

**16th Meeting of the General Assembly
Asian Ombudsman Association
Istanbul, Republic of Turkey
18th November, 2019**

MINUTES

16th Meeting of the General Assembly of Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) was held on 18th November, 2019 at Istanbul, Republic of Turkey. The meeting was presided over by the President AOA, Hon'ble Syed Tahir Shahbaz, Federal Ombudsman Pakistan. Mr. Abdul Khaliq, Executive Secretary of the AOA Secretariat, coordinated the Meeting.

2. Following Members of the Association attended the Meeting:

S.No.	Name	Position	Organization
1.	Syed Tahir Shahbaz	Voting Member	Federal Ombudsman, Pakistan
2.	Ms. Elmira Suleymanova	Voting Member	Commissioner for Human Rights, Azerbaijan
3.	Ms. Winnie Chiu Wai-yin	Voting Member	Ombudsman, Hong Kong, China
4.	Justice Hassan Darvishian	Voting Member	President, GIO, Iran
5.	Mr. Li Shulei	Voting Member	Vice Chairman, NCS, China
6.	Mr. Yamauchi Tatsuya	Voting Member	Deputy Director General, AEB, Japan
7.	Prof. Amzulian Rifai	Voting Member	Chairman Ombudsman Institution, Indonesia
8.	Ms. Pak Un – Jong	Voting Member	Chairman, ACRC, Korea
9.	Mr. Seref Malkoc	Voting Member	Chief Ombudsman , Turkey
10.	Mr. Harjeet Singh	Voting Member	Director General, PC B, Malaysia
11.	Ms. Sariya Saburskaya	Voting Member	Commissioner for Human Rights, Tatarstan
12.	General Viddhavat Rajatanun	Voting Member	Chief Ombudsman Thailand
13.	Mr. Asad Ashraf Malik	Voting Member	Provincial Ombudsman, Sindh

14.	Mr. Zafar Hussain Mirza	Voting Member	Ombudsman, AJ&K, Pakistan
15.	Ms. Jesuina Maria Ferreira Gomes	Voting Member	MPA, Provedor, PDHJ, Timor Leste
16.	Mr. Le Minh Khai	Voting Member	Inspector General, GIV, Vietnam
17.	Mr. Ulugbek Mukhammadev	Voting Member	Authorized Person of the Oliy Mejlis, Uzbekistan
18.	Mr. Lam Chi Long	Voting Member	Deputy Commissioner, Commission Against Corruption, Macao
19.	Major General Muhammad Hijazi	Voting Member	Chairman, JIAC, Jordan
20.	Ms. Nino Lomjaria	Voting Member	Public Defender of Georgia
21.	Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed Sukhera	Non Voting Member	Federal Tax Ombudsman, Pakistan
22.	Mr. Abdul Ghani Khilji	Non Voting Member	Provincial Ombudsman Balochistan, Pakistan
23.	Mr. Justice (R) Shahnawaz Tariq	Non Voting Member	Provincial Ombudsman Sindh for Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace, Pakistan
24.	Ms. Rukhsana Gillani	Non Voting Member	Provincial Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace, Punjab, Pakistan
25.	Ms. Sabira Islam	Non Voting Member	Provincial Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace, Baluchistan, Pakistan
26.	Ms. Ummupazil Omarova	Non Voting Member	Commissioner for Human Rights, Dagestan
27.	Mr. Shin Chul Young	Non Voting Member	Chief Ombudsman, Gangwon Province, Korea
28.	Mr. Arman Tatoyan	Non Voting Member	Office of the Human Rights Defender, Armenia
29.	Mr. Kubatbek Otorbaev,	Non Voting Member	Ombudsman (Akyikatchy) Institution of the Kyrgyz Republic
30.	Mr. Abdul Khaliq	Executive Secretary	AOA Secretariat, Pakistan

Agenda Item No. 1

3. Welcome and Introductory Remarks by the Chair

While opening the 16th Meeting of the General Assembly of Asian Ombudsman Association, the President AOA, Hon'ble Syed Tahir Shahbaz, Federal Ombudsman Pakistan welcomed the participants of the Meeting and thanked the host for honoring him and other colleagues to participate in the 2nd Istanbul International Ombudsman Conference organized so superbly by the Ombudsman Institution of the Republic of Turkey in the historic and magnificent city of Istanbul. He expressed his deep gratitude to Hon'ble Chief Ombudsman of Turkey and his team for making fabulous arrangements for this Conference.

