



مركز بحوث الرقابيين الأفارقة

African Ombudsman Research Centre

Centre de Recherche des Ombudsman Africains

Centro de Investigação da Provedoria de Justiça Africana

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## **AORC SUMMIT**

### **“Towards a Framework and Standards for the Establishment of Credible Ombudsman and Mediator Offices in Africa.”**

11 - 12 December 2013  
Cape Town

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The AOMA is an organisation of Ombudsman and Mediators across the African continent.

Established in 2003, AOMA currently boasts 39 members straddling the six regions (Northern, Eastern, Central, West, Southern and Indian Ocean) of Africa and 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.

Article 12 of the Constitution of the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association (AOMA) provides for the African Ombudsman Centre [now called the African Ombudsman Research Centre (AORC)] to conduct research and training, carry out information archiving and dissemination and to publish papers and a journal.

The primary role of the AORC is to:

- Promote the concepts of Ombudsmanship and to encourage its development in the rest of Africa;
- Develop capacity and professionalism in discharging the duties of the office of Ombudsman wherever such offices are opened, whether by country, region or focus area;
- Support the understanding of, the study of the best practices and the alignment of the role of the office of Ombudsman with internationally accepted best practices;
- The collection, storage and dissemination of research and data about the institution of Ombudsman as it grows in the African continent; and
- To facilitate the exchange of information and experiences among the ombudsmen in Africa as well as planning periodic conferences of the members of AOMA.

## **B. BACKGROUND**

The African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association (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.

### **C. AORC SUMMIT**

**i. Theme**

A central provision of the Joint Operational Implementation Framework 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 Public Protector as part of their good governance framework. In light of this, the theme for the Summit will be “***Towards a Framework and Standards for the Establishment of Credible Ombudsman and Mediator Offices in Africa.***”

**ii. Format**

The AORC Summit will be preceded by regional discussions on the draft 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.

**iii. Programme**

17h00 – 19h00, 9 December 2013: Arrival, welcome and Registration of Participants

<b>Day 1: 10 December 2013 PLENARY SESSION</b>	
09:00	Welcome by Programme Director
09:15	Opening address by the AOMA President & Introduction of AU Commissioner for Political Affairs
09h30	Key Note address by AU Commissioner
10:00	Welcome by Mayor/Premier
10:30	Refreshments
11:00	Break-away into panel discussions/commissions (1 and 2)

13:00	Lunch
14:00	Break-away into panel discussions/commissions (1 and 2)
15:30	Refreshments
16:00	Feedback to Plenary
19:00	Reception Dinner & Welcome Speech by host (AOMA Executive Secretary)

<b>Day 2: 11 December 2013 PLENARY SESSION</b>	
09:00	Welcome by Programme Director
09:15	Break-away into panel discussions/commissions (3 and 4)
10:30	Refreshments
11:00	Break-away into panel discussions/commissions (3 and 4)
13:00	Lunch
14:00	Feedback to Plenary and Presentation of draft Framework
15:30	Refreshments
16:00	Outing

<b>Commission 1</b>	
Topic	AORC Research: Comparative Analysis of Legal Systems within AOMA
Panellists	Research Team
Content	Background, methodology, sample, results

<b>Commission 2</b>	
Topic	AU Shared Values Instruments
Panellists	Task team: Operationalisation of MOU between AUC and AOMA
Content	Relevant Instruments, implementation, implications for AOMA Framework and Standards for Credible Ombudsman

<b>Commission 3</b>	
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Topic	Frameworks and Standards of other Ombudsman Associations
Panellists	BIOA, AOA, CROA, IOI, IOA
Content	Good practice, implementation, challenges, successes

#### **Commission 4**

Topic	Discussion on Draft AOMA Framework and Standards for Credible Ombudsmna and Mediator Offices in Africa
Panellists	Regional Co-ordinators, AOMA Constitution Sub-Committee, GMSI
Content	Presentation and discussion of draft, feedback from regional discussions and Kenya Colloquium

#### **Day 3: 12 December 2013**

09:00 – 17:00	<b>AOMA Exco Meeting</b>
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