



**Promoting Ombudsmanship**

**A Catalogue of Activities  
at  
the National Level  
2023-24**



**AOA Secretariat, Islamabad**

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## **Foreword**

It gives me great pleasure to present the document titled, “Promoting OmbudsmanSHIP: A Catalogue of Activities at the National Level”. Beginning from this year, the document has been prepared by the AOA Secretariat, Islamabad on the basis of information received from the esteemed member institutions.

The objective of this document is to compile an authentic record of activities, special projects, initiatives, achievements and modalities adopted by the AOA member institutions for realizing their national goals and targets. The document in hand presents a composite picture of the tremendous contribution being made by the member institutions in promoting the concept of ombudsmanSHIP in the region. While it delineates the current practices of ombudsmanSHIP in Asia, the document highlights our faith and commitment to the shared goals of good governance, the rule of law and the inviolability of human rights. In this regard, our pursuits at the national level offer a unique bonding between the members of the AOA family and enrich the professional credentials of our Association. Collectively, AOA has a great potential to contribute in setting standards of excellence in developing the ombuds institutions within our region and beyond.

Pursuant to the AOA Secretariat’s request as annexed to this document for reference, inputs so far have been received from fifteen member institutions. I am confident that we shall receive greater cooperation from the esteemed members and the document shall be a valuable addition to the AOA Resource Centre and facilitate exchange of information, sharing of experiences and best practices.

I shall welcome your views for developing this material into a useful reference document for our readership.

**(Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi)  
President  
Asian Ombudsman Association**

## **The Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman), Republic of Azerbaijan**

- On 9 June 2023, the Constitutional Law on the Commissioner for Human Rights was amended, granting the independent monitoring mechanism to the Ombudsman on promotion and monitoring of the implementation of the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, as well as ensuring the right to equality and prevention of discrimination.
- A project was initiated with the Council of Europe on promoting equality in Azerbaijan. Within this project a meeting was held for the civil society organizations to inform them about the new powers of the ombudsman. A training session was organized for the civil society and volunteer on the right to equality. Moreover, a unit on Ensuring the Right to Equality was established in the Ombudsman's Office in 2024.
- In Cooperation with UNDP, an educational material titled “Overview of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights” was published. In addition, several educational material including “Introduction to Gender” textbook, set of acts (2002 - 2022), booklets on early signs of autism, protection of the rights of children in the ombudsman's activity were published.
- In September 2023, the Ombudsman of Azerbaijan was elected as Vice President of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) and in October 2023, She was elected as Member of the Board of Directors of the OIC Ombudsman Association (OICOA).
- Azerbaijan is currently in the post-conflict period and there is a need to document and address human rights violation as well as to support the peace building and trust building activities. In this context, the Ombudsman addressed the land mine problem which impedes the return of the former IDPs to their homes and prepared two reports on related subjects.
- As a response to the UN call on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Ombudsman submitted a pledge to the OHCHR and also posted a video appeal. Special activities were arranged on this occasion.

- In February 2024, the Ombudsman adopted an Action Plan on Legal Awareness for 2024. This plan is aimed at using the leverage for human rights awareness in wide range of fields. The Ombudsman Office also pays attention to enhance the volunteering in the human rights fields. The number of volunteers increased five times in 2023 in comparison with 2022.
- Azerbaijan declared 2024 as the Year of Green World Solidarity and will host the UN Climate Change Conference in November 2024. In this regard, the Ombudsman Office plans to organize an International Symposium regarding the Climate Change and its Impact on Human Rights.

### **National Commission of Supervision of China (NCS)**

- In January 2023, the second plenary of the 20<sup>th</sup> Central Commission for Discipline Inspection<sup>1</sup> was held in Beijing. The Chinese President XI Jinping in his address reiterated that China will continue to deepen reforms of discipline inspection and supervision system. A comprehensive plan for China's anti-corruption and supervision work for the year 2023 was announced.
- In March 2023, China initiated the Sky Net Operation to bring back corrupt fugitives and their stolen assets. 1624 fugitives were brought back under this scheme. A national training workshop was also held to enhance the capacity building of practitioners.
- In October 2023, the thematic forum on the clean Silk Road of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was held in Beijing. H.E. Mr. Liu Jinguo, Deputy Secretary of the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection said that China is willing to work with other countries uphold the principles of integrity, deepen practical anti-corruption cooperation, maintain a zero-tolerance against corruption to ensure the high quality development of the Belt and Road Initiatives.
- The event witnessed the release of achievements and prospects of Belt and Road Integrity Building and the establishment of Integrity and Compliance Evaluation System for Companies involved in Belt and Road Cooperation.