He expressed that he was extremely happy finding himself among the loveable community of Ombudsmen in Asia; feel even much happier while thinking of participation in the prime activity for which the Event had been organized. The incumbent Board had completed its tenure at a happy note of commendable achievements as a result of their combined efforts. The Event also included the General Assembly Meeting wherein new Board of Directors was to be elected. In view of that, he gave a brief account of the activities and achievements of the Association since the election of the previous Board. 17th AOA Board and 14th AOA General Assembly Meetings were held in 2015 in Islamabad, Pakistan where the previous Board of Directors was elected. As per Bye-Laws, AOA General Assembly meets every second year; thus the 15th General Assembly Meeting was the prime activity of the PyeongChang Conference in 2017. The General Assembly Meeting was preceded by 20th Board of Directors Meeting in PyeongChang. Likewise, Board Meetings and Conferences held at Tokyo, Kazan and Baku provided great opportunities in promoting the cause of ombudsmanship, especially in the Asian Region.

Highlighting the significance of Ombudsmanship, he thought of the Ombudsman Institution as a hope for the poor. Each of such Institutions, without geographic divide or cultural distinctions, has been playing marvelous role in providing inexpensive and expeditious justice. In Pakistan, like many other countries, such role has constitutional support as well. Malpractices, administrative excesses and abuse of public authority erode social justice and

deprive citizens of their fundamental rights. This Institution provides valuable protection against these evils. Therefore, learning from each other's experience adds to the strength of Ombudsman Institution and this process must remain top priority with whole of heart and soul; it should be taken as a mission to fight out the forces of evil.

He also appreciated the role of the incumbent Members of the Board and the Secretariat in enhancing the Cause of the Association. The team, that was chosen four years back, has evidently displayed their remarkable zeal to drive forward the basic objectives of the Ombudsmanship. It had been the joint effort of this Team that during their tenure six new members joined this august body and six more were going to join after approval of the General Assembly in its upcoming session. The Secretariat has been persistently expanding its capacity to serve the Association much more efficiently and professionally under the supervision of a very senior retired civil servant of Pakistan. Secretariat's digital communication tools have played significant role in bringing the AOA Members closer, making mutual responses more swift and effective. He requested the Members to be more proactive in sharing their information and experiences through the AOA e Newsletter, Website and proposed e Profile Directory.

He also confided with the Members on the measures taken for making the AOA Election 2019 transparent and competitive, especially pursuing the valuable suggestions received from Japanese and Korean friends. Nomination record had already been shared with the Executive Committee; it had been kept open and accessible for every Member. The President also suggested that some independent presiding officer should be appointed for supervising the Ballot, as required under the Bye Laws, as he himself was the contesting member in the Election.

At the close of his Remarks, he thanked and paid his heartfelt regard to the colleagues for reposing trust upon the incumbent Board Members in the past and assured that he and his colleagues from Pakistan would keep on serving this grand Association in whatsoever position they could be placed by the Ombudsman brotherhood. He, once again, congratulated and thanked Excellency, Mr. Seref Malkoc, Chief Ombudsman Turkey, for arranging such a grand event and keeping the participants so comfortable in the historic city of Istanbul.

Agenda Item No. 2

4. Welcome and Opening Remarks by the Host

Hon'ble Chief Ombudsman Turkey, Mr. Şeref MALKOÇ, while delivering his Opening Remarks, welcomed the participants to Turkey for the noble cause of Ombudsmanship. He felt pleased and honoured for hosting the General Assembly of AOA in Istanbul. He hoped that his colleagues from various parts of the world would enjoy such a rare sunny weather in the month of November in Istanbul.

Wishing success for the upcoming General Assembly Meeting, he congratulated in advance the president, vice-president and other members of the board who would take office after the election. He mentioned that Turkish Ombudsman Institution had been a member of the AOA for the last two years, whereas, Turkish Ombudsman Institution had been a member of eight different associations worldwide. From this standpoint, he compared the AOA with other Ombudsman networks and proposed to be more active. He further desired that the Members should occasionally gather and talk about the important issues in their countries, as well as the issues in the World. The European Network of Ombudsmen organizes several meetings per year on specific agendas. Same experience is found with the Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmen as well.

