have a glass of orange juice?	puis-je avoir un verre de jus d'orange s'il vous plaît	Porfavor, pode me dar um copo de suco de laranja?
A glass of water	Un verre d'eau	Água
Coke	Coca	Coca
My food is undercooked	Ma nourriture n'est pas assez cuite	Meu alimentonão é cozido o suficiente
My food is overcooked	Ma nourriture est trop cuite	Meu alimento é cozidodemais.
Is there anything you would recommend?	Qu'est-ce que vous recommanderiez?	Existe algumacoisa que vocêrecomendaria?
Could you pass me the salt, please?	Pourriez-vous me passer le sel, s'il vous plaît?	Vocêpoderia me passar o sal, porfavor?
Pepper	Poivre	Pimenta
Sauce	Sauce	Molho
May I have the bill, please?	L'addition, s'ilvous plait	Porfavor, pode me dar a conta.
Today's special	Plat du jour	Especial do dia
Set menu	Formule	CardapioFixo
Cutlery	Couverts	Talheres
May I have a knife, please?	Puis-je avoir un couteau, s'il vous plaît?	Faca
Fork	Fourchette	Garfo
Spoon	Cuillère	Colher
Cup	Tasse	Copo
Plate	Assiette	Prato
Glass	Verre	Copo
Vegetarian	Végétarien	Vegetariano
Starter	Entrée	Antepasto
Main course	Plat principal	Prato principal
Dessert	Dessert	Sobremesa
Side dish	Accompagnement	Acompanhamento
Does this dish contain nuts?	Ce plat contient-il des fruits à coque?	Seráque esteprato conter nozes?

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مركز بحوث الرقابيين الأفارقة

African Ombudsman Research Centre

Centre de Recherche des Ombudsmen Africains

Centro de Investigaçao da Provedoria de Justiça Africana

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