- In 2023, China organized 04 training workshops for 108 participants from 15 developing countries. The participants gained knowledge about the major internal legal framework for anti-corruption cooperation and experiences in supervision work.
- In January 2024, the third plenary session of the 20<sup>th</sup> Central Commission for Discipline Inspection<sup>2</sup> was held in Beijing. The plenary reviewed China's anti-corruption and supervision work in 2023 and made plans for 2024. The Chinese President XI Jinping highlighted that China will carry on with the self-reform revolution and promote the high quality development of the supervision work.
- In March 2024, China initiated the Sky Net Operation 2023 to bring back corrupt fugitives and their stolen assets. This was the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive years for China to initiate similar operation.
- In June 2024, the National Commission of Supervision (NCS), China will hold a training workshop on the pursuits fugitives and assets recovery. Practitioners from different provinces will be invited to enhance their capacity building.
- In August 2024, China will hold a workshop themed “denying safe haven through enhancing mutual legal assistance” together with Peruvian Presidency under the APEC ACTWG in Lima.
- In September 2024, China, together with the UN Office on Drugs and Crimes, will hold the Globe plenary meeting and the steering committee meeting in Beijing. To discuss global anti-corruption and law enforcement cooperation.
- In 2024, China will continue to hold training workshops for participants from developing countries.

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<sup>1</sup>CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and National Commission of Supervision of China share the same office and staff, as most public officials in China are CPC members. The integration of the two commissions is conducive for efficient supervision over public administration and public officials.

<sup>2</sup>The same as above.

## **The Ombudsman, Hong Kong, China**

- Following the lifting of the mask wearing restrictions in March 2023, the year marked the first full year of normalcy since the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of complaints declined to 4300, the lowest in the recent five years. The pandemic related complaints recorded decline from over 750 to around 30 years on year.
- The Office completed approximately 4400 cases and exceeded performance pledges in handling enquiries, new complaints, re-assessment and the review of complaints. Over 180 complaints and over 90 cases were concluded by mediation and investigation. The Office completed 10 direct investigation operations with 180 recommendations of which more than 90% have been accepted by the relevant bureaux and departments.
- The Office undertook a series of promotional activities including a publicity complaint titled, “Hong Kong Needs a Clear Mirror” in October 2023. The campaign highlighted the steps taken for handling public complaints with the ultimate goal of uplifting the standard of public administration.
- In order to reach out to all sections of the society and promote a positive complaint culture, various experience-sharing sessions were held to promote awareness about the mission, scope of work and complaint handling procedure. This will also nurture a positive culture of expressing opinions and importance of good public administration.
- Special steps were taken to reach out to the young population and enhance their understanding about the work of the Office of ombudsman. 16 school talks attracting some 2500 students were arranged. A youth contest named “YOUTH CREATE: A better Hong Kong” was arranged. Over 300 entrees from 26 schools were received.
- The presentation ceremony of The Ombudsman’s Award was held on 15 November 2023. This year’s Grand Award went to the Immigration Department, whereas the Efficiency Office and the Hospital Authority were the runners-up. The Chief Secretary for Administration’s Office received the

Award on Mediation while 62 public officers received individual performance awards for exemplary public service.

- The coming year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Office. An International Ombudsman Conference with a celebration event will be held in Hong Kong in early December 2024. Members are cordially invited to attend these functions. Please stay tuned.