Concluding his Remarks, the Chief Ombudsman expressed his good wishes for the upcoming events in advance and thanked the President and the Secretariat for their efforts and good work done so far.

5. Thereafter, the Chair asked the Executive Secretary to proceed with the Agenda. Accordingly, the Agenda Items were presented before the General Assembly for consideration and decisions. Copy of the Agenda is annexed with the Minutes. The proceedings of the General Assembly Meeting and decisions taken therein are briefly recorded below.

Agenda Item No. 3

Report of the President, for the years 2017-18, on the Activities of the Association in terms of clause 5-5(i) of the Code of Conduct of Business

Minutes:-

As per Article 9(2) of the Bye Laws of AOA and Clause 5-5(i) of the Code of Conduct of Business of AOA, Annual Report on the activities of the Association is to be presented by the President to the Board.

The President of AOA presented Annual Report - 2017 on the activities of the Association in the 21st Meeting of the Board of Directors held on 30th October, 2018 at Baku. The Members appreciated the services rendered by the AOA Secretariat under the able guidance and patronage of Hon'ble President of the Association. In particular, the Board appreciated for managing efficient communication tools like AOA Website, e-Newsletter, online exchange of information and providing analytical reports to the Members for resolving the outstanding issues. They also thanked the President for the successful drive for expansion of membership and for providing effective secretariat services with least financial burden on the AOA funds.

Likewise, he presented a consolidated Report for the years 2017-18 in the 22nd BOD Meeting on the activities of the Association. Appreciating the great contributions made by Federal Ombudsman Pakistan for efficient management of AOA Secretariat, the Board approved the Consolidated Report and gave its consent to place it before the General Assembly for ratification under Article 6(4)(f) of the Bye Laws of AOA.

Thus, the Consolidated Report of the President for the years 2017-18 was placed before the General Assembly in terms of Article 9(2) for its consideration and ratification under Article 6(4)(f) of the Bye Laws of AOA, of the Bye Laws of AOA.

Decision:-

The Members appreciated the services rendered by the AOA Secretariat under the able guidance and patronage of Hon'ble President of the Association. In

particular, the Board appreciated for managing efficient communication tools like AOA Website, e-Newsletter, online exchange of information. They also thanked the President for the successful drive for expansion of membership and for providing effective Secretariat services with least financial burden on the Association Fund. With this, the Consolidated Report of the President for the years 2017-18 was ratified by the General Assembly under Article 6(4)(f) of the Bye Laws of AOA.

Agenda Item No. 4

Consideration of applications for membership of the AOA from:-

Minutes:-

The Board was apprised that six applications from following Institutions were received for the membership of the AOA.

- i. Provincial Ombudsman Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan
- ii. Provincial Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace, Punjab, Pakistan
- iii. Office of the Ombudsman, Philippines
- iv. Office of the Citizen Ombudsman of Siheung City, Republic of Korea
- v. Provincial Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace, Balochistan, Pakistan
- vi. Provincial Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

The AOA Secretariat reviewed these applications and concluded that the applicants are eligible for membership under the existing criteria identified in the Code of Conduct. Accordingly, the Secretariat drafted working papers for the Executive Committee of the Board to consider and recommend their proposals for the membership in terms of Sections 1-4 of the Code of Conduct. In terms of Article 5(1) & (6) of the Bye Laws of AOA, Office of the Ombudsman, Philippines could be granted Full Membership with Voting Right; whereas, the other five institutions could be granted Full Membership (Without Voting Right) as their respective countries already have the Voting Right. Two members of the Executive Committee, the President and the Secretary, had considered the applications and recommended to the Board of Directors for their acceptance under Section 1-2 of Code of Conduct of Business of AOA.

Thus, the Board of Directors was requested to consider the working papers and the membership applications of the above mentioned applicants for granting Office of the Ombudsman, Philippines Full Membership with Voting Right and other five institutions for Full Membership without Voting rights under Article 5(1) & (6) of the Bye Laws of AOA and, accordingly, the Board, in terms of Section 1-5 & 1-6, was requested to recommend for approval to the General Assembly for Membership under Article 6(4)(a) of the Bye Laws of AOA.

