

I.O.I. Newsletter

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December 2009



William Angrick

We have had a very productive first quarter year for the new I.O.I. Our new Beginning has seen continuation of our web site, the publication of the first newsletter from Austria and most recently the successful inaugural meeting of the new Board of directors in Vienna.

From November 18 through November 20 both the new I.O.I. Board of Directors and the Board of Directors of I.O.I. Canada met in the facilities especially prepared for the I.O.I. by the Austrian Ombudsman Board. The rooms and space are wonderful and will easily suit our needs for many, many years to come.

As the Board met for the first time we got to know one another better and early in the meeting we were communicating easily and directly. We were warmly welcomed to our new offices by the full Austrian Ombudsman Board with gracious comments.

Secretary General Peter Kostelka introduced the I.O.I. administrative staff to the Board and we had many opportunities to interact and get to know them during the meeting and the associated events.

We received updated financial reports from David Percy and Gord Button and finalized actions to allow our fiscal decisions to be carried out from Austria with active participation electronically from the Treasurer and other officers of the Board.

The Board received updated membership reports from Alice Tai and Peter Kostelka. Some decisions were made and I appointed a Bylaws and Governance Committee to be chaired by Mats Melin and comprised of Arlene Brock, Bev Wakem, Rafael Ribó, Gord Button, with two additional members to be named by the regional vice presidents of Asia and Africa.

I asked the Secretary General serve as an ex officio member on all standing and special committee and that Secretariat staff be available to assist those committees with their research and other duties.

In Vienna the Nominations and Elections Committee met, chaired by Tom Frawley. There was much discussion and the future final report to be presented by this commit-

tee to the full Board promises very desirable changes to be offered for the selection and election of our officers. Further communications will take place among the committee members with a concrete set of recommendations emerging for Board consideration in 2010. In addition to Tom, this committee is comprised of Arlene Brock, Caroline Sokoni, Javed Malik, Bev Wakem, and Gord Button.

We discussed how to best meet the needs of our members both with the remaining funds of I.O.I. Canada as that organization winds down; and the new I.O.I. which will enjoy the benefit of being able to invest most of the future membership fees toward direct membership service.

Remaining volumes of I.O.I. publications in the inventory of I.O.I. Canada will be shipped to established regionally based ombudsman libraries and research centres. This action will ensure a continued existence and availability of I.O.I. publications globally and for years to come. These actions are in addition to the gifting of Edmonton's extensive collection of I.O.I. publications and ombudsman related publications to the University of Alberta Library where they will be indexed and available for researchers and practitioners through interlibrary loan.

Decisions were made to earmark any remaining I.O.I. Canada funds for a future membership project and I appointed a I.O.I. Training committee to consider and recommend an active schedule of I.O.I. sponsored training programs.

Peter Kostelka, Mats Melin, Alice Tai, Rafael Ribó, Arlene Brock and I reported on our activities and experiences attending various regional ombudsman meetings and conferences since the 2009 World Ombudsman Conference in Stockholm. These opportunities took place in Sao Paulo and

Brasilia, Brazil; Bangkok, Thailand; and Florence, Italy including opportunities to meet with officers and members of the Association of Brazilian Ombudsman, the national "Ouvidores" of Brazil, the Asian Ombudsman Association, and the European Ombudsman Institute

We ended this historic inaugural meeting of the I.O.I. Board of Directors deciding to hold our 2010 annual Board meeting in Bermuda.



William Angrick
President of the I.O.I.



Peter Kostelka

Autumn 2009 was characterised by additional transition activities as well as the preparation of the Board meeting in Vienna. In October the General Secretariat moved into its new locality in the former ball room of the palais in which the Austrian Ombudsman Board is located. The newly equipped offices are spread out over nearly 200 square meters. The I.O.I. archives were shipped from Canada to Austria and have also found their new home in Vienna.

The new I.O.I. headquarters already attracted international visitors and delegations. Among them was the Control Yuan of Taiwan on 23 October 2009, the new Public Protector of the Republic of South Africa on 10 November 2009 and the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia on 17 November 2009.

In September another aspect of the transition phase could be successfully determined. On 17 September 2009 the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs granted the I.O.I. a privileged national legal status as international NGO.

The most important event certainly took place in November when the General Secretariat hosted a Board meeting in Vienna for the first time. The General Secretariat profited from the personal exchange and vivid debates. The Board took several far-reaching decisions which will determine the General Secretariat's working program for 2010.

