



مركز بحوث الرقابيين الأفارقة

African Ombudsman Research Centre

Centre de Recherche des Ombudsman Africains

Centro de Investigaçao da Provedoria de Justiça Africana

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## **AFRICAN OMBUDSMAN SUMMIT**

### **“Strengthening Good Governance in Africa Through the Role of the Ombudsman”**

25 - 26 February 2014  
Johannesburg, South Africa

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The African Ombudsman Research Centre (AORC), which is an entity of the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association (AOMA), intends to host an African Ombudsman Summit in Johannesburg from 25 – 26 February 2014. An historic event in the evolution of both the AORC and the AOMA, the Summit seeks to provide a strategic dialogue forum for AOMA, Ombudsman in Africa, African Union representatives, and other role players involved in the pursuit of good governance on the continent. Inter-governmental representatives, academics, Non-Government Organisations, and experts in ombudsman practice from other countries are also expected to attend.

#### **B. PURPOSE**

1. The aim of the Summit is to explore the contributions Ombudsman institutions make to the consolidation of democracy and good governance, therefore contributing to peace and stability on the continent. It will also provide a platform to engage on strengthening the concept of Ombudsmanship in Africa.

#### **2. Theme**

A central provision of the Joint Operational Implementation Framework between AOMA and the AUC is the entrenchment and enhancement of the Ombudsman institution as a central pillar of good governance in Africa. The first Strategic Objective of the Framework is “The Establishment and Strengthening of Ombudsman and Mediator Offices in AU Member States.” This includes a requirement that all member states should have a credible Ombudsman or Mediateur as part of their good governance framework. In light of this, the theme for the Summit is “*Strengthening Good Governance in Africa through the Role of the Ombudsman.*”

The African Ombudsman Summit has been preceded by regional inputs on the draft AOMA Framework, and the Kenya Commission for Administrative Justice Colloquium on *Repositioning the Ombudsman: Challenges and Prospects for African Ombudsman Institutions* held from 18 – 21 September 2013 in Nairobi. The Summit itself will consist of plenary sessions and commissions/panel discussions. The panel discussions will maximise stakeholders' participation through discussion of relevant issues, providing ongoing feedback, and discussion on and adoption of the Summit's Framework. They will also provide opportunity for regional and global cooperation.

### **3. About AORC**

The AORC is a research and training institution based at the University of KwaZulu Natal, and which is wholly funded by the South African Department of International Relations (DIRCO) through the African Renaissance Fund (ARF). Its Board is chaired by the Public Protector, South Africa. AORC was launched by President Jacob Zuma in March 2011.

The mission of the AORC is to support AOMA by promoting ombudsmanship; developing capacity and professionalism within the ombudsman institution and generating quality knowledge and information in furtherance of good governance, the rule of law, and human rights in Africa

### **C. ABOUT AOMA**

The AOMA is an organisation of Ombudsman and Mediators across the African continent. Established in 2003, with a view to enhancing the support of African Ombudsman offices in their role of ensuring good governance in the countries in which they operate, AOMA currently boasts 39 members straddling the six regions (Northern, Eastern, Central, West, Southern and Indian Ocean) of Africa. Efforts are ongoing to encourage those countries who are not yet members of AOMA to swell the ranks of the growing movement for good governance and the rule of law across our continent.

AOMA's objectives are to:

- Encourage the establishment, development and promotion of African Ombudsman institutions.
- Further mutual support, co-operation and joint activity through information sharing, training and development of Ombudsman and staff.
- Promote good governance - including the observance of human rights, transparency and administrative justice.
- Support and promote the autonomy and independence of Ombudsman offices.
- Foster affiliation and maintain liaison with other Ombudsman offices, Institutes and Associations, international bodies and organisations interested in the progress of Ombudsman activities and human rights.

- Identify and carry out any other relevant activities that members deem appropriate.

The need was identified to establish dedicated support structures for Ombudsman operating in Africa. To this end, Article 12 of the constitution of AOMA provides for the African Ombudsman Research Centre to conduct research and training, carry out information archiving and dissemination and to publish papers and a journal.

#### **D. COLLABORATION WITH THE AU**

The AOMA has been accredited with Observer Status in the African Union. The African Union Commission (AUC) and the AOMA achieved a milestone in their partnership to pursue good governance in Africa, at the conclusion of a coordinating meeting on the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the AUC and AOMA on 22 July 2012, in Luanda, Angola.

The coordination meeting concluded with a draft Joint Operational implementation Framework for the MOU, which regulates the relationship between the Commission and the continental Ombudsman and Mediators body.

The Joint Operational Implementation Framework covers seven strategic objectives, viz:

- i. The establishment and strengthening of Ombudsman Institutions in all member states of the African Union;
- ii. The popularisation of the African Union Shared Values Legal Instruments within the AU member states and the public;
- iii. The ratification of the AU Shared Values Legal Instruments;
- iv. The domestication and implementation of the AU Shared Values Legal Instruments;
- v. Monitoring the implementation of the AU Shared Values Legal Instruments including through the Peer Review Mechanism at the level of the African Governance Platform;
- vi. The creation of synergy between the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association and other African Institutions; and
- vii. Efficient management of the cooperation between the two parties.

Among the specific provisions of the Joint implementation Framework, is a commitment regarding the recognition of AOMA as a Pan African institution dedicated to the promotion of good governance.

The agreement envisages AOMA playing a role in the dissemination and entrenchment of AU shared values, particularly those dealing with governance in Africa. AOMA and its technical engine, the African Ombudsman Research Centre (AORC) based in Durban, South Africa, are also set to play a meaningful role in peace and stability initiatives in the continent, including conflict resolution and election monitoring.

## Programme

### **24 February 2014**

17h00 – 19h00: Arrival, Registration of Participants and Cocktail Reception (welcome by AORC Chairperson)

### **25 February 2014 – Day 1**

#### OPENING CEREMONY

- 09:00        Opening by Summit Chairperson
- 09:15        *Welcome by the Premier*
- 09:30        Opening Address (*President of AOMA*)
- 09:45        Introduction of the President of the Republic of South Africa
- 09:50        Keynote Address *by the President of the Republic of South Africa*
- 10:20        Group Photograph
- 10:50        Refreshments

#### PLENARY SESSION: The Role of Ombudsmanship in Good Governance

- 11:15        Introduction of the Session
- 11:30        “The Conscience of the State?”
- 13:00        Lunch
- 14:00        “Comparative Analysis of Legal Systems within AOMA”
- 15:30        Refreshments
- 15:45        “AU Shared Values Instruments: The Role of the Ombudsman in Strengthening Good Governance”
- 17:20        Closing of Day 1 *by the Programme Director*

#### GALA DINNER

## **26 February 2014 – Day 2**

### PLENARY SESSION

09:00 Summary of Day 1 *by the Programme Director*

### BREAK-AWAY SESSIONS

09:15 Commission 1:  
“Draft AOMA Framework and Standards for Credible Ombudsman and Mediator Offices in Africa”

Commission 2:  
“Developing a Flagship Good Governance Programme of AOMA”

11:15 Refreshments

11:30 Adoption of the AOMA Framework and Standards for Credible Ombudsman and Mediator Offices in Africa & Summit Declaration/Statement

12:30 Closing *by the Public Protector of South Africa*  
Vote of Thanks by the First Vice President of AOMA

13:00 Lunch

### CULTURAL EXPERIENCE