The Board of Directors, unanimously, gave its approval for granting Office of the Ombudsman, Philippines Full Membership with Voting Right and other five Institutions for Full Membership without Voting rights under Article 5(1) & (6) of the Bye Laws of AOA and, accordingly, recommended, in terms of Section 1-5 & 1-6, their membership to the General Assembly for approval under Article 6(4)(a) of the Bye Laws of AOA.

Decision:-

*The General Assembly, unanimously, gave its approval, under Article 6(4)(a), for granting Office of the Ombudsman Philippines Full Membership with Voting Right and other five Institutions for Full Membership without Voting rights, under Article 5(1) & (6) of the Bye Laws of AOA. Accordingly, to give effect to this decision, **Resolution No.1** (Annexed) was adopted by the General Assembly.*

Agenda Item No.5

Approval of Audit Statements of AOA Accounts for the years 2017 and 2018

Minutes:-

General Assembly was apprised that the Audit Statement of the AOA accounts for the year 2017 was discussed by the Board, as Agenda Item No. 9, at its 21st Meeting held in Azerbaijan (30th October, 2018) and approved for placing before the General Assembly.

Likewise, the Audit Statement of the AOA accounts for the year 2018 was presented by the Treasurer AOA in 22nd BoD Meeting through Agenda Item No.7 for approval.

The Board graciously approved the Audit Statement 2018 and consented to place Audit Statements for 2017 and 2018 before the General Assembly for approval under Article 6(4)(f) of the Bye Laws of AOA.

Decision:-

*Thus, President GIO Iran, Treasurer AOA, placed the Audit Statements for the years 2017 and 2018 before the General Assembly in terms of Article 8(2) which the General Assembly approved under Article 6(4)(f) of the Bye Laws of AOA. Accordingly, to give effect to this decision, **Resolution NO.2** (Annexed) was adopted by the General Assembly*

Agenda Item No. 6

Suspension of Annual Membership Fee for Four years (2020-2023)

Minutes:-

The General Assembly was apprised that since almost all the secretarial and logistic support was being financed by the Office of Federal Ombudsman Pakistan, the AOA's funds had been accumulating over the years; thus, it was felt appropriate by the President AOA to propose to the Board and the General Assembly for suspension of Annual Membership Fee for four years (2020-2023).

The Board considered this proposal but it was generally viewed that subscription of Annual Membership Fee may not be suspended as it may have some legal and logistic implications in future. Rather, some activities should be identified where these funds could be usefully utilized for enhancing the objectives of the Association.

In view of above, it was decided that subscription of Annual Membership Fee may not be suspended; rather, some activities should be identified where these funds could be usefully utilized for enhancing the objectives of the Association. The Chair, thus, requested the Members to identify some useful activities for the utilization of these funds.

Decision:-

The General Assembly upheld the decision of the Board and desired that the Members should identify some activities to enhance the objectives of the Association which could be financed from the AOA funds.

Agenda Item No.7

Finalization of dates and place for AOA 23rd Board of Directors Meeting in 2020 and 17th General Assembly Meeting in 2021.

Minutes:-

The General Assembly was informed that the Members were asked to give their proposals for Date and Venue for hosting the AOA 23rd Board of Directors Meeting in 2020 and 17th General Assembly Meeting in 2021 through email dated 15th October, 2019. No formal proposal had been received till stipulated date (1st November, 2019).

Thus, the matter was placed in the 22nd Board Meeting; wherein, the President GIO Iran showed his interest in hosting the 23rd Board of Directors Meeting in 2020 with the condition that confirmation would be communicated if so approved by the Government.

The Board decided to place the above stated position before the General Assembly. If some other offer could not be found, the confirmation from Iran would be awaited.

Decision:-

The stated position was placed before the General Assembly; wherein, the decision of the Board was upheld.

Agenda Item No. 8

Procedure of Election for any Vacancy Falling Vacant during Tenure of the Board

Minutes:-

The General Assembly was apprised on the background of the issue. The matter of filling a 'Vacancy Falling Vacant during Tenure of the Board' came under review of the AOA Board and finally the Board, in its Meeting held on 16th May, 2017 in PyeongChang (Agenda Item No. 4), unanimously dropped the proposal for 'Survey Monkey' or other similar systems in view of high cost and availability of remedy under Bye-Laws 7(6) and 7(9) of AOA in resolving the stated matter. The Board further agreed that if the position of Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer would fall vacant for a long time in future, the "Counter Proposal", suggested by Hon'ble Ombudsman Hong Kong, Secretary AOA, would be adopted to resolve the issues of finding replacement to fill the Mid-Term vacancy of Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer.

