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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Fellow Members of the IOI:

I would like repeat in my June column what I advised you by letter in March about the Expanded Task Force (ETF) meeting in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (29-31 March, 2007).

As you know, after the report of the initial Task Force at the 2006 annual Board Meeting in Barcelona, in December 2006, I allocated to the members of the ETF a range of topics for presentation of papers at the March 2007 Edmonton meeting. The subjects included membership strategy and services, publications and academic contribution, international relations, website, administrative issues, reforming the Secretariat, and functioning and financing of the IOI.

Present at the meeting were Dean David Percy (Treasurer), Ms. Alice Tai (Secretary), Mr. Song Chul-ho (RVP-Asia), Mr. Peter Kostelka (RVP-Europe), Mr. André Marin (RVP-North America), Mr. Bruce Barbour (RVP-Australasia & Pacific), Mr. Gord Button (Alberta Ombudsman), Mrs. Diane Callan (IOI Administrator) and myself.

The meeting was successful and productive and this letter outlines what had been discussed and the progress made in preparation for the November 2007 Board meeting in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

First and foremost, Dean Percy advised that after 2009, the Law School of the University of Alberta would not be in a position to continue hosting the head office of the IOI. The IOI has benefited from a relationship with the Law School for almost 30 years, and we are most appreciative of the contribution the University of Alberta has made to the development of a global ombudsman community. Dean Percy assured the IOI that until such time as appropriate alternative arrangements could be made continuity and support would be offered by the Law School.

As a consequence of this advice, the attention of the ETF and the Board must focus now on identifying a way forward to establishing a new Head Office and Secretariat for the IOI. Discussions were held by the ETF on the best practical way forward to ensure that appropriate matters are placed for Board consideration at the meeting in Sydney in November 2007. It is anticipated that following consideration by the Board an appropriate Secretariat model for the IOI, together with comprehensive criteria for a suitable selection process, will lead to the Board being able to make an appropriate decision at its meeting in 2008. This will then allow for all matters to be put before the General Assembly and a full vote of the membership at the next Ombudsman World Conference in Stockholm, Sweden in 2009.

Following discussion of the various topics at the ETF meeting, some of the issues agreed on included:

- 1 move towards the greater use of e-publications to ensure speedier and more effective communication with members;
- 2 identify ways to continue to expand and enhance the website;
- 3 improve the quality of information coming from members and Regional Vice-Presidents to the Secretariat;
- 4 explore ways for improving international relationships;
- 5 consider the merits of developing principles and best practice documents to assist members of the IOI.

In May I was invited to attend the annual meeting of the Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsmen (CCPO) by its President, Alberta Ombudsman Gord Button. The meeting was held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, hosted by Manitoba Ombudsman Irene Hamilton. This was an opportunity for me to meet with my Canadian provincial colleagues, several of whom are recently appointed and I had not yet had the opportunity to get to know. IOI North American Regional Vice- President André Marin of Ontario is a member of the CCPO and was also in attendance. André and I spoke about the work of the Task Force and the anticipated future of the IOI. Also participating were IOI members Dwight Bishop of Nova Scotia, Barry Fleming of Newfoundland and Labrador, Raymonde Saint-Germain of Quebec, Kevin Fenwick of Saskatchewan, Kim Carter of British Columbia, and Bernard Richard of New Brunswick. At this meeting Bernard was the current President of the Forum of Canadian Ombudsmen (FCO) and was elected to succeed Gord Button as president of the CCPO. Later in May, at the annual meeting of the FCO in Montreal, Bernard was succeeded by André Marin as President of the FCO.

Your Board and Officers are actively preparing for our upcoming annual board meeting which will be hosted by Bruce Barbour, Ombudsman of New South Wales, in Sydney, Australia in November. If you have issues or ideas for us to consider at that meeting please start communicating with your elected board representatives now.

Regards,
Bill Angrick,
President

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN HOSTING I.O.I.'S 2012 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE WELCOMED FROM INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

The I.O.I. is hosting its 9th International Conference in Stockholm, Sweden in 2009 to honour the 200th anniversary of the founding of the ombudsman institution in 1809 in Sweden. After 2009, the I.O.I. will revert to its usual spacing of its International Conferences, scheduling the 10th I.O.I. International Conference in 2012. I.O.I. institutional members are welcome to express their interest in hosting the 10th International Conference to the I.O.I. Secretary, Ms. Alice Yuen Ying Tai, at the following address:

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30/F China Merchants Tower
Shun Tak Centre
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Hong Kong, China
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THE REGION OF LA RIOJA IN SPAIN ESTABLISHES A DEFENSOR DEL PUEBLO (HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMAN) INSTITUTION

The autonomous community of La Rioja in Spain has established the institution of *Defensor del Pueblo* (human rights ombudsman). The powers of the institution are contained in Statute 6/2006 of May 2, 2006 pursuant to Article 22 of La Rioja's Statute of Autonomy. The *Defensor del Pueblo* is a high commissioner of the Regional Parliament of La Rioja and is appointed by the Parliament.