Regarding membership matters I was able to inform the participants that until the end of November 2009 more than half of all memberships had been renewed for the year 2009/2010. The Board approved the introduction of a new membership register which will consequently replace the current paper directory and will be made available online during the coming year.

Several institutions have expressed their interest in joining the I.O.I. as institutional or associate member. The Board put an application procedure in place that will ensure coherent, transparent and equal standards. A new application dossier will provide the I.O.I. with essential background information on the applicant regarding its institutional independence, structure and daily practises.

The I.O.I. Board also decided to strengthen the cooperation with former members who had in the past provided valuable input to the I.O.I. but had failed to pay the 2008/2009 membership fees. The Board offers these institutions a fast track membership procedure enabling them to regain their previously held class of membership.

I.O.I. finances were a key issue on the Vienna agenda. The Treasurer suggested a budget management controlling and reporting system that provides for efficient and transparent financial structures. The Board followed his advice and defined that the Treasurer should report to the Board on a quarterly basis beginning with spring 2010. The Board also selected a company to perform the 2009/2010 external audit.

As the President pointed out in his communication, the Board agreed to designate an already existing successful training tool as the beneficiary of residual assets from I.O.I. Canada upon its dissolution. The Sharpening Your Teeth (SYT) training project was developed by the office of Om-

budsman Ontario and offers an intensive briefing on principles of investigative work and communicating with the public. Aiming at offering such training in the I.O.I. headquarters in Vienna, the General Secretariat will clarify the details with regard to logistics and estimated costs with the Ontario Ombudsman, André Marin.

Communication was another priority of the Vienna meeting. The Board agreed that the General Secretariat would set up a new website which should be up and running in summer 2010. All domains currently reserved by the I.O.I. will be prolonged for one year. In the transitional phase the President has asked I.O.I. Canada for its support in continuing the popular listserv services until summer 2010. The Board also decided on a first concrete publication project for the I.O.I. website. Thanks to the efforts of the office of the Swedish Parliamentary Ombudsmen and the office of Ombudsman Ontario, the Stockholm World Conference proceedings are currently prepared for publication. The numerous presentations will be published on the I.O.I. website.

The Board also focused on the future publication policy of the I.O.I. The scope of the I.O.I. newsletter will be broadened within the coming year and will then include more valuable input by practitioners and experts. Newly established ombudsman offices will be asked to report on their first experiences. International organizations and NGOs will be asked to contribute and the General Secretariat will provide content as well. This soft relaunch with its broadened scope will be finished off with a new layout.

Issues related to strengthening good governance and the rule of law attract a broad interdisciplinary academic interest and are directly related to the work of ombudsman institutions. The Board decided that the I.O.I. should in the future stimulate the

academic debate by introducing the new "I.O.I. Working Papers". These will be edited by the I.O.I., the selection of articles will be made by academics guaranteeing academic credibility and independence.

Another long-term project, the enhanced cooperation with international organizations, was approved as well. The Board gave the General Secretariat a mandate for further talks with the World Bank on a possible cooperation. Further meetings with the United Nations should clarify the possibilities of the I.O.I. to gain an observer status.

As you can notice from this brief summary the I.O.I. has had a productive working year 2009 and will certainly face an interesting and equally active year 2010. Let me use this occasion to thank you for your cooperation in 2009 and wish all I.O.I. members and partner institutions a peaceful and successful year 2010!



Dr. Peter Kostelka
Secretary General of the I.O.I.

I.O.I. World Conference 2012

The I.O.I. Board of Directors is now accepting expressions of interest in hosting the I.O.I.'s 10th World Conference. The Conference will be held in 2012.

Expressions of interest from Institutional Members should be sent to the General Secretariat.

OMBUDSMAN CALENDAR OF EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE BY THE MEDIATOR OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, 1 February 2010

The Mediator of the French Republic is organizing the conference “Human Rights: universal principles and regional guarantees - Arab Charter on Human Rights and European Convention on Human Rights” together with the Panthéon-Assas University and John Hopkins University. The conference will be held on 1 February 2010 in Paris. Its opening will be put under the leadership of the United Nations, the League of Arab states and the Council of Europe.

For further information and registration, please contact Stéphanie Carrère at: Stephanie.carrere@mediateur-republique.fr

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FINNISH OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTION, 11 February 2010

On the occasion of its 90th anniversary, the Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland will celebrate a jubilee on 11 February 2010 in Helsinki.