#### **Administrative Evaluation Bureau (AEB), Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIAC) – Japan**

- The **Administrative Evaluation Bureau (AEB)** of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications in **Japan** handled around 130,000 cases every year, including cases received by Administrative Counselors. The exact number of cases AEB received in fiscal year 2023 are to be announced at the end of June. After the pandemic, as opportunities for face-to-face activities have increased, so have the number of handling cases.
- Some of the notable activities of the recent years include the AEB's Administrative Counseling session specialized for the affected victims by natural disasters. The AEB provided various support measures to the victims, including earthquake, typhoon, heavy rain, promptly providing accurate information on various government support measures promptly and holding in-depth consultations.
- For the Noto Peninsula Earthquake, which occurred on the New Year Day in 2024, special administrative counseling activities were conducted immediately in cooperation with related administrative organizations.
- Firstly, the AEB prepared and distributed a comprehensive contact list of relevant administrative organizations providing support measures. The first edition of the contact list was issued in the week following the earthquake, and the contents were continuously updated. The 13<sup>th</sup> edition had been issued and distributed in March 2024.

- Secondly, the toll-free telephone consultation service for the Noto Peninsula Earthquake was launched shortly after the disaster, enabling citizens in Ishikawa prefecture to seek useful advice from the AEB without having to pay the telephone bill. The number of cases related to the earthquake has reached over 3,000 by the end of March and is still counting; the most common issues consist of rebuilding or repairing of the damaged house and the payment of support grants for reconstructing livelihoods of disaster victims.
- Lastly, the AEB opened special administrative counseling booths in cooperation with related administrative organizations, municipalities, lawyers, tax accountants, Administrative Counselors, etc., and provided the one-stop consultation sessions to disaster victims. Particularly Administrative Counselors contributed greatly in collaboration with the municipalities. The establishment of counseling booths was featured in the news programmes of national TV channel.
- In fiscal year 2023, the AEB also focused on publicity to reach out to lonely and isolated people including the young generation and mothers who raising children and so on: we used social networking sites, developed a publicity strategy that young people would see, and let them know that if they had a problem, the Administrative Counseling Service would listen to them. Its details are available on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEMNRFkFgGQ>
- The AEB also provided training for Administrative Counselors on how to use translation apps in order to respond to the increasing number of foreigners living in Japan. In fiscal year 2023, the number of cases the AEB received from foreign residents of Japan or visitors from other countries was over 250.

## **Anti-corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) Republic of Korea**

### **Operation of an online system for filing civil complaints accessible to all people**

- Translation service provided in 14 foreign languages.
- No voice left unheard. “e-People” is the single online service made for the concerns of the people. It is a system for filing civil complaints integrating all administrative agencies allowing foreigners to file complaints/receive responses in their native languages.
- The e-People annually receives approximately 10 million civil complaint filed by Korean citizens and foreigners, among which about 30,000 are directly handled by ACRC while others are addressed by competent agencies.
- Major complaints by foreigners include visa extension, wages, industrial accident compensation and challenges faced by businesses operated by foreigners.

### **Addressing discrimination against foreign workers**

- ACRC recommended the Ministry of Employment and Labour to broaden grounds for changing work places of foreign workers and re-employment of construction workers to ease strict Employment Permit System.
- ACRC recommended the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries to allow determining the scale of introduction and employment standard for foreign seafarers to protect their rights and interests.

### **Protecting the Rights and Interests of People with disabilities**

- Enhanced the management facility for transportation of disadvantaged persons, such as braille blocks to ensure their mobility rights.
- ACRC analyse related to facilities for disadvantaged through e-People (18000 cases over three years).

### **Resolving Collective Conflicts**

- Addressed civil complaints involving multiple ministries and individuals despite not being illegal through mediation. In 2023, ACRC conducted a total of 63 mediation resolving grievances of approximately 120,000 people.

- Representative cases include measures for the livelihood of residents displaced by construction of the dam, installation of cable car in a national park and environmental preservation and developing school routes.

### **Recommending, Legal and Institutional Improvements**

- ACRC identified laws and regulations/systems to seek improvement of civil complaints recurring or requiring joint response by multiple agencies.
- Representative cases include addressing inconvenience concerning designated parking space for people with disabilities, drug prevention, education for teenagers, training programmes to protection the rights of military reserves, support for small business owners and improving parental leave and child care system.