However, the Board had further desired that the Secretariat should prepare a comprehensive report on this Issue, which was prepared and submitted to the Board in its 21st Meeting at Baku. The Members applauded the report submitted by the Secretariat as a very high quality analysis of the issues related to the **‘Procedure of Election for any Vacancy Falling Vacant during Tenure of the Board’** and stated that the report had explicitly explained the problem and its solution available within the Bye-laws or by pursuing the counter proposal as already decided in the last Board Meeting. The Counter Proposal is reproduced below:

“For the sake of continuous and efficient operation of AOA, Members of the Board of Directors will be empowered to elect by secret ballot to fill any such temporary vacancies when arisen. This will ensure that all the candidates, proposers and seconders in such elections are eligible (since all Board members are full members with voting rights) and there will not be any difficulties in conducting the elections by secret ballot at a Board meeting”.

Since the Board, in its Meetings both in PyeongChang, Korea (2017) and Azerbaijan (2018), reached to the conclusion that the ‘Procedure of Election for any Vacancy falling Vacant during Tenure of the Board’ had been adequately provided by the given law or by pursuing the ‘Counter Proposal’, no further perusal of the point was considered appropriate. However, under Section 4-1 of the Code of Conduct of Business of AOA, the Board was obliged to place the stated position before the General Assembly for its information.

Accordingly, the Board was requested to give its consent to place the matter before the General Assembly for its notice under Section 4-2 of the Code of Conduct of Business of AOA.

Therefore, the Board in its 22nd Meeting decided that no further perusal of the point was required; however, it gave its consent to place the matter before the General Assembly for its notice under Section 4-2 of the Code of Conduct of Business of AOA.

Decision:-

Convinced with the position stated above, the General Assembly upheld the decision of the Board taken in its 20th, 21st, and 22nd Meetings, that the matter merits no further perusal.

Agenda Item No. 9

Review of the Development and Performance of the Academy Established by the General Inspection Organization, Iran

Minutes:-

The General Assembly was apprised that in the 21st Board Meeting in Azerbaijan, Hon'ble Justice Naser Seraj, former President, General Inspection Organization Iran, updated the Board on the activities of the Academy and proposed to give it status of an affiliated body of the Association. He further shared with the Members that he desired AOA's support in terms of operational interaction with the Members and patronage of the Association; however, the Academy, for its financial and logistic needs, will not be dependent on the Association's support.

The President AOA supported the proposal made by the President, GIO Iran and stated that by granting the Academy a status of affiliated body will not only enhance its credibility but also add to the intellectual assets of the Association. The Members, thus, unanimously supported the proposal for granting the Academy status of an affiliated body of the Association and also approved for its placement before the General Assembly for ratification.

The Board, in its 22nd Meeting, was requested to place its earlier decision before the General Assembly for ratification under Article 6(4)(e) of the Bye Laws of AOA. The Board, accordingly, consented to place it before the General Assembly seeking its ratification on the aforesaid decision taken by the Board.

Decision:-

*The General Assembly endorsed the decision taken by the Board and granted the Academy, established by GIO Iran, status of an affiliated body of AOA. Accordingly, to give effect to this decision, **Resolution No.3** (Annexed) was adopted.*

Agenda Item No. 10

Launching of e-Profile Directory on the AOA website of AOA Members & Alumni Members

Minutes:-

The General Assembly was told that the initiative of ‘Launching of e-Profile Directory on the AOA website of AOA Members & Alumni Members was presented before the Board, in its 22nd Meeting, with the view to provide ever ready database of the Member Institutions for their closer interaction and sharing of information and experiences supporting the cause of Ombudsmanship in the Region and beyond. Federal Ombudsman Pakistan had given his consent to manage necessary resources from his own account without any burden on the Association Funds.

