

MINUTES

11th Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA)

Date: 2nd November, 2009

Venue: Bangkok, Thailand.

List of participants is attached.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Mr. Javed Sadiq Malik, President, Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), welcomed all members and in particular Mr. Alan N. Lai, Ombudsman, Hong Kong and Mr. Mostafa Pour Mohammadi, President, General Inspection Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran who had joined the Board of Directors for the first time. Mr. Junich Tanaka, Director General, Administrative Evaluation Bureau, Japan and Mr. Jae-Oh Lee, Chairman, Anti Corruption and Civil Rights Commission, Republic of Korea could not attend the meeting and were represented by Mr. Hideo Arai, Deputy Director General, Administrative Evaluation Bureau, Japan and Mr. Kweon-Sang Lee, Standing Commissioner, Anti Corruption and Civil Rights Commission, Republic of Korea respectively.

Agenda Item No. 1

Approval of the minutes of the last (10th) meeting of the Board of Directors held at Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, on 21-22 April, 2008.

Decision:

The minutes were approved.

Agenda Item No. 2

Approval of agenda for the present (11th) annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the AOA.

Decision:

Agenda proposed by the AOA Secretariat was approved for discussion.

Agenda Item No. 3

Implementation Report on decisions of the last (10th) meeting of the Board of Directors.

The Executive Secretary presented implementation status/ progress on the decisions taken in the last meeting of the Board.

The Board of Directors reviewed the progress in detail. The following points came up for discussion:

- i) No action was required on agenda items No.1, 2, 3, 4 & 10
- ii) On agenda items No. 7, 8, 9, 11&12, the Board noted the position and no further action was called for.
- iii) With reference to agenda item No. 13 (i), the Representative of the ACRC explained that Korea as Regional Vice President IOI, Asia Region was in the process of developing a programme for utilization of Canadian Dollars 10,000 committed by IOI to the Asia Region. The funds had however not been released so far. The Board decided to request the new Chairman ACRC to contact IOI to finalise the plan for the use of the offered funds.
- iv) On agenda item no. 14, the Members were informed that only one institution, out of 32 who were contacted for the said purpose, had responded and applied for the membership of the Association. It was felt that up-gradation of knowledge products, training activities and study tours etc. will attract new membership. Therefore, the effort to improve and propagate these activities followed by repeated contact with them should continue.
- v) On agenda item no. 15, the representative of the Republic of Korea thanked the Board of Directors for supporting the continuance of its membership after the change of nomenclature of the office of the Ombudsman, Korea to ACRC.
- vi) Agenda items No. 5, 6, 13(i) were listed as separate agenda items of the current meeting.

Agenda Item No. 4

Report of the President on the activities of the Association in terms of clause 5-5(i) of the Code of Conduct of Business of the AOA.

As per clause 5-5 (i) of the Code of Conduct of Business of the AOA, an annual report on the activities of the Association, including a report of the

activities of the AOA Secretariat, was presented by the President before the Board.

2. The Report highlighted the following activities undertaken during the year 2008-09 and emphasized on more concerted efforts and participation by the members:

- a. Knowledge sharing and dissemination through up-gradation of the website and provision of online links to other institutions.
- b. Establishment of an E-Library to provide access to the members and other interested research scholars to reports, journals, articles and other knowledge products.
- c. Enrichment of AOA library, by including annual reports, journals and other published material from the members.
- d. Organization of training programme, study tours, retreats and cross country studies under the Regional Technical Assistance Programme by ADB.

Agenda Item No. 5

Consideration of the status/ progress on (I) Research Studies and (II) Short Studies to be carried out by the member institutions.

During the 10th annual meeting of the Board of Directors, the members were requested to complete their research studies by the end of the year 2008. It was also requested that the short studies and the fact sheets need to be completed at the earliest. The Board noted with appreciation that most of the members had sent their research studies, fact sheets and short studies on different topics.

The President AOA emphasized that the up-gradation and enrichment of the website was a continuous process and could become possible only through sustained support from the members.

Decision:

The members were requested to forward as many annual reports, in

house journals, research studies, short studies and other material/information in the e-format, to the AOA Secretariat for its posting on the AOA website.

Agenda Item No. 6

Progress on the Establishment of the Knowledge Management Resource Centre through donor funding.

The President briefed the Board on the project as follows:

1. Survey Report

- (i) A questionnaire based survey initiated in November 2008 was finalized in April 2009. The draft report compiled in October 2009 is being presented to the RETA Advisory Committee.
- (ii) The purpose of the survey was to determine organizational gaps and weaknesses, and identify the capacity building measures. The report also identifies the best practices developed by the member institutions.
- (iii) The report presents the results of the survey and consists of:
 - (a) Best practices and innovative measures being implemented by the members, and
 - (b) Capacity gaps and training needs of the Members.
 - (c) Proposed capacity building activities

2. Capacity Building Activities

(i) Study Tours:

In order to benefit from the successful practices, procedures and policies being followed by the members with developed covenants, the remaining members of the Association had been grouped in four batches to visit the ombudsman offices in Korea, Philippines, Japan and Malaysia. The programme would be launched in late November.

