

I.O.I. Newsletter

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William Angrick

This issue of the International Ombudsman Institute newsletter marks one of the first official administrative acts of our newly relocated Institute offices in Vienna, Austria. Realization of this accomplishment has been the combined work of many people. In an attempt to avoid confusion, I will try to consistently reference the two organizations as I.O.I. and I.O.I. Canada.

As I have advised in previous newsletters and as many of you heard during the General Assembly of our membership in Stockholm at the World Conference, the day-to-day and future activity of the I.O.I. will now take place in the offices of the Secretariat under the directorship of Secretary General Peter Kostelka. The I.O.I. is governed by me as President, Vice President Mats Melin, Treasurer Gord Button of Alberta, the six Regional Vice Presidents,

and the elected members of the Board of Directors. The Secretariat of the Institute is managed by Secretary General Peter Kostelka and his staff. I will let Peter introduce his staff and outline the Secretariat's structure for you himself.

I introduced the newly elected Board of Directors and officers in my June newsletter column. Since that time I have received the resignation from the Board of Bruce Barbour of New South Wales, Australia. Beverly Wakem of New Zealand will succeed Bruce as Regional Vice President, and the Australasia & Pacific Region will hold an election to fill the vacancy.

The I.O.I. will also continue to exist and operate to a limited degree in Canada. It is our expectation that the relocation and the start up of the I.O.I. in Austria will be seamless and that the winding down of the I.O.I. in Canada will require little effort. As has been previously communicated, at the end of the year Diane Callan will leave her position as Administrator. I.O.I. Canada is being governed by a streamlined Board of Directors including myself as President, Vice President Mats Melin of Sweden, Sec-

retary Alice Tai, David Percy of the Faculty of Law at the University of Alberta, and the Regional Vice Presidents. As the existence of the I.O.I. as an operating legal entity in Canada winds down and its physical location at the University of Alberta in Edmonton draws to a close, I once again wish to thank the Law School of the University of Alberta, Diane Callan, and Linda Reif for their years of contribution to our organization.

Publications Editor Linda Reif resigned her position in June and returned to the Law School faculty on a full-time basis. The remaining I.O.I. Yearbook should be published and distributed before the end of 2009. Additionally André Marin and the Ontario Ombudsman office have offered to work with World Conference host Mats Melin to produce a volume of the papers and presentations from Stockholm.

Accompanied by Christine Stockhammer, I.O.I. Secretary General Peter Kostelka travelled to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, in August to meet with I.O.I. Canada Administrator Diane Callan and I.O.I. Canada Treasurer David Percy to identify and coordinate the transfer of the Institute's records and archives to Vienna.

On their return Peter and Christine travelled to New York City to meet with officials of the United Nations in order to explore future cooperative endeavors. From New York they travelled to Washington, DC, for several meetings with officials of the World Bank exploring the possibilities of funding and other cooperative efforts with the Bank. I was able to travel to DC and join Peter and Christine for one full day of meetings. Our meetings were quite informative, and there is a distinct possibility some manner of relationship will develop from the exchanges we had. The primary substantive discussions involved finding

funding for an international extension of the comparative legal benchmarking study which was conducted by Professor Gabriele Kucsko-Stadlmayer and supported by the Austrian National Bank, the Austrian Ombudsman Board, and European Region of the I.O.I., and the development of an ombudsman staff training program to be offered

I have called for a special meeting of the I.O.I. Board of Directors to be held in Vienna November 19 and 20, 2009. At that time we will be able to tend to the matters requiring Board attention and will be introduced to the offices and staff of our Secretariat.

As part of the start up activities in our new Secretariat, members will shortly be receiving invoices for membership fees to be paid to the administrative offices now in Austria. As noted in the June newsletter, all members who were paid up as of June 30, 2009, will continue as members in the status they held at that time. Lapsed memberships will need to make new application.

The legal business of the I.O.I. Canada and I.O.I. Austria are proceeding with appropriate papers and applications being filed and actions being taken to wind down and start up. A new web site has been launched, and efforts are underway to identify and prioritize other services for you, our members. New membership inquiries, questions about the Institute, and the services and support the I.O.I. can provide should now be directed to our offices in Vienna.



William Angrick
President of the I.O.I.



Peter Kostelka

Following the landmark decisions of I.O.I. members in Stockholm this International Ombudsman Institute newsletter reaches you for the first time from the newly relocated Institute offices in Vienna. On this occasion I would like to thank all members who have played an active role in this relocation process and helped taking this important step: Along with the former board which has been a valuable partner it is specifically due to the commitment of the executive committee and the representatives of I.O.I. Canada, Alice Tai, David Percy and Diane Callan that we are able to smoothly realise the relocation process.