Ms. María Bueyo Díez Jalón was elected as the first Ombudsman, taking up her duties on December 28, 2006. For further details on Ms. Bueyo Díez Jalón, please see below under "Appointments/Retirements/Anniversaries, Awards".

UNGARY IN PROCESS OF CHANGING ITS HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMAN STRUCTURE

In May 2007, the Hungarian Parliament abolished the position of General Deputy to the Commissioner of Citizen's Rights, one of the four human rights ombudsman positions in Hungary. Parliamentary discussions are proceeding with respect to the details of a new ombudsman to replace the position that was eliminated which will be an ombudsman for future generations, i.e. an ombudsman for the environment. The details of the powers and functions of this new ombudsman will be fleshed out in the autumn.

For further information see on-line: BBC Monitoring Service, May 17, 2007

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHES FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME AND FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN FOR VETERANS

Canada's federal Conservative Government established a federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime in March 2007 with a mandate to: promote access of victims of criminal acts to existing support programs and services, ensure that the federal government is complying with its legislative and policy commitments, address complaints of victims with respect to compliance with the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* provisions that apply to victims of offenders under federal supervision, and identify and explore systemic and emerging issues of concern to victims of crime. It is stated that the office will operate at arm's length from the relevant federal government departments (Public Safety and Justice). However, the Ombudsman will make recommendations and report to the Ministers of Public Safety and Justice, and will be appointed by the Governor in Council (Cabinet/executive).

The Canadian government also announced in April that it will establish an Ombudsman for Veterans. The mandate of the office is to raise awareness of the needs of veterans and to ensure that veterans are receiving the services they are entitled to under a new "bill of rights" for veterans. Again, it is stated that the office will operate at arm's length from the federal government, although this Ombudsman will report annually to the Minister of Veteran's Affairs and it is the Minister who will report to Parliament.

Canada does not have a full service parliamentary ombudsman at the federal level.

NEW PRESIDENTS OF THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF PARLIAMENTARY OMBUDSMEN (CCPO) AND THE FORUM OF CANADIAN OMBUDSMAN (FCO)

Mr. Bernard Richard, Ombudsman and Child and Youth Advocate of New Brunswick, was elected President of the Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsmen (CCPO) in May 2007.

Mr. André Marin, Ombudsman of Ontario and I.O.I. Regional Vice-President for North America, was elected President of the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman (FCO) for a two-year term at the biennial meeting of the FCO in Montreal on May 30, 2007. The FCO is an umbrella organization representing ombudsman offices across Canada from the public and private sectors. He replaces outgoing FCO President Mr. Bernard Richard, Ombudsman and Child and Youth Advocate of New Brunswick.

APPOINTMENTS/RETIREMENTS/ANNIVERSARIES/AWARDS ETC.

AUSTRALIA—WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Ms. Deirdre O'Donnell has resigned as the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (Ombudsman) for the State of Western Australia, following completion of her term of office. The new Ombudsman for Western Australia is Mr. Chris Field, appointed by the Premier for a five-year term, commencing on March 26, 2007. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Field was a member of Western Australia's Economic Regulation Authority. He was formerly the Executive Director of the Victorian Consumer Law Centre and has held numerous board and

university appointments relating to consumer issues. Mr. Field obtained his Bachelor of Laws (Hons.) and Bachelor of Arts degrees from La Trobe University.

AUSTRIA

Ms. Maria Fekter has been named by the People's Party of Austria as their Ombudsman on Austria's Ombudsman Board and was elected by the Austrian Parliament. Prior to her appointment, Ms. Fekter was the justice spokesperson for the People's Party in the Austrian Parliament. She replaces Ms. Rosemarie Bauer.

CANADA—ALBERTA

Mr. Harley Johnson, Alberta Métis Settlements Ombudsman, finished his term of office on June 1, 2007. Mr. Johnson is a former Ombudsman of Alberta and a former I.O.I. Board member. The new Métis Settlements Ombudsman is Mr. Gary Jones.

CANADA—ONTARIO

Mr. André Marin, Ombudsman of Ontario was given an award by the Canadian Crime Victim Foundation in May 2007 for his work for victims of crime based on his investigation into Ontario's Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB). The Ombudsman's Report, called "Adding Insult to Injury" found that the CICB engaged in poor practices and there was excessive delay, and responded with 17 recommendations for change.

