



international relations
& cooperation

Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**THE AFRICAN OMBUDSMAN RESEARCH CENTRE (AORC)
A RESEARCH AND TRAINING ARM OF
THE AFRICAN OMBUDSMAN AND MEDIATORS ASSOCIATION (AOMA)
IN COLLABORATION
WITH THE INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTE (IOI)**

- Cordially invite you to a special webinar in celebration of Ombuds Day 2026 -

**INNOVATING FOR THE FUTURE: TECHNOLOGY, TRANSPARENCY AND
ACCOUNTABILITY IN OMBUDSMAN OFFICES**

Technology is changing how Ombudsman institutions receive complaints, manage cases, communicate with the public and report on their work. Digital tools can improve access and efficiency, but their use must protect confidential information, preserve fairness and serve people who cannot use digital channels.

In celebration of Ombuds Day 2026 and its theme, "Ombuds: Office of Options," this webinar brings together practitioners from different regions to explore how technology can help Ombudsman institutions offer more accessible services and strengthen public accountability.

✦ This webinar will explore:

- ✓ Digital case management and responsible automation
- ✓ The use of data and digital tools for transparency and public reporting
- ✓ Cybersecurity, data protection and human oversight
- ✓ Digital inclusion and practical approaches to sustainable innovation

Participants will gain practical insights into using technology to improve complaint handling, identify recurring issues and communicate institutional work, while maintaining accessibility and public trust.

Who Should Attend: Ombudsman, Ombudsman office staff, ICT personnel, case management and data practitioners, oversight actors, and professionals interested in digital transformation and public accountability.

PLEASE CLICK ON THE RSVP LINK IF YOU WISH TO JOIN THE WEBINAR

DATE

TUESDAY, 06 OCTOBER 2026

TIME

10H00 – 11H30 SA (GMT + 2)

SPEAKERS

SPEAKER 1 – MS LIIRI OJA

**SENIOR ADVISER ON AI AND HUMAN RIGHTS, OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR OF JUSTICE - ESTONIA
Digital Case Management and Responsible Automation**

SPEAKER 2 – ADV. OFFER GELBART

**CRM AND BUSINESS SYSTEMS MANAGER, ISRAEL OMBUDSMAN OFFICE
Technology for Transparency and Reporting**

SPEAKER 3 – DRA. LUTIANA VALADARES FERNANDES BARBOSA

**DEFENSORIA PÚBLICA DA UNIÃO, BRAZIL
Innovation for Public Accountability**

FACILITATOR

PROF. MANOJ MAHARAJ

PROFESSOR IN THE DISCIPLINE OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY

[CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)

Please note that there will be no live question and answers due to time constraints. Participants may however submit relevant questions to Franky Lwelela (FrankyAorc@pprotect.org) or Marion Adonis (MarionAorc@pprotect.org) by 10:00 on Monday, 05 October 2026 or use the Q & A function during the webinar. Time has been allocated for a response to questions raised before and during the session. If there is insufficient time to respond to all, the questions and answers will be posted on our website www.aoma.ukzn.ac.za.

ENQUIRIES ONLY

Marion Adonis

Email : MarionAORC@pprotect.org



Franky Lwelela

Email : FrankyAORC@pprotect.org

SPEAKER & FACILITATOR PROFILES



Ms Liiri Oja (PhD) – Senior Adviser on Human Rights and Technology, Office of the Chancellor of Justice of Estonia. Ms Oja is recommended based on her specialised expertise in artificial intelligence, human rights, cybersecurity and the responsible use of technology. She holds an LL.M. from Georgetown University, where she studied as a Fulbright Scholar, and a PhD in Law from the European University Institute. She also serves as a member of the Standing Committee on Cybersecurity of the Estonian Academy of Sciences.

Adv. Offer Gelbart has over twenty years of experience in Administrative Law, information systems development, and data analytics. He holds an LL.B. and a B.A. in Business Administration (Finance) from Reichman University, as well as an LL.M. in Commercial Law from Tel Aviv University. Since joining the Israel Ombudsman's Office in 2005, he has investigated complex complaints regarding government ministries and local authorities while playing a central role in driving the digital transformation of the Office. Since 2024 he is the CRM & Business Systems Manager of the Ombudsman Office. In this capacity he oversees all core business technologies, leading cutting-edge initiatives including AI integration into complaint intake and handling workflows and omnichannel communication platforms. In addition, since 2018 he has been responsible for leading the Office's data analytics for annual and special reports, in close collaboration with the Central Bureau of Statistics.



Dr Lutiana Valadares serves as a Federal Public Defender in Brazil, and was a Visiting Professional at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR/OAS). She is also Co-Coordinator of the Research Group on Ethics, Human Rights, and Artificial Intelligence at ENADPU. Currently working on a book on Women Peace and Security and AI. Postdoctoral Researcher at the O'Neill Institute at Georgetown Law and Visiting Researcher and faculty member at Center for Latin American Studies at Georgetown University SFS. She completed her postdoctoral studies at Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) and holds a PhD in International Law from UFMG. LL.M. degrees from Columbia University and Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais (PUC Minas).

Professor Manoj Maharaj is a highly respected figure in the School of Management, IT, and Governance at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. With a remarkable career spanning over thirty years, he has made a lasting impact in academia. As a Professor in the Discipline of Information Systems & Technology, Prof. Maharaj's expertise shines brightly. His extensive experience encompasses leadership and management positions in higher education and training institutions. He possesses a profound understanding of legislation policies and procedures pertaining to state-owned enterprises (SOEs), establishing him as a sought-after authority in this field. Prof. Maharaj's knowledge of the ever-evolving ICT sector is unparalleled. His in-depth research and numerous publications have significantly contributed to advancing knowledge and innovation. Beyond his achievements, Prof. Maharaj is passionate about fostering the growth of future scholars. He has played a pivotal role in developing intellectual capacity, empowering aspiring minds to explore new frontiers and challenge existing boundaries. Prof. Maharaj began his academic journey by earning a BSc (Hons) from the University of Durban-Westville (UDW). He further enhanced his education with an MSc from the University of the Witwatersrand, culminating in completing a PhD from the University of Natal. These achievements solidify his esteemed position within the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Through his unwavering dedication to education, research, and leadership, Professor Manoj Maharaj inspires generations of scholars, illuminating the path toward excellence.