But it was also the broad political support and financial commitment in Austria that made it possible for the Austrian Ombudsmanboard to offer the I.O.I. a new home: the Federal President, both Chambers of Parliament, the Federal Government and the city of Vienna contributed to this success. I am also grateful for the cooperation by my two fellow members of the Austrian Ombudsman Board, Gertrude Brinek and Terezija Stoisits, and extend my thanks to staff members Adelheid Pacher, Michael Mauerer and Reinhard Binder-Krieglstein for their support. Following intensive preparations the I.O.I. General Secretariat could therefore take up its position on 1 September 2009 as decided in Stockholm.

Let me outline for you the three priorities of the Secretariat for the coming weeks and months: first, it will finalise the transition period and put the necessary infrastructure

in place, second, it will open up new communication channels with its members and third, it will prepare the coming board meeting during which a broad range of items will be discussed.

Finalising the relocation was at the core of my visit to Edmonton where Christine Stockhammer and I gained overview over the existing archives and disposable material. With the support of David Percy and Diane Callan we were able to identify the material that should be shipped to Vienna in order to be stored there in new institutional archive of the I.O.I. We followed a detailed checklist which the General Secretariat had prepared in cooperation with the Executive Committee. Several items, among them the historic overview of all board meeting minutes and financial records will be newly arranged, completed and then transferred to Vienna.

As you might know already the Austrian Ombudsman Board installed a Unit for international affairs and communication which will also act as I.O.I. General Secretariat. Let me very briefly introduce to you the team that will be handling the every day business in the Secretariat: Christine Stockhammer who is Head of Unit has an extensive experience in international relations and was a government spokesperson before joining the Austrian Ombudsman Board. Ursula Bachler has been a valuable staff member of the Volksanwaltschaft already for several years dealing with international affairs. Karin Wagenbauer has joined the Austrian Ombudsman Board in August and has extensive experience in the private sector. From now on the General Secretariat will be able to communicate with members in all three official I.O.I. languages with each of them being covered by two staff members.

Back in Vienna I could see real progress regarding the infrastructure. I am glad to inform you that the General Secretariat is currently moving into its new premises at the Austrian Ombudsman Board. The offices and conference facilities are spread out over nearly 200 square meters and include new technical facilities as well. I am convinced that the premises will be the perfect surrounding for hosting the next Board meeting in November. Next to the representative office space the Secretariat disposes of sufficient storage capacity in which the Edmonton archives will be kept in the future.

Among other important issues I deem it specifically necessary to enforce the communication channels with the members in the coming months. We have therefore installed a provisional website on the domain www.theioi.com that provides information on the "new" I.O.I. All members will receive a communication in the coming weeks in which they will be invited to log into a secure area where they can communicate their contact details to the Secretariat. This information will be the keystone for the future member database. Further decisions on the website will be taken during the Vienna meeting.

Preparing the Vienna Board meeting is currently clearly the third priority. In addition to the organisational side I deem it the task of the Secretary General to lay the ground for necessary debates and decisions of the Board. Certain issues for the agenda have already emerged such as the first financial report and the selection of an external auditor as well as potential changes in election procedures and the future of I.O.I. publications. The decision of Austrian authorities to grant the International Ombudsman Institute a national NGO status will be due in November as well. In addition, possible cooperation pro-

jects with international organisations will also be on the table.

As the President already mentioned Christine and I had fruitful talks with the UN at the end of August which focused on the questions how the I.O.I. could be involved in UN activities that are of specific interest for its Ombudsman members. The Assistant Secretary General providing legal advice to the Secretary General will continue communication with the I.O.I. on the question how official relations between the UN and the I.O.I. could best be established and which form of observer status might be suitable for the I.O.I.

The World Bank meetings focused on the question how the I.O.I. with its specific expertise could become a valuable partner for the World Bank in the framework of its "Good Governance" focus. The President and I emphasised the importance of a comparative analysis of Ombudsman institutions and their legal foundations which already exists for Europe but needs to be realised as well for the other world regions. The importance of regional trainings for ombudsman staff on specific issues was also highlighted. Although the road to a concrete cooperation is still long I have sensed a strong interest of these two important international organisations in the work of the International Ombudsman Institute.

I am looking very forward to our common projects and am of course always available for your valuable input and comments.



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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, I.O.I. EUROPEAN REGION, September 19-22, 2009

The directors of the European Region of the I.O.I. met in Belfast, Northern Ireland, U.K., from September 20th to 22nd, 2009.

