



AOMA Executive Committee Meeting

GENERAL REPORT AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S DECISIONS

Luanda, Angola, 18 to 20 March 2013

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1 Introduction

In compliance with its decisions taken in Windhoek, Namibia, in April 2012, the Executive Committee of the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association (AOMA) met in Luanda, Angola, from the 18th to the 20th days of March 2013.

The meeting's aim was to deal with matters related to the daily management of AOMA's activities; to the vacancies within the Executive Committee's Office; to the cooperation between AOMA and the AU; as well as to the preparation of the 4th General Assembly's Meeting.

Twelve delegations were present at the meeting, namely:

- i. The members of the Executive Committee (9):
 - a. The Provedor de Justiça of the Republic of Angola, who is also the President of AOMA, Dr Paulo TJIPILICA;
 - b. The Public Protector of South Africa, who is also the Executive Secretary of AOMA, Adv Thulisile MADONSELA;
 - c. The Ombudsman of Mauritius, who is also the Regional Coordinator for the Indian Ocean Region, Adv Soleman HATTEEA;
 - d. The Ombudsman of Zambia, who is also the Regional Coordinator for the Southern African Region, Mrs Caroline SOKONI;
 - e. The Mediator of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, who is also the Regional Coordinator for the West African Region, dully represented by his Chief of Staff, Mr Daouda TANON;
 - f. The Mediator of the Republic of Burkina Faso, Member of the IOI Board of Directors and Ex Officio Member of AOMA's Executive Committee, Mrs Alima Deborah TRAORE;
 - g. The Ombudsman of Namibia, IOI Vice President and Ex Officio Member of AOMA's Executive Committee, Adv John WALTERS;
 - h. Judge Mohammed Abuzeid AHMED, Honorary Member of the Executive Committee;
 - i. Mrs Jeanne Manomba KOMBILA, Honorary Member of the Executive Committee;
- ii. A guest of honour, representing the African Union Commission, the Commissioner for Political Affairs, H.E. Dr Aisha ABDULLAHI ;
- iii. Special invitees, from African member states:
 - a. The Ombudsman of Tanzania, Judge Amiri Ramadhani MANENTO ;
 - b. The Ombudsman of Mozambique, Pr. José Ibraimo ABUDO ;
 - c. The Representative of the Ombudsman of Uganda, Mr David MAKUMBI;

- d. The Acting Director of the African Ombudsman Research Centre, Adv Ishara Bodasing

2 Official Opening Ceremony

2.1 Welcome Address by the President of AOMA

In his capacity as President of AOMA and the host Ombudsman of the Meeting, the *Provedor de Justiça* of the Republic of Angola pronounced a welcome address as the official opening ceremony began.

The President's welcome address was mainly articulated on the following:

- The President expressed his appreciations to his colleague and members of the Association who had made the trip to Angola;
- He also commended the presence of the Acting Speaker of Parliament as well as that of the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, a sign that the AU and the State of Angola place AOMA and the Ombudsman Institution at a high level in their priorities;
- The President also seized the opportunity to commend Angola's involvement under the leadership of the Head of State in ensuring that AOMA's activities receive the support they need, i.e. the direct involvement of the Presidency's Civil Office in preparing this meeting;

As he concluded, Dr Paulo TJIPILICA briefly reminded the audience the main themes of discussion which were to form part of the meeting's agenda, namely:

- The preparation of the 4th General Assembly Meeting;
- The vacancies among the office bearers;
- The security status in some AOMA regions and countries;
- The drafting of the Constitution of AOMA;
- The AU/AOMA cooperation;

2.2 Address by the Executive Secretary of AOMA

In her address, the Executive Secretary of AOMA, Adv Thulisile MADONSELA first expressed her appreciations:

- To the President of AOMA, the Government of Angola and the Angolan people for their hospitality and excellent organisation of the conference;
- To the members of the Association and to all the guests present at the opening ceremony.

