

AORC WEBINAR

PROTECTING WHISTLEBLOWERS:

Safeguarding Integrity and Preventing Retaliation

WEBINAR



INTERNATIONAL
OMBUDSMAN
INSTITUTE



AFRICAN
OMBUDSMAN
RESEARCH CENTRE



international relations
& cooperation
Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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KWAZULU-NATAL
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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 webinar



DATE & TIME

Tuesday,
7 July 2026

10:00

South Africa Time
(GMT+2)



LANGUAGE

Simultaneous interpretation
will be available in:

- English
- French
- Arabic
- Portuguese



SPEAKERS

- **Mr. Christian Friess** –
Ombudsman of the
Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
*International Standards and
Best Practices in Protecting
Whistleblowers*
- **Mr. Tom Millett** –
Deputy Ombudsman,
NSW Ombudsman, Australia
*Safeguarding Whistleblowers:
Approaches, Mechanisms
and Outcomes*
- **Mr. Klaas Vansteenkiste** –
Forensic Auditor,
Federal Ombudsman of Belgium
*Investigating Safely:
Protecting Identity and
Preventing Retaliation*



FACILITATOR

**Hon. Emmanuel
Sahr Tondoneh Esq.**
Ombudsman of
the Republic of
Sierra Leone



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As part of AORC's 2026 capacity-building programme, this timely webinar will explore the critical role of whistleblower protection in strengthening accountability, transparency, integrity, and good governance.

Across the world, whistleblowers continue to play a vital role in exposing corruption, fraud, maladministration, abuse of power, and other forms of wrongdoing. Yet many face retaliation, victimisation, and serious personal and professional risks after speaking up.

Ombudsman institutions are increasingly recognised as key oversight bodies in building trusted reporting systems, safeguarding whistleblowers, and ensuring institutions respond effectively to protected disclosures.

This webinar will provide practical insights into how Ombudsman institutions can strengthen whistleblower protection frameworks and contribute to safer, more accountable governance systems.

What to Expect:

- Insight into international legal and institutional frameworks for whistleblower protection.
- Practical approaches to secure reporting systems, confidentiality, and retaliation prevention.
- Understanding the Ombudsman's role in receiving disclosures, monitoring compliance, and protecting whistleblowers.
- Real-life experiences and practical lessons from leading international Ombudsman practitioners.
- Interactive engagement and peer-learning opportunities with Ombudsman institutions across regions.

This webinar forms part of AORC's broader capacity-building programme, supported through funding from the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF) of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), South Africa, in collaboration with the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI).



Please note that participants are encouraged to submit questions in advance to Franky Lwelela (FrankyAorc@pprotect.org) or Marion Adonis (MarionAorc@pprotect.org).

Participants may also submit live questions during the webinar using the Zoom Q&A function. Due to time constraints, not all questions may be addressed during the live session. Unanswered questions may be shared with panelists for possible post-webinar responses.

ENQUIRIES ONLY



Marion Adonis

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OR



Franky Lwelela

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STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY, INTEGRITY AND SAFE DISCLOSURE IN AFRICA

SPEAKER & FACILITATOR PROFILES



Mr. Christian Friess holds a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Luxembourg, a Master's degree in European Comparative Law from the University of Strasbourg, and a Master of Laws (LL.M.) from the University of Hamburg. He began his professional career as a legal officer at the Luxembourg Ministry of Justice, where he represented Luxembourg as a national expert in negotiations within the Council of the European Union. He subsequently joined Luxembourg's Office for Whistleblowers (Office des signalements), gaining extensive expertise in whistleblower protection and reporting mechanisms at both the national and international levels. In this capacity, he participated in EU expert meetings and contributed to the activities of the Network of European Integrity

and Whistleblowing Authorities (NEIWA). Since October 2025, he has been serving at the Ombudsman of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, where he continues to work on issues relating to good administration, citizens' rights, and public accountability.

Mr. Tom Millett Deputy Ombudsman, Public Interest Disclosures and Complaints Handling System Oversight BA (Hons), LLB (Hons). Tom commenced as Deputy Ombudsman, Public Interest Disclosures and Complaints Handling System Oversight in September 2025. Tom has worked in the office since 2006, with a period at the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission from 2021–23. He has worked across a range of areas, including police oversight, project and corporate roles and as Executive Officer to two former Ombudsmen. Most recently, he was the Manager of the Complaints Handling System Review Unit.



Ms. Klaas Vansteenkiste is a forensic auditor at the federal Ombudsman of Belgium, working within the Integrity Centre. He handles confidential whistleblower reports and contributes to investigations into integrity violations in the federal public sector and, in the private sector, to the assessment and coordination of reports of breaches of law with competent authorities, and to the protection of whistleblowers against retaliation. Before joining the Ombudsman, he worked as a fraud investigator for the National Investigation Unit of the Belgian Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain, where he focused on detecting and investigating food fraud.



Hon. Emmanuel Sahr Tondoneh Esq. is the Ombudsman of the Republic of Sierra Leone and a distinguished Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of Sierra Leone. He brings extensive expertise in corporate and commercial law, regulatory compliance, governance, and public accountability. He holds an LLB (Hons) from De Montfort University and an LLM (Distinction) in Corporate and Commercial Law from University of Dundee. He is also pursuing PhD research in corporate insolvency, focusing on creditor protection in cross-border proceedings. His career spans senior leadership roles in both public and private sectors, including State Counsel in the Attorney General's Chambers of Sierra Leone, Head of Legal at Sierra Rutile Limited, and senior legal advisory roles in major mining corporations. He has led and advised on landmark mergers, acquisitions, and restructuring transactions worth billions of dollars. His advisory work includes collaboration with leading international firms and institutions such as BlackRock Plc, Webber Wentzel, Freshfields, and Clyde & Co. As Ombudsman, he brings strong leadership in governance, integrity, accountability, and oversight. He is widely respected for his strategic legal insight and commitment to justice..