GERMANY—MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN

Mr. Bernd Schubert was elected as the regional Ombudsman for Mecklenburg-Vorpommern by the *Landtag* of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern on December 7, 2006. Mr. Schubert assumed his duties on February 5, 2007 for a six-year term. Prior to his election, Mr. Schubert trained as a mechanical engineer. He served as a Member of the *Landtag* of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern from 2002 until January 2007, acting as the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) speaker on security, drugs and drug-addiction, and youth affairs. Mr. Schubert has also served as the Mayor of Ducherow since 1994.

Mr. Schubert replaced Ms. Heike Lorenz who had completed her term of office.

HUNGARY

Dr. Barnabás Lenkovics, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Civil Rights of Hungary, has demitted office before the completion of his six-year mandate. Dr. Lenkovics was elected as a Constitutional Court Justice by the Hungarian Parliament effective April 21, 2007.

Further details of his replacement will appear in a future issue of this *Newsletter*.

ITALY—VALLE D'AOSTA

Mr. Flavio Curto was elected regional Ombudsman (*Il Difensore Civico*) for the Autonomous

Region of Valle d'Aosta, Italy on December 20, 2006 by the Regional Council of Valle d'Aosta. Mr. Curto assumed his duties on January 22, 2007. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Curto had worked for the public administration in Valle d'Aosta since 1992. He has served as Director of the Transport Department, Coordinator of the Legal Department and Coordinator of the Legislative and Legal Department. He also served as Councillor of the Etroubles Commune from 1985 to 2000.

Mr. Curto replaces Ms. Maria Grazia Vacchina who has completed her mandate.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Mr. Pavel Kandráč was reelected Public Defender of Rights of the Slovak Republic for a second five-year term by the Slovak Republic National Council on January 30, 2007. Prior to his appointment as the Public Defender of Rights, Mr. Kandráč obtained his law degree at the Faculty of Law, Comenius University in Bratislava (FLCU). He served as the Vice-Dean and Head of the Criminal Law Department of the Faculty of Law of the FLCU. In 1998, Mr. Kandráč was elected as a member of Parliament of the Slovak Republic's National Council, where he was a member of the Committee for Education, Science, Youth and Sport. He was elected as the first Public Defender of Rights of the Slovak Republic in 2001.

SLOVENIA

Dr. Zdenka Čebašek-Travnik was appointed as the new Slovenian Human Rights Ombudsman by the Parliament of Slovenia on December 20, 2006. She commenced her duties on February 21, 2007 for a six-year term. Prior to her appointment, Dr. Čebašek-Travnik was a psychiatrist who specialized in treating addicts. She has served as the assistant to the head of training programmes at Ljubljana University Psychiatric Hospital and as a professor at the Ljubljana University Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Law. Dr. Čebašek-Travnik completed post-graduate studies in psychopathology and psychotherapy in Zagreb, the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, U.S.A. and at the London Institute of Family Therapy. She was awarded her doctorate degree at the Ljubljana Faculty of Medicine in 1998.

Dr. Čebašek-Travnik replaces Mr. Matjaz Hanzek who completed his term of office as Human Rights Ombudsman. Mr. Hanzek also served on the I.O.I. Board of Directors for the European Region.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Mr. Joe Poraiwai was appointed as the new Ombudsman for Solomon Islands.

SPAIN—LA RIOJA

Ms. María Bueyo Díez Jalón was elected on a unanimous basis by the regional Parliament of La Rioja, Spain as the first regional Ombudsman of La Rioja on September 26, 2006. She assumed her duties on December 28, 2006 for a five-year term.

Prior to her appointment, Ms. Bueyo Díez Jalón was the head of the public prosecutor's office in La Rioja and was a member of the Consultative Committee which worked on the amendments to La Rioja's Regional Statute. Ms. Bueyo Díez Jalón also taught as a professor at the University of La Rioja and is the author of several publications.

SWEDEN

Ms. Kerstin André was reelected as a Parliamentary Ombudsman of Sweden for a third four-year term in mid-November 2006. She has served as a Parliamentary Ombudsman since 1998. Her areas of responsibility include the supervision of social services, the health and medical care system and the educational system. Ms. André also served for a period of time on the I.O.I. Board of Directors. Ms. André's colleagues are Mr. Mats Melin, Chief Ombudsman, and Ombudsmen Ms. Cecilia Nordenfelt and Mr. Nils-Olof Berggren.