While she emphasised the role of the Ombudsman in achieving the Millennium Development Goals through the promotion of Good Governance and the fight against corruption, the Executive Secretary also seized the opportunity to remind the audience that the Ombudsman of Tanzania, the very first Ombudsman Office to be established in Africa, was to celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2016. This was said in the context of AOMA's support to CHRAGG to host the 11th IOI World Conference.

Before concluding her address, the Executive Secretary informed the audience that the African Ombudsman Research Centre had recently published a book on the history of the Association and the institution of the Ombudsman in Africa.

The Executive Secretary's Report also elicited discussion on:

- Request for audited AOMA Financial Reports
- Explanation on the upgrade of the position of AORC Director, and why that post was not advertised as such
- Feedback on visit to Kenya as a venue for the next GA. Guinea also expressed an interest to host. AU was also mooted as a candidate.
- Status of the amendments to the AOMA Constitution
- Recognition of AOMA as an international organisation

2.3 Address by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs

According to the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, AOMA has come to the stage where it faces the challenge of reinforcing its visibility and its structures in the pursuit of its mission. In order to achieve this, AOMA has to prove itself as an organisation capable of integrating the AU's framework of values and principles. For her, AOMA's recent efforts in associating the AU in its regular activities are proof that the Association is on the right path.

2.4 Address by the Acting Speaker of Parliament of Angola

In his official opening address, H.E. Honourable Dr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, the Acting Speaker of Parliament of Angola, expressed his gratitude for all the entities present at the ceremony. His appreciation went to both Angolan and international delegations, whose presence was according to him the proof of the growing interest in the figure of the Ombudsman, on the national as well as the international stage.

The Acting Speaker of Parliament seized the same opportunity to commend the role of the Angolan *Provedor de Justiça* in the defence of the citizen's rights, the promotion of good governance, the consolidation of peace and democratic rule. He therefore encouraged all other Ombudsmen in their daily challenges while discharging their respective mandates.

Before he declared the meeting officially opened, the Acting Speaker of Parliament wished to all AOMA Executive Committee Members fruitful discussions for the following days.

3 The Executive Committee Meeting (closed session)

The actual meeting of the Executive Committee began in the afternoon of the 18th of March, 2013 and lasted for two days.

Once the agenda was adopted and the quorum verified, the Executive Committee Members held discussions on the following items:

- i. The President's report
- ii. The Executive Secretary's report
- iii. The Regional Representatives reports
- iv. The vacancies among the Executive Committee's office bearers
- v. The programme of activities in the framework of AU/AOMA cooperation
- vi. The situation in Mali and the role of the AU/AOMA in the efforts for reconstruction and stabilisation
- vii. Preparations for the 4th AOMA General Assembly Meeting
- viii. The new Constitution of AOMA
- ix. Honorary titles to be awarded to former members and partners of AOMA
- x. The training activities by the African Ombudsman Research Centre (AORC)
- xi. The cooperation between AOMA and IOI
- xii. The organisation in Tanzania of the 11th World Conference of the IOI

PRESENTATION OF REGIONAL REPORTS

- a Indian Ocean (Adv Hatteea)
- b West Africa (Mr Tanon)
- c Southern Africa (Mrs Sokoni)
- d North Africa (Judge Abuzeid)

4 Conclusions and Resolutions of the Executive Committee

At the end of the meeting, the following decisions were taken by adopted resolutions:

4.1 On the vacancies among the Executive Committee office bearers

- 4.1.1 The Mediator of the Republic of Burkina Faso, Mrs Alima Deborah Traoré, was elected as the new 1st Vice President of AOMA.
- 4.1.2 The Inspector General of Government of Uganda, Mrs Irene Mulyagonja KAKOOZA was elected as the new 2nd Vice President of AOMA.
- 4.1.3 The Chief Ombudsman of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Mrs Foziya Amin, was elected as AOMA's Permanent Representative at the African Union.