### **Seoul Metropolitan Government Citizens’ Ombudsman Commission, Republic of Korea**

- A total of 19 audits, including 10 resident audits, 7 citizen audits and 2 compulsory audits were conducted in 2023 with the participation of internal and external experts. From the second half of 2023, an “Online Residents Audit Application System” was operated to further enhance citizens participation.
- 440 complaints were investigated resulting in 96 recommendations and 94 expressions of opinion. Monthly checks were conducted on the compliance status to prevent recurrence.
- A total of 170 key monitoring projects and 1000 general monitoring projects were selected to strengthen citizen participation and monitoring activities.
- Efforts were made to resolve citizen grievances and enhance safety by expanding the number of “My Neighbourhood Watchers” from 1407 in 2022 to 5037 in 2023, handling 2.2 million issues related to daily lives of citizens.
- Experts including 47 legal advisors, 100 citizen participants and 100 Ombudsman jury candidates were involved to enhance professionalism and credibility of operation. Various promotional contents including YouTube videos were developed to enhance awareness and accessibility.

## **Key Initiatives - 2024**

- Efforts being made to improve citizens trust and satisfaction with audit processes by operating a legal advisory panel, conducting satisfaction surveys and checking compliance by the target organizations on a quarterly basis.
- Direct investigations into complaints and the complaint handling procedures are being strengthened through legal consultations involving three or more individuals for each type of grievance. Compliance checks will result in preventing recurrence.
- Efforts being made to increase transparency and fairness of petition processing through the online petition system “Petition 24”. Operations of “My Neighbourhood Watchers” are supported to enhance project efficiency and safe urban environment.
- Key monitoring activities focus on pre-emptive monitoring through “Ombudsman for Citizens”. For significant issues, compulsory audits are conducted. Efforts are made to increase transparency and fairness in contracts and to promote good governance by encouraging citizen participation in evaluating projects and inspection of vulnerable areas in project implementation.

## **Commission Against Corruption (CCAC), Macao SAR**

- Out of the total complaints and reports, 147 were sent to the Ombudsman Bureau for investigation which concluded 195 cases including 20 cases required follow up by the respective departments.
- Internal functioning of the CCAC was optimized and changes were made to facilitate interaction with citizens. The Complaint Management Centre (CMC), established in 2022, is fully operational. The CCAC also established an online appointment service for direct hearing of complaints.
- Since 2023, the CCAC is disseminating results of some investigations by the Ombudsman Bureau on the CCAC Webpage for the general public.

- The CCAC reinforced the cooperation work with the local Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau to jointly study ways of interpretation of various legal regimes in the framework of the public service. The CCAC made efforts to encourage direct dialogue with Macao citizens to promote balance between the principle of confidentiality and transparency in the handling of cases and continued to call citizens to file their complaint responsibly.
- The type of cases handled by the Ombudsman Bureau included complaints about noise from the construction work beyond the authorized hours, concession of land, guarantee of impartiality in public tenders for recruitment of personnel and acquisition of goods and services and equal treatment to people with disabilities and alike.
- The CCAC continued to implement “All for Integrity” long term awareness project and to disseminate its work through use of videos as well as by enhancing the effectiveness of integrity education.
- The CCAC continued to organize lectures on different topics to promote culture of honesty among the employees and to attach importance to training of civil servants for promoting knowledge, responsibility, respect for law, noble character and upright conduct. The contents of the Integrity Academy Column of the Integrity Information Network for Civil Servants thematic website were also updated to highlight the provisions of the civil service law.

### **Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Pakistan**

- The Office of Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Pakistan celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of its establishment on 24 January 1983. It has witnessed continued growth in qualitative and quantitative terms over the years. Besides its Headquarters at Islamabad, the institution has 17 Regional Offices and 04 Complaint Collection Centres in different parts of the country.
- The incidence of complaints has touched the figure of 194,106 during 2023 marking an increase of 18% as compared to 2022. Likewise, the disposal of 193,030 cases marked an increase of 22% over the complaints addressed in

the preceding year. During the period January to May 2024, the Office received 83,243 cases and has disposed of 82,854 cases so far.