USOA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, September 28 - October 2, 2009

The 2009 annual conference of the United States Ombudsman Association is being held on September 28 - October 2, 2009 at the Holiday Inn at Rocky Mountain Park, Estes Park, Colorado.

Marilyn Young, Ombudsman with College Assist Neinet Guarantor Solutions is hosting this event. She can be contacted at: (303) 305 3274.

Also contact Gerald Papica, USOA Conferences and Training Committee Chair at 1-800-264-0904.

For your information:

<http://www.usombudsman.org/> will take you to the link for the conference and the conference program can be found at <http://usoa.non-profitsites.biz/>

REGIONAL MEETING, I.O.I. NORTH AMERICA, September 30, 2009

During the USOA Annual Conference in Estes Park, Colorado, a Regional Meeting of North American I.O.I. Members is being held. Contact Wendy Ray, Acting Deputy Ombudsman/Senior Counsel at

wray@ombudsman.on.ca, if you would like to raise specific issues or topics for discussion.

EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTE (EOI) GENERAL ASSEMBLY, October 5, 2009

The General Assembly of the European Ombudsman Institute (EOI) will meet in Florence, Italy on October 5, 2009.

Further information at: eoit@tirol.com

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE IBERO-AMERICAN OMBUDSMAN FEDERATION, October 27-30, 2009

The 2009 annual conference of the Ibero-American Ombudsman Federation will take place in Madrid, Spain, from October 27th to 30th, 2009.

11TH ASIAN OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE, November 2-5, 2009

The 11th Asian Ombudsman Association conference will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, November 2-5, 2009. The conference theme is the "Role of the Ombudsman in the Process of Public Sector Reforms towards Good Governance".

Detailed information and registration at: www.aoa2009.com or contact the conference secretariat at secretariat@aoa2009.com

200 YEARS OF OMBUDSMAN CONFERENCE, November 4-6, 2009

A conference on "200 Years of Ombudsman" will be held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, November 4-6, 2009.

For registration and information: even-tos@prociadania.org.br

Website: www.prociadania.org.br

I.O.I. BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, November 19-21, 2009

An I.O.I. Board of Directors Meeting will be held at the I.O.I. General Secretariat in Vienna, Austria, November 19-21, 2009.

Further information at: ioi@volksanw.gv.at

15TH ANNIVERSARY OF WALLOON OMBUDSMAN - INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM "MEDIATISATION", November 24-25, 2009

On the occasion of its 15th anniversary, the Walloon Region's Ombudsman is organizing the International symposium "MEDIATISATION" in Namur, Belgium, from November 24th to 25th, 2009. The official languages for the symposium will be French, English and Spanish.

Registrations by email to David Dannevoye: colloque@mediateur.wallonie.be

Please note that the deadline for registration is September 30, 2009.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CZECH PUBLIC DEFENDER OF RIGHTS, November 26-27, 2009

The Czech Public Defender of Rights will be hosting an international conference on

"Transparent Public Administration" in Brno, Czech Republic, November 26-27, 2009.

SHARPENING YOUR TEETH ADVANCED INVESTIGATIVE TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE WATCHDOGS, November 30 - December 2, 2009

The Ontario Ombudsman's Office will be offering the third annual iteration of "Sharpening Your Teeth: Advanced Investigative Training for Administrative Watchdogs", in Toronto, Canada, November 30 - December 2, 2009.

Information and registration at:

www.ombudsman.on.ca

or contact Susan Mason at sma-son@ombudsman.on.ca

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALBANIAN OMBUDSMAN – INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, December 10, 2009

The People's Advocate of the Republic of Albania is organizing the conference "Human rights, Good-governance and the Performance of the Ombudsman" in Tirana, Albania, on December 10, 2009.

For further information call Anila Shyti at +355 4 2380 306.

THIRD MEETING OF THE MEDITERRANEAN OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION (MOA), December 14-15, 2009

The Third Meeting of the Mediterranean Ombudsman Association will be held in Athens, Greece, December 14-15, 2009.

Further information at:

<http://www.ombudsman-med.org/eng>

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

The European Region of the I.O.I. will hold a conference in Barcelona, Spain, October 3-6, 2010. Subject for discussion is "Europe as an open society: a global and inclusive vision of the migration phenomenon within our countries". Suggestions about topics in this field and possible Ombudsman speakers are highly appreciated.

Please send your suggestions and proposals no later than September 15th, 2010 to: ioieurope@sindic.cat

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