4.2 On the cooperation between the AU and AOMA

- 4.2.1 The Operational Framework for the Implementation of the Cooperation Agreement between AOMA and the AU was adopted by the Executive Committee as presented by the representative of the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs.
- 4.2.2 The same framework shall be tabled at the 4th General Assembly Meeting for final ratification before it is used as the legal framework for the drafting of a calendar of joint activities.
- 4.2.3 The participation of the AU Political Affairs Department as well as the contributions of the representative of the AU Legal Affairs Office were noted with satisfaction;

4.3 On the situation in Mali

- 4.3.1 Joint efforts among the office of the President of AOMA, the Executive Secretariat, the Regional Coordinator for West Africa, the African Ombudsman Research Centre as well as the AU Political Affairs Department will be implemented in order to define the best approach vis-à-vis the situation in Mali.
- 4.3.2 This decision concerns Mali as well as other African countries in crisis, namely Libya, Guinea Bissau, the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as the Central African Republic.

4.4 On the preparations for the 4th General Assembly Meeting

- 4.4.1 As far as the choice of the venue is concerned, two options were retained: the headquarters of the AU (Addis Ababa) or Kenya.
- 4.4.2 Considering that Kenya just came of an election period and that the AU option cannot be immediately confirmed prior to approval by the AU Protocol Services, a technical mission will visit the two venues before reporting back to the Executive Committee.
- 4.4.3 On provisional basis, the Executive Committee recommended that the 4th General Assembly Meeting be held either at the end of August 2013 or during the month of October 2013. The Executive Secretary undertook to follow up on Guinea's expression of interest to host the next GA.

4.5 On the drafting of the new Constitution of AOMA

- 4.5.1 A draft was compiled through the contributions of the Ethiopian Chief Ombudsman, the Ombudsman of Namibia and the African Ombudsman Research Centre (AORC); more contributions shall be sought from other members of AOMA before the final draft is submitted to the AU Legal Affairs Office for compatibility assessment in the light of AOMA/AU growing partnership.
- 4.5.2 Once the compatibility is confirmed with the AU's legal principles, the final draft will be submitted to the General Assembly for final ratification.

4.6 On the Honorary Titles to be awarded to the former Members and Partners of AOMA

- 4.6.1 A nomination process shall be implemented so as to allow all AOMA Members to nominate former members and partners who deserve special recognition.
- 4.6.2 The Secretariat shall compile a list of nominations, submit it to the Executive Committee for assessment before the final list is submitted to the General Assembly for approbation.

4.7 On the next training session of Ombudsman and their personnel

Following the report by the Executive Secretary on the AORC training activities, it was decided that in collaboration with the IOI – Africa Region, a training session on Investigation Techniques shall be organised in Zambia; dates and venue shall be confirmed at a later stages.

4.8 On the establishment of a permanent seat for AOMA

Following repeated appeals by the Executive Secretary that any interested member countries submit their proposal for the hosting of a permanent seat for AOMA, no feedback has been received so far; due to the importance of the matter, the Executive Committee recommended that this be referred to the General Assembly for further consideration. In the meantime, the seat shall be hosted by the Executive Secretary.

4.9 On the cooperation between AOMA and the IOI

A draft Memorandum of Understanding between AOMA and the IOI was presented by the Executive Secretary; the Executive Committee approved the draft with minor amendments, and decided that it shall be translated into the official languages, and then signed by the Presidents of AOMA and the IOI.

4.10 On the organisation in Tanzania of the 11th World Conference of the IOI

The Executive Committee approved and supported the Business Plan presented by the Ombudsman of Tanzania, Honourable Judge Amiri Manento; the hosting of the conference was approved as an AOMA/Tanzania joint project and the Executive Committee resolved that AOMA shall support the Tanzanian Ombudsman within the limits of AOMA's financial and technical means.

DONE IN LUANDA
25 MARCH 2013

APPROVED AND SIGNED

PAULO TJIPILICA
PRESIDENT OF AOMA