- During 2023-24, the institution focused on consolidating the gains of earlier initiatives and their impact on the efficiency and quality of its performance. These initiatives included, inter-alia, opening of new Regional Offices, holding of Khuli Katcherries (public hearings), launching of the Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD) mechanism, visits by the Ombudsman's Inspection Teams to various service delivery agencies to improve their operations and undertaking investigation, on his own motion, into any allegation of maladministration on the part of any agency or its officers/employees.
- Besides redressal of grievances, the Office undertakes research and prepares reports on issues of public interest with a view to promoting good governance and the rule of law. It has submitted so far 28 reports on subjects such as pension system, plight of street children, primary health care system, prison reforms etc.
- Two dedicated offices, (i) Grievance Commissioner for Overseas Pakistanis and (ii) Grievance Commissioner for Children are operating within the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat to address specific issues of Pakistani diaspora abroad and children.
- A well designed and calibrated media strategy is pursued to enhance awareness about the role and functions of this institution among the general public. The use of latest IT tools adds to the institution's efficiency in processing complaints and provides ease of service to the general public. The complaints can be filed through website, mobile app, email/post, while hearings are conducted through video link for the convenience of the complaints and agency. Integrated Complaint Resolution (ICR) arrangement exists with 181 Federal Government agencies whereby grievances, if not resolved within 30 days by the relevant agencies, get transferred to the Ombudsman Office for further processing.

- The Federal Ombudsman Office maintains a robust profile at the international fora. The Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) was re-elected as President of the 47-member strong Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA). Likewise, this Office plays an active role in upholding cause of ombudsmanship from the platforms of International Ombudsman Institute (IOI), the OIC Ombudsman Association (OICOA) and the Forum of Pakistan Ombudsman (FPO) with a membership of 14 ombudsman institutions in Pakistan.
- The Office in cooperation with the AOA Secretariat organized various international Webinars on professional themes i.e. Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD), Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace and Public Awareness: An Essential Feature of Ombudsman and the use of Information Technology in the Redressal of Public Grievances.

### **Federal Tax Ombudsman (Pakistan)**

- In 2023, the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) conducted 115 seminars and sessions across small cities as part of outreach and awareness campaign. The adjudication time was reduced to 37 days and over 100 own motion investigations were initiated for the benefit of public at large.
- Other important initiatives included initiation of Informal Dispute Resolution (IDR) and establishment of cell for overseas Pakistanis. Appointment of interns contributed to enhancing linkages with different colleges/universities and holding of awareness seminars.
- The incidence of complaints recorded an increase and touched the figure of 8076 cases (disposal 8128 including 239 cases carried forward from 2022) with an impressive implementation rate of 94.07% during 2023.
- Public service messages were disseminated in collaboration with Pakistan Telecom Authority to 117 million mobile users. The establishment of a dedicated helpline and FTO TV channel further enhanced the outreach and accessibility.

- Training Session on “Operations and Complaint Management Process” hosted by Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) Secretariat (16 May 2023 - Islamabad).
- Training Session on “Guidelines for Investigation, Drafting of Recommendations and Orders” hosted by FTO (7 June 2023 - Islamabad).
- Training Session on “Role of Registrars in Ombudsman Office” hosted by Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) (20 July, 2023 - Islamabad).
- Training Session on “Investigation by Ombudsman Offices” hosted by Forum of Pakistan Ombudsman (FPO) (31 July 2023 - Islamabad).
- Training Session on “Alternate Dispute Mechanism”, hosted by FTO (29 December 2023 - Islamabad).
- Training Session on “Conduct of Effective Research” hosted by FTO (24 January, 2024 - Islamabad).
- Training Session on “Implementation of Findings and Recommendations” hosted by FTO (5 March, 2024 - Islamabad).

