

MINUTES
Meeting of the Board of Directors of AOA
22-23 February, 2000
Islamabad, Pakistan

The Board of Directors of Asian Ombudsman Association held its first meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan on 22nd and 23rd February 2000.

2. The Board noted with appreciation the role and contribution made by the Government of Islamic Republic of Iran in hosting the Conference of Asian Ombudsman in Tehran in May 1999.

3. The Board unanimously confirmed and adopted the outcome of deliberations of Tehran Conference.

4. The Agenda items were discussed in detail.

5. All the delegates stressed the need for an institutionalized system of administrative accountability with a view to ensuring good governance. It was noted that the following points/suggestions emerging from the discussions at Tehran be adopted for implementation by individual countries:

- i. Providing Public enlightenment to create an appropriate culture of supervision and inspection in Asia.
- ii. Inserting inspection-related subject matters in curriculum of educational institutions.
- iii. Training public servants for law abidance and accountability.
- iv. Establishing a training centre in Asia after being funded.
- v. Granting scholarship to the experts and members of AOA.
- vi. Establishing Ombudsman databank in its Secretariat, classifying the information and serving AOA members.
- vii. Necessitating extensive research to explore an optimal use for inspection and supervision.
- viii. Expanding exchange of information and experiences among the members to fight against administrative corruption, especially against complex networks.
- ix. Increasing public awareness on legal functions and status of Ombudsman through mass media.

6. The delegates stressed the need for a clear recognition of the need for Ombudsman's institutions in all the countries of Asia to promote public awareness with regard to accountability, supervision and inspection within the ambit and framework of the administrative and judicial systems in each member country.

7. It was resolved that AOA Secretariat would establish a Databank concerning the origin and institutional development of Ombudsman's Office in Asia and other countries of the world. The BoD welcomed all relevant proposals to attract and familiarize the non-AOA member states to go for institutional development of the office of the Ombudsman in their respective countries.

8. It was further resolved that the AOA Secretariat would collect reports on achievements of the institution of Ombudsman during each calendar year from all member and non-member countries. This would strengthen the resource bank of AOA Secretariat for exchange of lego-professional information, extending assistance to prospective researchers towards further development of Ombudsman's institution in Asia and elsewhere.

9. It was resolved that the Databank would contain processed data in relation to the following areas:

- i. The population of the Asian countries and their socio-economic indicators, judicial system of the accountability, inspection, supervision etc.
- ii. The establishment of a law of Ombudsman in public and private sector in each country.
- iii. Mechanism of handling complaints and redressal of grievances.
- iv. The achievement of the Institution of Ombudsman.
- v. Salient features of the statutes and rules for providing relief.
- vi. Information on Annual Report, Special Report, Articles, Research Studies.
- vii. Date of meeting, conferences, seminar, agreement and treaty, etc.

10. It was agreed that the Government of Philippines would extend invitation to all member states of AOA for the forthcoming meeting in Manila during July 2000. It was also agreed that the Government of Philippines by consensus of member states extend invitation to non-member Asian states.

11. The meeting discussed the proposal of Agenda (Proposal No. 3) for the membership of AOA and the Asian Ombudsmanship in the region. The delegates were unanimous in their views that institution of Ombudsman has made a tangible contribution to the cause of promoting accountability leading to good governance for the benefit of millions of people in the region. It was therefore stressed that not only the institution of Ombudsman be encouraged to grow but also the concept may be extended to areas where the institution does not exist at the moment. In this context it was also emphasized that the achievements of the organizations for the redressal of grievances of the aggrieved citizens may be highlighted to encourage non-member Asian countries to adopt the system.

12. The meeting while discussing proposal No. 4 on the agenda, endorsed the proposal of Peoples Republic of Japan and China to host the Annual Conference of the AOA for the year 2001-2002 respectively. It was noted that holding AOA Conferences in Japan and China would strengthen the institution of Ombudsman in the region.

13. The Pakistan delegation placed before the meeting requirements for ascertaining the registration fee and annual subscription for the newly created AOA Headquarters. To that effect the Pakistan delegation also placed a statement outlining the minimum expenditure anticipated to be incurred on running the Headquarters located in Islamabad. It was agreed that the proposal would be considered by each member state after consultation with the concerned officials and the reaction/comments would be made available at the forthcoming plenary conference of the AOA to be held at Manila in July this year. It was agreed that an amount of US\$ 200 per participating country would be the registration fee, while an amount of US\$ 1,000 would be the annual subscription of each member state.

14. The Chinese delegation also offered to invite the delegates from Pakistan, Iran, Korea and Philippines to visit the Peoples Republic of China with a view to examine the working of the Institution of the Ombudsman in their country. The Chinese delegation also informed that their country would be sending delegation to visit Japan, Hong Kong for an on the spot study of the system of the Ombudsman in those countries.