

**MINUTES OF THE
16TH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE ASIAN OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION (AOA)**

Date 1st July, 2014

Venue: Seoul, Korea

List of participants is attached.

Mrs. Panit Nitithanprapas, Chief Ombudsman, Thailand and President of the AOA, chaired the meeting. In her opening remarks, she welcomed all members, including Mr. Fu Kui, Vice Minister, representing the Minister, Ministry of Supervision, People's Republic of China, Mr. Shojiro Yoshikai, Director of Administrative Counseling Division, representing the Director-General, Administrative Evaluation Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan, and the new member Ms. Connie Lau, Ombudsman, Hong Kong SAR, People's Republic of China, and Secretary of the AOA. The Chairlady also thanked Mr. Lee Sungbo, Chairman, ACRC, Republic of Korea for hosting the meeting and organizing the Global Conference.

Agenda Item No. 1

Approval of the agenda for the present (16th) annual meeting of the Board of Directors of AOA

The President presented before the Board for approval the draft agenda for the current meeting proposed by the AOA Secretariat.

Decision:

The agenda was approved by the Board.

Agenda Item No. 2

Approval of the minutes of the last (15th) meeting of the Board of Directors held in Tehran, Iran on 7th October, 2013

The President requested the Board to consider and confirm the minutes of the 15th annual meeting of the Board held on 7th October, 2013 in Tehran, Iran.

Decision:

The Board noted that there was a missing word "People's" on line 7 of the first paragraph of the minutes and the sentence should read "...Minister of Supervision of the People's Republic of China".

The minutes of the meeting with the above amendment were approved by the Board.

Agenda Item No. 3

Implementation Report on decisions of the last (15th) annual meeting of the Board of Directors.

The Director (Coordination) / Administrator, AOA Secretariat, presented the Implementation Report on the decisions taken in the last meeting of the Board.

Decision:

The Implementation Report was adopted by the Board.

Agenda Item No. 4

Elections for the post of Vice President and any other vacancy. (Carried over from the previous Board meetings)

No consensus had been reached on the filling of the position of Vice President in the 15th meeting of the Board held on 7th October, 2013 in Tehran.

Decision:

It was decided that the AOA Secretariat should initiate the process for appropriate amendments in the Bye Laws and Code of Conduct of AOA to deal with such a situation in future.

Agenda Item No. 5

Consideration of the proposals received from members on amendment in Bye-Laws of the AOA to remove discrimination in the voting rights of the full members of the Association.

Professor Siracha Charoenpanij, Ombudsman, Thailand presented a proposal at the meeting and sought members' views.

Decision:

Lengthy discussions were held and the Board arrived at a consensus that the voting rights of the Founding Members should be respected and it was unanimously agreed to maintain status quo. As a result, there was no need to amend the Bye-Laws. Moreover, AOA should in future focus on how to enhance cooperation and exchange of information among members.

Agenda Item No. 6

Consideration of the proposal of the General Inspection Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran for establishment of an academy in Iran. (Carried over from the previous Board meeting)

Islamic Republic of Iran reported to the Board the genesis and operation of the Academy in Tehran.

Decision:

After discussion, the Board decided that the development and performance of the Academy should be reviewed in due course before considering AOA patronage for the Academy.

Agenda Item No. 7

Use of AOA Funds

(Carried over from the previous Board meeting)

It had been agreed at the last Board meeting that the President of the AOA would liaise with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to seek their support in launching another Regional Technical Assistance (RETA) Project. The Board was informed that no positive response had been received from the ADB.

Decision:

It was agreed that efforts should continue to be made in this regard. Other organizations such as World Bank, UNDP should be approached for support. Member countries should also endeavour to organise seminars and research projects with their own resources for sharing knowledge and experience.

Agenda Item No. 8

Consideration of application for membership of the AOA from Ombudsman Commission of Gangwon-do Province, Republic of Korea

The Board considered the application from the Ombudsman Commission of Gangwon-do Province, Republic of Korea for full membership and agreed that the applicant was eligible for membership.

