

The African Ombudsman Research Centre (AORC), a research and training arm of the African Ombudsman and Mediators' Association (AOMA) in collaboration with the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI)

Cordially invite you to a Webinar.

OMBUDS DAY 2024

Promoting the Role of the Ombudsman - Increasing Awareness and Recognition of the Institution's Importance
Tuesday, October 8, 2024

This annual event, dedicated to highlighting the vital role of Ombuds institutions worldwide, will take place on October 8, 2024. This year's theme, "Promoting the Role of the Ombudsman: Increasing Awareness and Recognition of the Institution's Importance," aims to shed light on the essential functions these offices serve in upholding justice, fairness, and accountability.

The theme of Ombuds Day 2024, "Ombuds: Here to Hear You," underscores the commitment of Ombudsman offices worldwide to actively listen and address concerns. This year's objective is to enhance global awareness of the Ombudsman's vital role in fostering transparency, trust, and accountability across sectors. Through a variety of activities, such as educational seminars, public forums, and workshops, stakeholders will gain deeper insights into how Ombudsman offices contribute to resolving conflicts and promoting fair practices. Since its inception in 2018, Ombuds Day has been celebrated annually on the second Thursday in October, transcending political and sectoral boundaries to unite the profession and strengthen connections with the communities they serve. The day aims to educate the public about the Ombudsman's role and encourage greater use of their services, while also fostering unity within the profession.

The goal of the Ombuds Day 2024 webinar is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolving role of Ombuds institutions, address the challenges and successes faced by these offices, and explore future directions and strategies for advocacy. Through insightful presentations from three expert speakers, the webinar aims to highlight the historical and contemporary roles of Ombuds institutions, examine their achievements and challenges, and discuss strategies for future growth and increased support. By doing so, the event seeks to enhance global awareness of the critical functions of Ombuds institutions and foster greater recognition and support for their contributions to justice, fairness, and accountability.

OMBUDS DAY

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CLICK HERE
TO RSVP

Due to time constraints, please note that **there will be no live questions** and answers. Participants may, however, submit relevant questions to Franky Lwelela (Lwelela@ukzn.ac.za) or Marion Adonis (adonism@ukzn.ac.za) by 10:00 on Monday, October 7, 2024, or use the Q & A function during the Webinar. Time has been allocated to respond to questions raised before and during the session. If there is insufficient time to respond to all, the questions and answers will be available on the AOMA/AORC website www.aoma.ukzn.ac.za.

DATE

Tuesday, October 8,
2024

TIME

10h00 – 11h30 SA
(GMT+2)

Speaker 1 – Mr Chris Gill, Professor of Socio-Legal Studies, University of Glasgow, Scotland, will discuss "Historical and Contemporary Roles of Ombuds Institutions: Exploring the evolution of Ombuds Institutions and their roles in various sectors."

Speaker 2 – Adv. John Walters, Former Ombudsman of Namibia, will discuss "The Challenges and Achievements of Ombudsman Offices: Examining the common challenges faced by Ombuds offices and highlighting notable successes and best practices."

Speaker 3 – Hon. Grace Malera, Ombudsman of Malawi, will discuss "Future Directions and Advocacy for Ombudsman Institutions: Discussing Future Trends, the Need for Increased Support and Independence, and Strategies for effective advocacy."

Facilitator – Hon. Tejan Ahmed Israel Jah, Esq. Ombudsman of Sierra Leone

Inquiries only:

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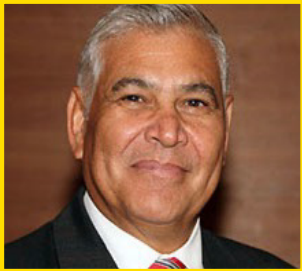
Marion Adonis

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SPEAKERS



Mr. Chris Gill is a Professor of Socio-Legal Studies at the University of Glasgow. Chris' main expertise relates to administrative justice, with a particular emphasis on the Ombud institution, complaints procedures, bureaucratic behaviour, access to justice, and the design of dispute systems. He is the Editor of the Book Series Access to Justice in Change World (Edinburgh University Press). Chris is currently conducting a British Academy Innovation Fellowship investigating the Role of Ombudspersons in Protecting Refugees and Asylum Seekers (<https://oprasproject.wordpress.com/>) and is being funded by the Economic and Social Research Council to explore transformative approaches to complaint handling in Scottish social care services. Chris also works as an independent consultant and has conducted a number of research and consultancy projects for clients including the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise, the Council of Europe, the Legal Services Board, Legal Ombudsman, Citizens Advice, and the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman. For more information, see <https://profchrisgill.com/>.



Adv. John Walters is the former Ombudsman of Namibia (2004-2021). He obtained the degrees B.A. (1977) and L.L.B. (1980) from the University of the Western Cape in South Africa and was admitted as an advocate of the Supreme Court of South Africa (South West Africa Division; as it was then called) in 1981. Mr. Walters has been a career prosecutor since 1981 and a magistrate since 1985. He spent some time in private practice until he was appointed as Acting Prosecutor-General in December 2002 until 31 December 2003. From April 1998 until March 2006, Mr Walters was the Chairperson of the Transportation Commission of Namibia; he was a member of the Board for Legal Education from 1996 to March 2004 and a member (ex officio) of the Law Reform and Development Commission of Namibia since July 2004 until date. Mr. Walters was also a Board member of the African Ombudsman Research Centre. Mr. Walters was appointed Ombudsman of the Republic of Namibia in July 2004. He succeeded Adv. Bience Gawanas as the third substantive Ombudsman of Namibia. Mr. Walters joined the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) Board of Directors as African Regional Vice-President in 2009. He was elected 1st Vice-President of the IOI in 2012 and President of the IOI in October 2014. His term of Office as President of the IOI ended in November 2016.



Hon. Grace Tikambenji Malera was appointed Malawi's Ombudsman on September 1, 2021. She has 19 years of experience in law and human rights, collaborating with state and non-state entities. Her work spans various governance sectors in Malawi, covering human rights, gender equality, children's rights, and access to justice. She earned her LLB Honours from the University of Malawi, Chancellor College, in 2002 and furthered her education with an LLM from the University of the Free State, South Africa, in 2007. Admitted to the Malawi Bar in 2002, she practices law in the Supreme Court, High Court, and subordinate courts. With extensive involvement in regional and international human rights mechanisms like the African Commission and the United Nations, she notably contributed to the Special Law Commission on Electoral Laws and Trafficking in Persons Legislation. A dedicated advocate for human rights and gender equity, she's been instrumental in NGOs advancing governance and women's rights. Serving on various human rights NGO boards, she views the law as a catalyst for social change, aiming to achieve justice and gender equality. She moderated the Malawi Presidential Debate before the 2019 Tripartite Elections.

FACILITATOR



Hon. Tejan Ahmed Israel Jah is a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of Sierra Leone with over 15 years of legal experience. He began his career at Shears Moses & Co. and Marcus Jones & Co. law firms, later serving as a Magistrate in the Judiciary of Sierra Leone. He has extensive experience in both private and corporate sectors, holding key positions in government agencies such as Legal Officer at the Right to Access Information Commission and Acting Director of Legal Affairs at the Social Security Institution. In private practice, he worked with NGOs like Advocaid and Defence for Children International, providing legal aid to indigent women, girls, and juveniles. Tejan Jah lectures at the University of Makeni, IPAM, and Njala University, and serves as a Council member on the General Legal Council. He holds an LL.B from Fourah Bay College, an MBA from IPAM, and an LL.M from the University of Salford, UK.