

ISSN 0229-2181
VOLUME 29: NUMBER 3
SEPTEMBER 2007

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Fellow Members of the I.O.I.:

In June, I wrote about the work of the Expanded Task Force (ETF) and reported on Dean David Percy's advice that the University of Alberta would not be in a position to continue hosting the International Ombudsman Institute's Head Office after 2009. In November, the Board will discuss the search for a new location for its Head Office, with a view to inviting bids from interested member organizations. Thereafter, a lot of work will have to be accomplished within a short time, preparing proposed amendments to the By-Laws and formulating recommendations for the General Assembly to decide in Stockholm in June 2009.

"Relocation" is the biggest decision facing the International Ombudsman Institute (I.O.I.) to date. A decision on this subject will influence the I.O.I.'s future development on a wide range of matters. I would like to share with you the current thinking on this subject, to give you ample notice, so that anyone interested in hosting the Secretariat (Head Office, plus office of the Secretary) can start considering their position to prepare their bid. It is possible some of these requirements or criteria may be changed or modified when the full Board meets in Sydney this November.

Even before Dean Percy's advice, the ETF had been considering the desirability of co-locating the Secretariat with an Institutional Member to achieve the following objectives:

- to allow a serving Ombudsman, as *ex-officio* Secretary General, to give executive direction and guidance to the Secretariat and its work, thereby providing continuity to the Organization;
- to focus more on services to and activities for members by utilizing regional membership structures and networking;
- to save administrative costs so that the I.O.I.'s revenue from membership can be devoted to membership services more fully.

The I.O.I.'s ultimate goal is to fund an appropriately staffed Secretariat. The I.O.I. cannot afford this right now, given regional feedback that members want more membership services and activities, but are unlikely to support an increase in membership fees. Co-location with an Institutional Member, requiring the latter to bear the costs for accommodation, secretarial, clerical and other administrative support, would allow the I.O.I. to keep its fees for membership benefits.