The Board, in its 22nd Meeting, was requested to approve this initiative, presented under Section 5-5 of the Code of Conduct of Business, and place it before the General Assembly for its notice in view of Section 4-1 of the Code of Conduct of Business. The Board, accordingly, approved the stated initiative and gave its consent to place it before the General Assembly.

Decision:-

The General Assembly, appreciating the idea, supported the initiative as approved by the Board in its 22nd Meeting.

Agenda Item No. 11

Subscription of News Items for e-Newsletter

Minutes:-

As per decision of the AOA Board and General Assembly, the AOA Secretariat is regularly issuing fortnightly Asian Ombudsman Association e-Newsletter, but response of the Member Institutions was not much encouraging. Therefore, the Member Institutions were requested to send News Items for e-Newsletter regularly to fully avail the Forum for mutual cooperation and sharing of experiences.

The Board was requested to place this initiative, taken under Section 5-5 of the Code of Conduct of Business, before the General Assembly for information and emphasis. Accordingly, the Board appreciated the successful implementation of the initiative and desired that the

Member Institutions should send News Items for e-Newsletter regularly to fully avail the Forum for mutual cooperation and sharing of experiences; however, it was considered appropriate that it should be issued on monthly instead of fortnightly basis. The Board further consented to place this initiative before the General Assembly for information and emphasis.

Decision:-

The General Assembly appreciated the successful implementation of the initiative and endorsed the decision of the Board that the e-Newsletter should be issued on monthly instead of fortnightly basis and the Member Institutions should send News Items for e-Newsletter regularly to fully avail the Forum for mutual cooperation and sharing of experiences.

Agenda Item No. 12

Continuation of Mr. Abdul Khaliq as the Executive Secretary, AOA

Minutes:-

The General Assembly was apprised that Mr. Abdul Khaliq, Senior Advisor Federal Ombudsman Pakistan, a former Secretary Finance Pakistan, had been working as Executive Secretary, AOA, since 19th February, 2016. In view of his appreciable contributions in running the business of the Association, continuation of his services as Executive Secretary, AOA appeared in the Organization's interest.

Thus, the President AOA recommended to the Board to approve continuation of his appointment as Executive Secretary in terms of Section V of the Code of Conduct of Business and place it before the General Assembly for information in view of Section 4-1 of the Code of Conduct of Business.

The Members, appreciating the services rendered by Mr. Abdul Khaliq as Executive Secretary AOA, approved continuation of his appointment as Executive Secretary for two years, further extendable with the approval of the Board, in terms of Section V of the Code of Conduct of Business and place it before the General Assembly for information in view of Section 4-1 of the Code of Conduct of Business.

Decision:-

The General Assembly, appreciating the services rendered by Mr. Abdul Khaliq as Executive Secretary AOA, endorsed the decision of the Board for continuation of his appointment as Executive Secretary for two years, further extendable with the approval of the Board, in terms of Section V of the Code of Conduct of Business of AOA.

Agenda Item No. 13

Conduct of Election 2019 for the Board of Directors of AOA

Minutes:-

The General Assembly was apprised that the Board, in its 22nd Meeting, scrutinized the following documents and arrangements related to AOA Election 2019 and necessary approvals were accorded.

Scrutiny of Nomination Forms

The Board was apprised that the List of the Candidates and Nomination Forms had been sent to the Executive Committee Members three days before the General Assembly Meeting for their scrutiny and perusal. The same were also placed before the Board Members, in its 22nd Meeting, for their perusal. Complete satisfaction was shown by the Members on the process adopted for the Nominations, keeping the record in order, ensuring transparency and strict compliance of rules and procedures laid down in the Bye-Laws and Code of Conduct of Business of AOA.

Approval of Candidates' List

The Board, after its satisfaction on the process adopted as mentioned above, approved the List of the Candidates and their Nomination Forms to proceed for the election.

Procedure for Balloting and Counting of Votes

Procedure for Balloting and Counting of Votes was displayed in the Meeting. (i) Ballot Paper, (ii) Election Control List and (iii) Votes Counting Sheet were placed before the Board, which were appreciated as exemplary documents to ensure transparent and effective election proceedings without compromising the secrecy and independence of ballot as required under the rules. Thus, the Board approved these documents after their detailed scrutiny and perusal.