(ii) Training:

A training programme had been planned in Bangkok with the help of the Ombudsman from Ontario, Canada in February, 2010 to

train the operational level staff from the Members countries in matters relating to service delivery.

(iii) Secondments

This component was meant for intermediate and operational level staff to visit the host institutions in order to get hands on experience of the practices and procedures being followed in respective countries.

(iv) Retreats

The objective of the retreats would be to bring together the functional/operational level staff to discuss constraints and opportunities based on observed best practices.

(v) Regional Review Conference

A two day conference was proposed at Manila in April or May 2010 to exchange views on the outcome of the activities executed under the RETA project.

3. **Knowledge Products**

Five cross country studies are envisaged under this component on relevant subjects by renowned experts on matters relating to Ombudsmen.

4. **Up-gradation of AOA Website**

It is contemplated to make the AOA website not only rich in content but also interactive in character to generate a continuous dialogue process amongst various Ombudsman institutions.

Decision:

The Board expressed its satisfaction and appreciation on the progress of the project. It was observed that the RETA Project Advisory Committee was empowered to give guidelines and necessary decisions for implementation. Wherever necessary, the Board's approval could be sought through circulation.

Agenda Item No.7

Consideration of applications for membership of the AOA from:-

- i. The Commissioner for Human Rights, Republic of Tatarstan (Associate Membership)**
- ii The Banking Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Pakistan. (Full Membership)**

The Offices of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Republic of Tatarstan, and the Banking Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Pakistan had applied for associate membership and full membership respectively. The Executive Committee of the Board while considering the working papers prepared by the AOA Secretariat recommended to the Board of Directors to accept both the applications.

Decision:

- i. The Board of Directors accepted the application of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Republic of Tatarstan, for the Associate Membership of the AOA.
- ii. The Board of Directors also approved to recommend to the General Assembly the membership application of the Office of Banking Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Pakistan for full membership of the AOA.

Agenda Item No. 8

Performance assessment of the Manager Coordination.

The President AOA briefed the Board about the assignments completed during the last year and the future work plan of the Manager Coordination.

Decision:

The Board showed satisfaction over the performance of the Manager Coordination and appreciated her achievements.

Agenda Item No. 9

Audit report of the AOA accounts.

The Treasurer AOA placed the audit reports prepared by M/s WA Associates (Pvt.) Limited, for the period 1st January to 31st December, 2008, before the Board of Directors.

Decision:

The Board approved the placement of the audit reports before the General Assembly.

Agenda Item No. 10

Approval of Financial proposals and the AOA annual budget 2009 & 2010

The Executive Secretary briefed the Board about the financial proposals for the AOA annual budgets 2009 & 2010. It was explained that the expenditure incurred till 31st October of the financial year 2009 is included in the proposed budget and requires ex-post-facto approval of the Board.

The President also explained the miscellaneous expenditure of US Dollars 742 on Mr. Farrukh Bashir Moriani's visit to Manila, Philippines in connection with the approval of the RETA Project

Decision:

The Board approved the following proposals for the AOA budget 2009 and 2010:

(In US \$)

Sr. No.	Items	Budget proposals 2009	Budget proposals 2010
1	Remuneration of Manager Coordination	6,500	6,600
2	Telephone, fax, internet & web hosting & maintenance charges, postal & courier service charges, stationery and office equipments	1,300	1,500
3	Fee for the Auditors	500	550

4	Establishment of Print Library	3,680	1,000
5	Printing	1,000	1,000
6	Miscellaneous expenditure	1,000	1,000
	TOTAL	13,980	11,650

Agenda Item No. 11

Investment of AOA Funds

The RETA project sponsored by the ADB came under discussion in which the Bank had expressed its difficulty in incurring expenditure on the non-ADB members, Iran, Macao and Yemen.

An alternate proposal to incur the expenditure from AOA funds had generated a mixed response from the Members.

- i. During the course of discussion, the President, General Inspection Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran stated that they would bear the expenses for their inclusion in the RETA activities.
- ii. The Ombudsman from Hong Kong pointed out that the RETA project document provided to them conveyed an impression of inadmissibility for incurrence of expenditure for Hong Kong, Japan and Korea.

Decision:

The Board decided that:

- i. The AOA Secretariat should get it clarified from the ADB whether there was any bar on expenditure to be incurred for Hong Kong, Japan and Korea.
- ii. The President AOA may consult with Macao and Yemen whether they will participate in the RETA project activities by incurring expenditure from their own resources.
- iii. On the basis of response against the above two queries, AOA Secretariat, will draft a proposal for the Board and submit before the Board for consideration through circulation.
- iv. Issue regarding use/ investment of funds will be placed before the next BoD meeting after clarification on (i) to (iii) above.

