

This barrier prevents them from fully participating in social, cultural, economic and political life. The global health crisis showed us clearly that there is an urgent need to strengthen the international and national mechanisms and frameworks for protecting older persons. It is essential that each country ensure a comprehensive institutional response in order to guarantee the protection of older persons' rights. International, as well as regional cooperation and coordination is also vital.

Ombudsmen play a key role in promoting and protecting the rights of older persons. Given its unique mandate, the Ombudsmen directly monitor the human rights situation of the older persons and constantly engage with national authorities and other relevant actors on states' responsibilities in relation to the protection of older persons' rights. Ombudsmen also report to regional and international organizations, and thus bridge international standards within their national frameworks.

The Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmen's (AOM) mission is the promotion and the defence of the fundamental rights in the countries of the Mediterranean basin. It allows to standardize the experiences and the initiatives of the various Ombudsman and Mediator Institutions for a collective enrichment, to strength the relations and the cooperation ties between the members. Therefore, the Office of Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia as a member of the AOM will host a Conference on "The Rights of Older Persons and the Role of Ombudsman and Mediator Institutions" together with AOM.

The main objective of the Conference is aimed primarily at exploring the unique role of Ombudsman and Mediator Institutions in promoting and protecting the rights of older persons at national, regional, as well as international levels especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, facilitating the exchange of experiences among other key national, international, and regional stakeholders. The Conference will address several important challenges faced by older persons and the actions taken by the Ombudsman and Mediator Institutions in this regard, in particular, the Conference will cover following topics:

Theme I. The Rights of Older Persons – Existing Regional and International Protection Mechanisms;

Theme II. Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Implications on Older Persons and Ombudsman/Mediator's Actions;

Theme III. Human Rights of Older Persons in Digital World: Challenges and Opportunities.

These issues have been particularly acute in recent years, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore, the event will provide an excellent opportunity for participants to discuss possibilities for improvement in respect of working methods and agreeing on comprehensive institutional and concerted actions to respond to the identified problems in an effective, consistent, and protection-sensitive manner. The Conference will be held in-person in September, though online participation will also be possible. The Conference will bring together Ombudsmen and Mediators, which are the members of the AOM, and other Ombudsman and/or networks of National Human Rights Institutions, international and national non-governmental organizations, as well as independent experts working on the rights of older persons.

The outcome of the Conference will be reflected in the Declaration to be adopted at the end of the event on measures to increase the impact of Ombudsman and Mediator Institutions through performing all range of activities that their mandate would entail with regards to the rights of older persons.

Draft Agenda

27 September 2022

Courtyard by Marriott Tbilisi

Freedom Square 4, 0105 Tbilisi, Georgia

Monday, 26 September 2022

All day	<u>Arrival of Delegations and Participants</u>
19:00	<u>Informal Gathering</u>
	<u>Location TBC</u>

Tuesday, 27 September 2022

09:30-10:00	<u>Welcome Coffee and Registration</u>
10:00-10:30	<u>Opening Ceremony: Welcome Address and Opening Statements</u>
	<u>Speakers:</u> Ms. Nino LOMJARIA, Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia Dr. Andreas POTTAKIS, The President of the Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmen (AOM), Greek Ombudsman (TBC) Mr. Chris FIELD, President of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) Ms. Debbie KOHNER, Secretary-General of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)
10:30 – 10:45	<u>Group Photo</u>
10:45 - 11:45	<u>Session I. Rights of Older Persons – Existing Regional and International Protection Mechanisms</u>

	<p><u>Moderator:</u> <i>Dr. Andreas POTTAKIS, The President of the Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmen, Greek Ombudsman (TBC)</i></p> <p><u>Speakers:</u></p> <p>UN Perspectives Speaker: TBC</p> <p>CoE Perspectives Member of the European Committee of Social Rights (TBC)</p> <p>EU Perspectives Representative of EU Fundamental Right’s Agency (FRA) (TBC)</p>
11:45-12:15	<p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> <i>Dr. Andreas POTTAKIS, The President of the Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmen, Greek Ombudsman (TBC)</i></p>
12:15 -13:30	<u>Lunch</u>
13:30 – 14:30	<p><u>Session II. Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Implications on Older Persons and Ombudsman/Mediators’ Actions</u></p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> <i>Dr. Tamar GVARAMADZE, First Deputy Public Defender of Georgia</i></p> <p>Mr. Şeref MALKOÇ, Chief Ombudsman of Turkey</p> <p>Ms. Tatjana VLAŠIĆ, Deputy Ombudswoman of Croatia</p> <p>Other speakers TBC</p>
14:30 – 15:00	<p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> <i>Dr. Tamar Gvaramadze, First Deputy Public Defender of Georgia</i></p>
15:00 – 15:30	<u>Coffee Break</u>
15:30 – 16:30	<p><u>Session III. Human Rights of Older Persons in Digital World: Challenges and Opportunities</u></p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> <i>TBC</i></p> <p>Mr. Mohamed BENALILOU, Ombudsman of the Kingdom of Morocco</p> <p>Ms. Rosemary AGNEW, Scottish Public Services Ombudsman</p>

	Other speakers TBC
16:30 – 17:00	<u>Discussion</u> <u>Moderator: TBC</u>
17:00 – 17:15	<u>Wrap Up and Closing Remarks</u> Ms. Nino LOMJARIA , Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia Dr. Andreas POTTAKIS , The President of the Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmen, Greek Ombudsman, (TBC)
17:15	<u>End of the Conference</u>
19:30	<u>Official Dinner Hosted by the Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia</u> <u>Location TBC</u>

Wednesday, 28 September 2022

<u>All day</u>	<u>Departure of Participants</u>
<u>First half of the day</u>	<u>City Tour Offered by the Office of Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia</u> <u>Mtskheta</u> Participants will gather in front of the Venue and will be transferred to Mtskheta, ancient capital of Georgia