### **Federal Insurance Ombudsman (Pakistan)**

- The Federal Insurance Ombudsman Secretariat has adopted pro-active strategy which enabled the Office to dispose of 5017 complaints with monetary relief of Rs. 5.074 billion during 2023.
- The continued awareness strategy enhanced the number of complaints by over 200% and took on board all major stakeholders of the industry i.e. State Bank of Pakistan, Insurance Association of Pakistan and Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan.
- On the recommendations of the FIO, insurance companies in the country uploaded awareness messages on their website, issued policy documents in Urdu, SECP issued Bancassurance guidelines, state bank issued directives regarding Bancassurance to all banks. FIO help line was also launched.
- A high-level committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Director General, FIO Secretariat with the participation of State Bank of Pakistan, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) and the Insurance Industry for growth and maintenance of code of ethics and fair business practices.

### **Provincial Ombudsman, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan)**

- In order to provide free of cost access to justice to citizens at their doorsteps, three Regional Offices at Abbottabad, Swat and D.I. Khan were established.
- Awareness campaign to educate general public about the role and responsibilities of the Provincial Ombudsman's institution was launched in various remote areas.
- Awareness sessions were held at D.I. Khan, District Dir (Lower), Landi Kotal and Tank.
- Lectures were also delivered at different educational institutions and universities for this purpose.
- Due to concerted efforts of the institution to generate awareness, the number of complaints was increased from 2000 to 4000 per year.

### **Provincial Ombudsman Sindh (Pakistan)**

- Focus of the Office of the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh remained on providing speedy relief to common man especially in remote areas of the province by streamline in the complaint investigation process and closer co-ordination with the agencies to ensure administrative justice to the people of Sindh.
- During the year 2023, a total of 10,057 fresh complaints were received against the government agencies whereas the relief was provided in 2624 cases which comes to 75% of the disposed of cases. Furthermore, 62 complaints pertaining to children issues were also dealt with.
- On the directives of Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Regional Directors have been holding Khuli Katcherries (public hearings) monthly in the offices of District Accounts Officer in each District of their respective jurisdiction.
- The Ombudsman Sindh unveiled upgraded website [www.mohtasibsindh.gov.pk](http://www.mohtasibsindh.gov.pk) in November 2023 for improved user experience and accessibility. Furthermore, a mobile app for easier access to the institution's services, including complaint submission and follow-up tracking, is nearing completion and will be launched soon.

- Provincial Ombudsman Sindh established three new Regional Offices i.e. two in Karachi (Districts West/Keamari and Korangi) and one in District Sanghar, facilitating public complaints and expediting grievance resolution by enhancing access to local government authorities.
- The research study on “Issues of Girls Education in Sindh” conducted by the Sindh Education Foundation (SEF), on the initiative of Provincial Ombudsman Sindh (funded by IOI) was launched by the Hon’ble Chief Minister Sindh with the objective of promoting removing bottleneck and obstacles in girls education. The recommendations of the study were converted into “Chief Minister Directives” and now being persuaded for implementation.
- The Ombudsman Sindh also initiated research study on “Assessment of Malnutrition (Stunting) in District Tharparkar” conducted by the R&T Wing of P&D Board and funded by IOI, was launched by the Hon’ble Chief Minister Sindh. The Key objectives of the study were to analyze the nutrition-specific programs in the last five years, the dynamics of multi-dimensional factors hampering the substantial improvement of nutrition outcomes in Sindh and to find effective and viable remedies thereof.
- The Hon’ble Federal Ombudsman Pakistan/President of AOA, Mr. Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi, visited the office of the Ombudsman Sindh to discuss ways and means for enhancing the effectiveness of their respective offices in providing relief and assistance to the public in addressing their grievances.
- Mr. Somsak Suwansujarit, President of IOI (Asia Region) and Chief Ombudsman of Thailand, visited Pakistan in November 2023. During the visit, an MOU was signed to facilitate international cooperation in the areas of complaint-handling, good governance, and Ombudsmanship.
- Mr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput, SI/PAS took the oath of the Office as the 7<sup>th</sup> Ombudsman for the Province of Sindh (Pakistan) in March 2024.
- A training programme on Complaint Investigation Process is planned for the Investigating Officers in 2024.
- An awareness project is planned by engaging students of select universities as Brand Ambassadors.