Agenda Item No. 12

Award of honorary membership of the AOA to Ms. Alice Tai, Ex-Secretary AOA

Ms. Alice Yuen Ying Tai, the former Ombudsman of Hong Kong, held the office of Secretary of the AOA from 1st of April 1999 to May, 2009. She retired from the office of the Ombudsman of Hong Kong in May, 2009. During her tenure as Secretary of the AOA, she made significant contributions to the Association. She contributed substantially in the drawing up of the Bye-laws and Code of Conduct of the Association. In view of her long and meaningful association with the AOA, it was proposed to grant her Honorary Life Membership under article 5(3) of the Bye-Laws of the AOA.

Decision:

The Board unanimously approved the proposal to grant Honorary life membership of AOA to Ms. Alice Yuen Ying Tai, former Ombudsman of Hong Kong.

Agenda Item No. 13

Hosting of the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, AOA in 2010.

On the invitation for the proposals by the AOA secretariat to host the BoD meeting in 2010, the National Ombudsman, Philippines had offered to host the next meeting of the Board in Manila.

Decision:

The Board accepted with thanks, the offer of the National Ombudsman, Philippines to host the next meeting of the Board in Manila in the first half of 2010. The exact timing would be left to the convenience of the host.

Agenda Item No. 14

Scheduling future meetings of the BoD and General Assembly in the first quarter of the calendar year.

In contrast to the general practice of holding the meetings of the BoD and the General Assembly in the first quarter of the calendar years, the

11th meeting of the BoD and the General Assembly was programmed in November, 2009 on the special request of the Chief Ombudsman Thailand to coincide with their national celebrations. It was proposed that the future meetings may again revert to the earlier part of the calendar year to facilitate timely passing of the budget and the annual work plan.

Decision:

The Board decided that in future all BoD as well as General Assembly meetings will be scheduled in the earlier part of a calendar year. However, the dates of the meetings will be decided by the hosts at their convenience.

Agenda Item No. 15

Approval of the arrangements of the 11th Conference and agenda of the General Assembly Meeting/Session 2009.

The 11th AOA Conference program proposed by the Chief Ombudsman of Thailand and the draft agenda prepared by the AOA Secretariat were placed before the Board for consideration.

Decision:

The Board unanimously approved the 11th AOA Conference program and the draft agenda for the General Assembly.

Agenda Item No. 16

Provision of Ombudsman Services to the Foreigners living in Member Countries - Role of AOA.

The Member from the Republic of Korea intimated that the services of Ombudsman were being made available to the foreigners living in their country. In this connection he invited the views of the other Board members on the possible role of AOA.

Decision:

The Board desired that Anticorruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) Korea may be asked to elaborate on their system of providing services to foreigners for the information and benefit of the AOA members.

Agenda Item No. 17

Proposals from General Inspection Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Following proposals were made by the General Inspection Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran for the consideration of the Board:

- i. Expansion of the membership of the Association to the Central Asian and Middle Eastern States.
- ii. Creation of an academy under the aegis of the AOA.
- iii. Strengthening of AOA website to make it more interactive.
- iv. Introduction of virtual courses by AOA through distance learning.
- v. Networking amongst members institutions with identical jurisdiction and power.
- vi. Creation of think tanks for research and development.
- vii. Creation of two additional committees relating to scientific and cultural matters.
- viii. Re-engineering of the organizational chart of AOA to include volunteers.
- ix. Establishment of a working group for implementation of the decisions of the Board and the General Assembly.
- x. Establishment of an office of a cultural group in Iran.

Decision:

The Board observed that the Regional Technical Assistance Programme addressed a number of the proposals made. The AOA Secretariat could examine the remaining proposals and place them formally before the Board.

General

The Board placed on record its appreciation and gratitude for the immaculate arrangements for the conference and the hospitality extended by the Chief Ombudsman, General Teeradej Meepien (Ret), Chief Ombudsman, Thailand, Mr. Pramote Chotimongkol, Mrs. Panit Nitihanprapas and the entire staff of the Thai Ombudsman's office.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

11TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AOA 2ND NOVEMBER, 2009 – BANGKOK, THAILAND

PRESIDENT

Mr. Javed Sadiq Malik, Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman), Pakistan.

VICE PRESIDENT

Madam Merceditas N. Gutierrez, National Ombudsman, Philippines.

SECRETARY

Mr. Alan N. Lai, Ombudsman, Hong Kong, SAR China.

TREASURER

Mr. Kweon-Sang Lee, Standing Commissioner, Anti Corruption and Human Rights Commission, Republic of Korea.

MEMBERS

Mr. Mingjin Hao, Vice Minister, Ministry of Supervision, Peoples Republic of China.

Mr. Mostafa Pour Mohammadi, President, Head, General Inspection Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Hideo Arai, Deputy Director General, Administrative Evaluation Bureau (AEB), Japan.

General Teeradej Meepien (Ret), Chief Ombudsman, Thailand

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Mr. Junaid Iqbal Ch., Secretary, W. M. Secretariat, Pakistan.

ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Abdur Rauf Khan, Director, W. M. Secretariat, Pakistan.