I.O.I. BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, October 2010

The next I.O.I. Board of Directors meeting will be hosted by Ms. Arlene Brock, the Ombudsman for Bermuda. The meeting is scheduled for October 2010 and more information will be circulated in due time.

I.O.I. EUROPEAN MEETING, 3-6 October 2010

The European Region of the I.O.I. will hold a meeting in Barcelona on 3 – 6 October 2010. The conference will focus on “Europe as an open society: A global and inclusive vision of the migration phenomenon within our countries”.

For further information, please contact: ioieurope@sindic.cat

USOA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 6-8 October 2010

The 2010 Annual Conference of the United States Ombudsman Association will be held at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Dayton, Ohio, October 6 – 8, 2010.

For more details contact Diane Welborn at welborn@dayton-ombudsman.org.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Do you wish to spread information on an upcoming conference, meeting or event that your institution is organizing?

Please contact the I.O.I. General Secretariat (ioi@volksanw.gv.at) and your event will be announced in the next newsletter edition.

OMBUDSMAN NEWS

will continue the close cooperation between the CCAC and the I.O.I.

<http://www.ccac.org.mo>

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON CHIEF OMBUDSMAN

Papua New Guinea Ombudsman Chronox Manek was shot and seriously wounded in an assassination attempt outside his Port Moresby home on 11 December 2009.

The I.O.I. condemns the shooting of Chief Ombudsman Manek, who is known to be a dedicated fighter against corruption. Mr. Manek's fate has shown that an ombudsman who takes his task seriously, also takes a personal risk.

As a first reaction, a message by President William Angrick and Secretary General Peter Kostelka was sent to Mr. Manek to express their concern on behalf of the I.O.I. The international ombudsman family hopes that he will recover quickly and continue to carry out his important work. The I.O.I. is proud of having such a courageous ombudsman on its Board of Directors.

MACAO: COMMISSIONER'S TERM ENDS

Mr. Cheong U will leave the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) as his term ended on 19 December 2009. He will serve as Secretary of Social Affairs and Culture.

Mr. Cheong U expressed his gratitude to the I.O.I. for providing continued support to the CCAC and emphasized that he appreciated the opportunity to form an integral part of the I.O.I. as a member of the Board. He expressed his belief that his successor

ITALY: NEW LAW ABOLISHES LOCAL OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTIONS

The Italian government approved a new law, according to which towns and communities will have to abolish their local ombudsman institutions. As a consequence, all local ombudsman institutions will gradually cease to exist after the next election of the corresponding city council.

Local ombudsman institutions are of major importance to the public as Italy does not have a national ombudsman and regional ombudsman institutions only exist in some parts of the country. In a statement submitted to the I.O.I., Vittorio Gasparini indicates on behalf of Mr. Morales, Ombudsman of the Tuscany Region, that this new regulation might violate the Italian Constitution, which grants autonomy to every town. This enables towns to provide the legal basis for an ombudsman institution through their local constitution.

The Italian government justified this step with the necessity of reducing costs at a time when some regions had already agreed on cutting costs by installing only one ombudsman institution representing several towns.

In a letter to the Italian Ombudsman Coordination, the European RVP Rafael Ribó expressed on behalf of the I.O.I. his concerns with regard to the future of local ombudsman institutions in Italy and pointed out the important democratic role that local ombudsman institutions fulfil when controlling public administration.

More detailed information on the I.O.I. position can be found on the I.O.I.'s website www.theioi.com.

MEXICO: NEW PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

On 17 November 2009 the Senate of the United States of Mexico has distinguished Dr. Raúl Plascencia Villanueva to chair the Mexican National Human Rights Commission, for a five year term.

Mr. Plascencia Villanueva reiterated his commitment to work closely with institutions such as the I.O.I. and is looking forward to share experiences and best practices in the field of human rights and good governance.

As new chair of the Mexican National Human Rights Commission, Mr. Plascencia Villanueva designated Ambassador Luis Ortiz Monasterio to be the new Executive Secretary of the institution.

<http://www.cndh.org.mx>

NEW OMBUDSWOMAN FOR VORARLBERG (AUSTRIA)

Gabriele Strele was elected by the Parliament of the Land Vorarlberg as new Ombudswoman and took up office on 30 October 2009 following Dr. Felix Dünser who returned after his non-renewable six year term to the judiciary.