## **The Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tatarstan**

- The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights uses various forms and ways of working with the public as enshrined in the law of the Republic of Tatarstan No.95 of 03 March 2000.
- The information system “Public Control” has been functioning to generate awareness about the problems of the population in various spheres through the use of Internet (the State and Municipal Services Portal and Mobile Applications). Public Control provides a mechanism for citizens to access effectiveness of executive authorities and local self-government bodies.
- The steps taken for the purpose of legal education during 2023-2024 include; School of Legal Knowledge held classes for conscripts and their parents, classes for parents of children with disabilities, classes for students of the University of the Third Age, thematic telephone hotlines, lectures for students of universities in Kazan and alike.
- Within the framework of spring and autumn appeals to the armed forces, the Commissioner, staff members and public aids continued the practice of escorting teams with young recruits to places of military service. The Commissioner has so far visited more than 200 military units.
- The Commissioner actively maintains pages in the social networks. More than 300 materials were published on the platforms of three social networks as well as the Commissioner’s Official Website.
- A rehabilitation programme for convicts addicted to narcotic drugs is being implemented. During 2023, almost 98 rehabilitated persons were released from places of detention, 70% of those released continue to integrate successfully into the society using the knowledge and skills acquired during rehabilitation process.
- The new project, “Legal Aid Days for Foreign Students” was started in 2024 for providing necessary assistance and facilitating their stay in the Republic.
- A special leaflet for foreign students containing detailed information about immigration, registration, provision of medical assistance, temporary residence permits for the purpose of education was developed.

### **Provedoria dos Direitos Humanos e Justica (PDHJ) – Timor-Leste**

- PDHJ conducted education and promotion programmes jointly with UN Human Rights involving training to National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) with 250 participants, training on human rights to the Timor-Leste Defence Force, 168 participants as well as training to prison guards on torture prevention with the participation of 100 persons.
- PDHJ conducted a Workshop on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Good Governance with the participation of 153 public civil servants, 192 community members, 69 civil society organizations and 400 students.
- In the scope of monitoring, PDHJ carried out 16 issues, related to human rights situation and application of principle of good governance i.e. monitoring of presidential election, stock of medicines in the warehouse, distribution of food baskets, installation of clean water projects and alike.
- PDHJ received 378 complaints comprising 64 complaints of human rights violation, 127 complaints on violation of good governance principles from the community. PDHJ concluded 131 investigation on human rights and good governance violation.
- PDHJ maintains relations with institutions and organizations such as GANHRI, SEAOF, AOA, IOI and SEANF for strengthening cooperation to promote and protect human rights and good governance at the national, regional and international levels.

### **The Ombudsman Institution of the Republic of Türkiye**

- On 11-12 January 2023, the International Ombudsman Conference on "The Future of Human Rights in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" was held in Ankara with 70 participants in total, including approximately 40 Ombudsman and Human Rights representatives from all over the world. President of the Republic of Türkiye, H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan welcomed the participants at the opening ceremony. At the Conference Mr. Malkoç brought together the Ombudsman of Ukraine and Russian Federation. The main purpose of the

efforts is to open a “humanitarian corridor” for vulnerable groups. President Erdoğan also met with two Ombudspersons.

- On 25 January 2023, Chief Ombudsman and President of OICOA Mr. Şeref Malkoç sent a letter to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman of Sweden and to the Members of OICOA, condemning the act of burning the Holy Quran. On 6 July 2023, Mr. Malkoç, sent another letter to the all Ombudspersons and National Human Rights Institutions regarding the Burning of the Holy Quran in Sweden.
- On 5-6 October 2023, the 9th Board of Directors and 3rd General Assembly meetings of OICOA were held in Istanbul, hosted by the Ombudsman Institution of Türkiye. 50 participants from 20 countries participated in the meeting. At the General Assembly Mr. Malkoç was unanimously re-elected as the Chairman of the Board of Directors and new members were accepted to the Association.
- A TURKOMB meeting was also held in Istanbul on 5 October 2023 with the participation of Ombudspersons and Representatives of Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.
- On 18 October 2023, OICOA published a statement regarding the Conflicts in Palestine and Israel and sent it to all Ombudspersons around the world.
- At the 24th Board of Directors and 17th General Assembly Meetings of AOA were attended where Mr. Malkoç was once again elected as a member of the AOA Board of Directors.
- In September 2023, Mr. Malkoç also paid a visit to the new Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic, Ms. Jamilya Jamanbayeva and a bilateral memorandum of understanding was signed.
- In March 2023, Mr. Malkoç visited Serbia in order to participate the EOI Executive Board Meeting where he was unanimously elected a member of the Executive Board.
- On 14 August 2023, Mr. Malkoç hosted the delegation of National Commission for Supervision of China chaired by the Vice-President of the Commission, Mr. Fu Kui which was aimed at strengthening mutual cooperation.