Also, Mr. Jan Pennlöf, Parliamentary Ombudsman from 1999 to 2002, was reelected in November 2006 as Deputy Ombudsman for his third two-year term. Mr. Hans Ragnemalm serves as the other Deputy Ombudsman.

UNITED KINGDOM—SCOTLAND

Professor Alice Brown was reappointed as the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman by Scotland's Parliament for a second term in March 2007.

U.S.A.—DAYTON, OHIO

The I.O.I. announces with great regret the death of Marie D. Ferguson on May 27, 2007. Ms. Ferguson served as Ombudsman and Executive Director of the Joint Office of Citizen Complaints in Dayton, Ohio from July 1992 until May 1999. Ms. Ferguson was the third Ombudsman for the Joint Office of Citizen Complaints which was founded in 1971. She served as a member of the Board of Directors of the United States Ombudsman Association (USOA) from 1993 to 1999, and as a member of the Board of Directors of the International Ombudsman Institute from 1996 until 1999. After her retirement, Ms. Ferguson was elected an Honorary Member of the USOA in recognition of her contribution to the profession of ombudsman. Ms. Ferguson will be remembered for her passion for truth and fairness, and for her respect for the individual.

PAST/UPCOMING CONFERENCES/MEETINGS

APRIL 12-13 AND 16-17, 2007—TENTH ROUND TABLE OF EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN AND CONFERENCE CELEBRATING TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTION—ATHENS, GREECE

The Tenth Round Table meeting of European Ombudsman was held in Athens, Greece on April 12 to 13, 2007, hosted by the Greek Ombudsman, Professor Giorgos Kaminiis, and the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Mr. Thomas Hammarberg. The

Round Table was attended by all of the ombudsmen and the heads of national human rights commissions of Council of Europe member states, comprising about fifty representatives. The Round Table was inaugurated by the President of Greece, H.E. Dr. Karolos Papoulias and closed by the Minister for Internal Affairs, Mr. Prokopis Pavlopoulos. The Round Table examined the new role of the Commissioner for Human Rights and the national ombudsmen in the provisional procedure before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg after the entry into force of the Fourteenth Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights. The amendments stipulate that the national ombudsmen will undertake to provide information and evaluations with regard to the applicability of an individual's recourse to the European Court and also will express their opinion with regard to queries concerning violations of human rights to the European Court of Human Rights itself.

On April 16 and 17, 2007, a conference celebrating the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Greek Ombudsman institution was also held in Athens. The conference was inaugurated with a greeting from the President of the Greek Parliament, Anna Benaki-Psarouda, presented in her absence by the Greek Ombudsman, Professor Kaminis. The conference included a session on the discussions in the Greek Parliament at the time when the law on the Greek Ombudsman was adopted and sessions on the institution with presentations given by Greek legal experts and political scientists, including Professor Nikiforos Diamandouros, first Greek Ombudsman and current Ombudsman of the European Union.

APRIL 26-28, 2007—ASIAN OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION (AOA) TENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE— HANOI, VIETNAM

The Tenth Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) Annual Conference was held in Hanoi, Vietnam on April 26 to 28, 2007, hosted by the Government Inspectorate of Vietnam (GIV). Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister Truong Vinh Trong spoke at the Opening Ceremony on April 26, 2007. The Conference <http://www.aoa.org.pk> was attended by 120 international and domestic delegates, representing the AOA, the I.O.I., and the ASEAN and northern European inspection agencies.

MAY 28-29, 2007—FORUM OF CANADIAN OMBUDSMAN 3rd BIENNIAL CONFERENCE— MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The 3rd Biennial Conference of the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman was held on May 28 to 29, 2007 at the Holiday Inn Select Downtown Montreal Convention Centre in Montreal, Quebec. The theme of the Conference was "Unique Solutions to Universal Problems". Optional pre-conference workshops were held on May 27.

JUNE 11-14, 2007—INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION (IOA) TRAINING COURSES—AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, TUNIS, TUNISIA

The International Ombudsman Association (IOA) will present "Ombudsman 101" and specialized courses on "Ombudsman Support Role", "Helping People Come Forward" and "Ombudsing in the Field" at the African Development Bank, Tunis, Tunisia on June 11 to 14, 2007. For additional information see: <www.ombudsassociation.org> and e-mail:

<info@ombudsassociation.org>.

JULY 16-20, 2007—INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION (IOA) TRAINING COURSES—SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA

The International Ombudsman Association (IOA) will present “Ombudsman 101” and specialized courses on “Ombudsman 101PLUS”, “Legal Issues in an Everyday Ombudsman Practice—Answers to the Questions That You Have Always Wanted to Ask” and “Defining Effectiveness for the Ombudsman Office” at The Red Lion Hotel on Fifth Avenue in Seattle, Washington, USA on July 16 to 20, 2007. For additional information see: <www.ombudsassociation.org> and e-mail: <info@ombudsassociation.org>.