Appointing the Presiding Officer

The Members were apprised on the appointment of the Presiding Officer, in terms of Article 6(6) of the Bye Laws of AOA and Section 2-9 of the Code of Conduct of Business of AOA. The President AOA himself proposed for appointing the Presiding Officer, despite the fact that he had been unopposed candidate for the post of President. The General Assembly, appreciating the proposal, appointed Mr. Asad Ashraf Malik, Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Pakistan, as the Presiding Officer, in terms of the stated law and procedure.

Decision:-

After detailed briefing on the above mentioned findings and decisions made by the Board, in its 22nd Meeting, the General Assembly Members appreciated and approved the course of action adopted so far, comprehensive documentation of various processes and arrangements made for carrying out balloting in-camera under the supervision of representatives from two member countries. Besides that, the General Assembly appointed the senior most Non Contesting Member, Mr. Asad Ashraf Malik, Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Pakistan, as the Presiding Officer in terms of Article 6(6) of the Bye Laws and Section 2-9 of the Code of Conduct of Business of AOA to conduct the election proceedings.

Agenda Item No. 14

Announcement of Election Results and Resolution No.4 for approving the newly elected Board of Directors of AOA

Minutes

Pursuing the Election Plan, detailed in Agenda Item No. 13, secret balloting was held. Against each of the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, there was a single candidate; therefore, the candidates for these positions were declared successful unopposed. Whereas, against the five positions of Directors of the Board, there were eight contestants; therefore, for this category, twenty Voting Members cast their votes, list of Voting Members is annexed herewith.

Decision:-

As a result of the election process following new Board of Directors was constituted by the General Assembly for the next four years under Articles 7(1), 7(2) and 6(4)(b) of the Bye Laws of AOA.

SN	Position	Name	Institution	Country
1	President	Syed Tahir Shahbaz	Federal Ombudsman	Pakistan
2	Vice President	Ms. Elmira Suleymanova	Commissioner HRs	Azerbaijan
3	Secretary	Ms. Winnie Chiu Wai-yin	Ombudsman	Hong Kong
4	Treasurer	Mr. Justice Hassan Darvishian	President GIO	Iran
5	Member	Mr. Li Shulei	Vice Chairman NCS	China
6	Member	Prof. Amzulian Rifai	Chairman Ombudsman	Indonesia
7	Member	Mr. Shiraiwa Suguru	DG AEB	Japan
8	Member	Pak Un-Jong	Chairman ACRC	Korea
9	Member	Mr. Seref Malkoc	Chief Ombudsman	Turkey

Accordingly, to give effect to this decision Resolution No.4 (Annexed) was adopted by the General Assembly.

Agenda Item No.15

Any other item, which the Chair or any Member of the Board of Directors may like to discuss

Under this Agenda Item, several Members of the Association availed opportunity to express their views on the election process and, as a result of it, constitution of a new Board of Directors. It was unanimously viewed that the election process was well documented, procedures were strictly complied with and administration of the balloting was highly smooth

and disciplined maintaining transparency and secrecy of vote together. They appreciated the AOA Secretariat, especially the Executive Secretary, for creating an independent, systematic, and creditable environment that made everyone satisfied with the election process.

Agenda Item No.16

Vote of Thanks and Gratitude

The President AOA thanked all the colleagues for reposing their trust on him and other Members of the newly constituted Board. He assured of his resolve to work even harder in future for making the Association much more effective for serving the noble cause of Ombudsmanship within and outside the Asian Region. He appealed to the New Board Members, too, for concerting upon a pledge together to make our Association much more strong in the coming time.

Before concluding the Meeting, the President AOA offered ‘Vote of Thanks and Gratitude’ to the host. He expressed his feelings that the historic moment today and great courtesies and splendour of this Event will remain together in our memories in days to come. Therefore, for hosting the 16th AOA General Assembly Meeting, 22nd Board of Directors Meeting and 2nd Istanbul International Ombudsman Conference, he, on behalf of the General Assembly, wished to put his heartfelt sentiments of ‘Thanks and Gratitude’ on record for his Excellency Mr. Seref Malkoc, Chief Ombudsman, Republic of Turkey, the Organizing Team and the Government of Turkey. To make his sentiments part of the Association’s record; he placed a Resolution for adoption by the august house. **Resolution No 5** is annexed herewith.