Decision:

The Board approved the application from the Commission of Gangwon-do Province, Republic of Korea, for ratification by the General Assembly.

Agenda Item No. 9

Audit report of the AOA accounts for the year 2013.

The Audit Report was tabled. Mr Lee Sungbo, Treasurer of the AOA, appreciated the efforts of the auditor viz. M/s W.A. Associates and the AOA Secretariat. While praising the Government of Pakistan for providing more than USD 100,000 in the shape of facilities and services including wage expenses for the AOA Secretariat and its staff etc. over the years, the Treasurer encouraged members to pay their membership fees on time and emphasised the need to reduce expenses and identify new resources of income.

Decision:

The Board approved the Audit Report with appreciation on the financial position of the Association.

Agenda Item No. 10

Difficulty in operation of the AOA accounts maintained in the MCB and National Bank of Pakistan

The Director (Coordination)/Administrator, AOA Secretariat explained the difficulty in operation of the AOA Bank Accounts in Islamabad as according the Code of Conduct of Business of AOA, cheques had to be signed by both the President and the Executive Secretary, even though they were currently located in two different countries. He proposed that, as an interim arrangement, the Executive Secretary and Administrator (Director Coord) of the AOA Secretariat be allowed to sign cheques pertaining to the AOA accounts particularly to defray urgent expenses like auditors' fee and AOA's website hosting charges, etc.

Decision:

The Board decided that the Executive Secretary of the AOA Secretariat be allowed to sign cheques for expenditure of US\$500 or below, with the President's prior approval for each case. For expenditure of over US\$500, co-signature on cheques by the President and the Executive Secretary would still be required. Board Members should be kept informed of the income and expenditure of the Secretariat as and when necessary.

Agenda Item No. 11

Invitation and consideration of proposals for hosting the 14th AOA Conference in 2015

During the 13th General Assembly meeting held in Tehran on 9th October, 2013, Pakistan and Georgia had expressed interest in hosting the 17th AOA Board Meeting and the 14th AOA Conference in 2015. However, the Board noted that Georgia had not yet given its formal consent and the approval of the Government of Pakistan was still pending. The People's Republic of China (PRC) showed interest in hosting the Conference. Subject to its government's approval, PRC will give its confirmation within 3 to 4 weeks to AOA Secretariat.

Decision:

The Board agreed to await the decision of the Government of Pakistan and that of the PRC, whichever arrived earlier. Meanwhile, hosting of the conference was still open to other members.

Agenda Item No. 12

Proposal for appointment of Manager (Coordination) in AOA Secretariat and fixation of his/her remuneration

The Director (Coordination)/Administrator, AOA Secretariat, informed the meeting that since the retirement of Mr. Abdur Rauf, Director (Coordinator)/ cum Administrator, no full-time official had been working with the AOA Secretariat. In this connection, the AOA Secretariat proposed the appointment of a Manager.

Decision:

The Board opined that more information on the work scope and duties was necessary to justify the creation of the said post. AOA Secretariat will draft the necessary document for the consideration of members

Any Other Items

There being no other items, the meeting ended at 11:55am.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
16TH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF AOA
1st July, 2014, Seoul, Korea

PRESIDENT

Mrs. Panit Nitithanprapas, Chief Ombudsman, Thailand

SECRETARY

Ms. Connie Lau, Ombudsman, Hong Kong SAR, People's Republic of China

TREASURER

Mr. Sungbo Lee, Chairman, Anti-corruption and Human Rights Commission,
Republic of Korea

MEMBERS

Mr. Fu Kui, Vice Minister, representative, Ministry of Supervision,
People's Republic of China

Mr. Justice Naser Seraj, President, General Inspection Organization,
Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr. Shojiro Yoshikai, Director of Administrative Counseling Division,
Administrative Evaluation Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and
Communications, Japan

Madam Mahani Tan Abdullah, Director-General, Public Complaints Bureau,
Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia

Dr. Fong Man Chong Vasco, Commissioner, Commission against Corruption,
Macau SAR, People's Republic of China

SECRETARIAT:

Mr. Muhammad Naeem, Director (Coordination)/Administrator, AOA Secretariat