Gabriele Strele previously worked in the field of adult education and in private law practise. She has completed training as a mediator and is Vice President of the Austrian Family Association. Gabriele Strele

earned a law degree from the University of Innsbruck.

Ombudswoman Strele is now responsible for complaints relating to the administration of the country and communities within Vorarlberg. In addition she acts as Treasurer of the European Ombudsman Institute in Innsbruck.

<http://landesvolksanwalt.at>

SOUTH AFRICA: NEW PUBLIC PROTECTOR TAKES OFFICE

Advocate Thulisile (Thuli) Nomkhosi Madonsela, was appointed by the President as South Africa's third Public Protector in October 2009 after being recommended by Parliament following a hundred percent vote in her favour by all parties represented in Parliament.

A human rights and constitutional lawyer, equality expert and policy specialist with over two decades of post legal qualification experience, Advocate Madonsela had previously been the only full-time Commissioner in the South African Law Reform Commission. One of the drafters of South Africa's post apartheid constitution, Advocate Madonsela is also co-architect of Justice Vision 2000, the National Action Plan on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. Advocate Madonsela holds a BA Law (UNISWA) and an LLB (Wits).

<http://www.publicprotector.org>

AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA: NEW OMBUDSMAN

The Parliament of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina elected Mr. Dejan Janca as the new Provincial Ombudsman of Vojvodina on its meeting held on 15 October 2009. Mr. Janca was elected with 104 MP

votes in his favor and will replace Mr. Petar Teofilovic, after a six-year mandate.

Mr. Janca has previously had a professional career in human rights protection both internationally and locally. Amongst others, he was the head of the Public International Law Department of the Law School of the University of Novi Sad, a member of the UN Human Rights Committee in New York as well as the ambassador of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in Hungary.

<http://www.ombudsmanapv.org>

SOUTH KOREA: NEW HEAD OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

In August 2009 Yang Kun, the first chief of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission, resigned for personal reasons. He returned to Hanyang University where he had previously served as a law professor.

The new Chairman of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission Jae Oh Lee took office as of 30 September 2009. Jae Oh Lee was member of the 15th, 16th and 17th National Assembly and served in various important functions such as Chairman of the special Committee on political reform and Supreme Council Member, GNP, as well as special messenger of President-elect Lee in 2008. He graduated from the School of Economics, Joongang University and holds a Honorary Doctor of Political Science, Chung-Ang University.

<http://www.acrc.go.kr>

CAYMAN ISLANDS: NEW OMBUDSWOMAN APPOINTED

In June 2009 United Kingdom lawyer Nicola Williams was appointed by the Office of the Governor as the new Complaints Commissioner for the Cayman Islands Government. Ms. Williams, who is a former Commissioner with the Independent Police Commission for London and the South East in England, replaced Dr. John Epp who held the post for the past three years.

Ms. Williams has over eight years of experience investigating, mediating and resolving complaints and worked nearly 16 years as a Barrister in private practice. Ms. Williams has a law degree from the University of the South Bank in London.

<http://www.occ.gov.ky>

CONTRIBUTE TO THE OMBUDSMAN NEWS

The I.O.I. General Secretariat is trying to monitor all changes in I.O.I. member offices and partner institutions. In case your institution wishes to contribute to this section of the newsletter please send a brief text to the I.O.I. General Secretariat at ioi@volksanw.gv.at.

VIENNA BOARD MEETING – OFFICIAL FAMILY PHOTO



The official family photo of the Vienna I.O.I. Board of Directors meeting comprises (from left to right): Caroline Sokoni (Zambia), Secretary General Dr. Peter Kostelka (Austria), Lynette Stephenson (Trinidad & Tobago), President William P. Angrick II (USA/Iowa), RVP Arlene Brock (Bermuda), Treasurer Gord Button (Canada/Alberta), RVP Beverley Wakem (New Zealand), RVP André Marin (Canada/Ontario), Tou Wai-fong representing Cheong U (Macau), Mafarma Sanogo representing Amina Quédraogo (Burkina Faso), Giorgos Kaminis (Greece), RVP Rafael Ribó (Spain/Catalunya), Chronox Manek (Papua New Guinea), Alan Lai (Hong Kong); Vice President Mats Melin (Sweden), Jaechoong Lee (Korea), Dr. Tom Frawley (UK/Northern Ireland).

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