I.O.I. PUBLICATIONS

(2004) 8 THE INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN YEARBOOK

Volume 8 (2004) of *The International Ombudsman Yearbook* has been completed and sent to the publisher for production. Volume 8 will be distributed to members in May or June 2007. The following articles will appear in Volume 8: “The Ombudsman and the Rule of Law” by John McMillan, “The Role of Administrative Courts and Ombudsmen in France and Malta: A Review of Two Contrasting Systems” by Cécile Plaidy and Ivan Mifsud, “Administrative Mediation and Ombudsmen: An Encounter With Internormativity” by Marie-José Chidiac, “Good Governance and Development Challenges in the South Pacific: The Promise of Ombudsmanship” by Dejo Olowu, “A Specialist Ombudsman for Prisoners” by Stephen Shaw, “The Engaged Ombudsman—Morality and Activism in Attaining Administrative Justice” by Gregory J. Levine and “What Should be the Primary Focus of the Ombudsman Institution? Redressing Public Grievances and Protecting Human Rights Versus Fighting Corruption: Emphasis on South Asia and the Commonwealth Caribbean” by Najmul Abedin.

(2005) 9 THE INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN YEARBOOK

Work on Volume 9 of the *Yearbook* is well underway. The issue is complete with respect to contents and the editing of the volume will continue over the summer. The I.O.I. anticipates sending the volume to the publisher in September with publication to occur at the end of 2007 or in early 2008. The extensive Bibliography containing citations of books, book chapters and articles on the ombudsman found on the I.O.I. web site and compiled by Ms. Heather Grab and Professor Linda C. Reif will be published in this volume. The articles accepted for publication in this volume are: “The Ombudsman and Client Satisfaction: Observations on the Relationship Between Jurisdiction, Outcome, and Satisfaction” by Frank Fowlie; “L’ombudsman: Proposition de Définition” (French) and in its English translation “The Ombudsman: Proposal for a Definition” by Rhita Boustia; and “Derechos Humanos y la Migración en México: Algunas Experiencias de la Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos” (Spanish) and in its English translation “Human Rights and Migration in Mexico: Some Experiences of the National Commission of Human Rights” Mr. José Luis Soberanes.

NEW OMBUDSMAN STREET, TELEPHONE AND E-MAIL/WEB SITE ADDRESSES/CHANGES TO THE I.O.I. DIRECTORY

ARMENIA

The new address, telephone number and fax number for the Human Rights Defender of Armenia are:

Human Rights Defender
Yerevan, 0002 Pushkin 56a
Armenia
Telephone: +37410538842
Fax: +37410530262

The e-mail address and web site information remains the same.

AUSTRIA

The telephone number and web site for the Volksanwaltschaft, Austria are:

Telephone: 43 1 51505
[Http://www.volksanwaltschaft.gv.at](http://www.volksanwaltschaft.gv.at)

MACEDONIA

Contact details for the Office of the Public Attorney/Ombudsman of Macedonia are:

Public Attorney/Ombudsman
Mr. Idzet Memeti
ul. "Dimitrija Cuposki" br. 2
MK - 1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Telephone: 389 23129 335
Fax: 389 23129 359
E-mail: skopje@ombudsman.mk
[Http://www.ombudsman.mk/default.aspx?LAN=EN](http://www.ombudsman.mk/default.aspx?LAN=EN)

MALTA

The e-mail address for the Parliamentary Ombudsman of Malta is:

office@ombudsman.org.mt

SOLOMON ISLANDS

The fax number for Solomon Islands is 677 28626. The address, e-mail address and telephone

numbers remain the same.

NEWS ITEMS, ARTICLES ETC. FOR I.O.I. PUBLICATION

We encourage the submission of news items for publication in the *Newsletter* and the submission of articles, manuscripts and lectures for consideration of their publication either in the *Occasional Paper* series or *The International Ombudsman Yearbook*. In particular, the Editor wishes to receive papers for consideration of their publication in (2006) Volume 10 of *The International Ombudsman Yearbook* and news items for the September 2007 *Newsletter*. We appreciate the regular receipt of information from member offices on changes in appointment, retirements, etc. for inclusion in the *Newsletter*.

Please note that the Editorial Advisory Board is in operation for anonymous review of papers submitted in consideration of their publication in the *Yearbook*.

Please submit all material to:

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