- In January 2024, The Ombudsman of Serbia and the Ombudsman of Georgia visited The Ombudsman Institution of Türkiye.
- On 29-30 January 2024, Mr. Malkoç paid a visit to Pakistan within the framework of the 10<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors meeting of the OICOA where he had the opportunity of visiting the offices of AOA and Mr. Qureshi, the President of the AOA.
- In February 2024, a special report on “Gaza: Nakba of Humanity” has been prepared and made public at the GNAT with the participation of Turkish authorities and representatives of foreign mission in Türkiye which is available on our website both in English and Turkish.
- On 25-28 March 2024, Mr. Malkoç and Ombudsman Mr. Sadettin Kalkan paid a study visit to Ukraine upon the invitation of the Ombudsman of Ukraine, Mr. Dmytro Lubinets. The visit included observing the damages in Odesa and Kyiv, the iftar dinner organized by the President of Ukraine, Mr. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, meeting at the Ombudsman Institution of Ukraine in Kyiv, meeting with the families of prisoners of war and listening to the requests of the families. Mr. Malkoç held a meeting in also with the Leader of the Crimean Tatar People Mr. Mustafa Dzhemilev and the Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People Mr. Refat Chubarov, Mr. Şeref Malkoç paid a visit to the facility where the Russian prisoners of war are held, in order to observe the conditions there.
- Following his visit to Ukraine, Chief Ombudsman Mr. Şeref Malkoç and Ombudsman Mr. Sadettin Kalkan paid a visit to the Commissioner for Human Rights of Poland Mr. Marcin Wiącek.
- In April 2024, Chief Ombudsman Mr. Malkoç paid a study visit to the People’s Republic of China upon the invitation of the Vice President of the National Commission for Supervision of China Mr. Fu Kui. Mr. Malkoç also visited the Minister of Justice of China and the Chairman of the China Foundation for Human Rights Development, Mr. Xie Fuzhan.



**Executive Secretary**

F.No.4(3)/AOA/Coord/2023



**Senior Advisor**

25 April 2024

**Subject: The 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AOA Board of Directors**

Excellency,

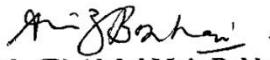
The AOA Secretariat is currently preparing necessary documents for the upcoming 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AOA Board of Directors which is scheduled to take place on 28 June 2024 at Istanbul (Republic of Turkiye).

2. In addition to the standard documents prepared every year, the AOA Secretariat proposes to prepare a catalogue/compilation of activities, special projects, initiatives and achievements of the member institutions for the promotion of ombudsmanship at the national level. The proposed compilation of such events/initiatives will greatly facilitate exchange of information, knowledge, sharing of experiences and best practices as envisaged in the Bye Laws of our Association. This document shall form a useful addition to the AOA Resource Centre and shall also be placed before the Board of Directors and the General Assembly meetings for the information of AOA membership.

3. Accordingly, it is requested that a brief summary (maximum two pages) of activities, special projects, initiatives and achievements covering the timeframe of 2023-24 may kindly be shared with the AOA Secretariat as soon as possible, but not later than 08 May 2024.

With assurances of my highest consideration and personal esteem.

Yours sincerely,

  
(Amb. (R) Abdul Moiz Bokhari)

**To:**

**All Members of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA).**