



International Ombudsman Institute – European Region
Instituto Internacional del Ombudsman – Región Europea
Institut International de l’Ombudsman – Région Européenne

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NEWSLETTER No. 5

Dear colleague,

As you already know, an IOI Board Meeting was held in Barcelona a few weeks ago.

The Board Meeting was kindly hosted and perfectly organised by our colleague OM Rafael Ribó. During the Meeting, which was characterised by an excellent atmosphere and lively discussions, colleague OM Bill Angrick was confirmed as president of the IOI, Alice Tai and Dean David Percy were reappointed Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

Tom Frawley new Vice-President

I think it is a genuine expression of respect for our friend Ombudsman Tom Frawley and the IOI-European Region as well that the above mentioned was unanimously elected Vice-President of the IOI. He succeeds Dr. Hayden Thomas who will resign as Ombudsman of Antigua / Barbuda in November 2006.

Task Force

This year's Meeting focused on the proposals submitted by President Bill Angrick (USA), Alice Tai (Hong Kong), Bruce Barbour (Australia) and Peter Kostelka in their capacity as members of the Task Force. As President Bill Angrick outlined, the IOI had developed in many different ways since its establishment. There was a constant need for the IOI to redefine itself, to facilitate the development of new offices while strengthening established ombudsman institutions. The Task Force, established last year, had identified a range of subjects for a redefinition of IOI's direction. It was unanimously decided to further elaborate the points of discussions raised, and proposals made, by the Task Force within an enlarged Task Force including the members of the IOI Executive Board and all IOI Regional Vice-Presidents. Based on preliminary work and activities, the enlarged Task Force should make

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proposals on the reorganisation of the IOI. Special consideration should be given to questions regarding the tasks and organisation of the IOI Secretariat, the position of the IOI Regions and the scientific field. The overall aim is to provide a better service for the IOI members. The steps to be taken in this direction should be specified until our 2007 Board Meeting in Sydney. We would thus be able to present proposals to our members and to possibly develop a decision making process in 2008, in good time before our next General Assembly which will be held in 2009 during our world conference in Stockholm.

New IOI Homepage

The new homepage design presented in Barcelona will facilitate the access to the IOI homepage. The homepage will not only contain general information on the IOI and links to the homepages of the IOI Regions, but also a calendar of ombudsman related events, a list of all IOI publications and further literature dealing with the ombudsman idea in English. This ombudsman bibliography will make research activities easier. It is, however, intended to give access especially to the Occasional Papers of the IOI that are now available on the website, only to IOI members.

The Board expressed its gratitude to Editor Linda Reif and Administrator Diane Callan for designing and building the new website (<http://www.law.ualberta.ca/centres/ioi/>).

Financial status of the IOI

Our Treasurer Dean David Percy reported last year's expenditures and tabled next year's budget. It turned out that the IOI has sufficient financial means to accomplish the current tasks. Nevertheless, we will have to continue our discussion about whether or not it is suitable to calculate membership fees according to the members' financial situation. Within this context, the Board confirmed the decision that membership expires after two years of non-payment of membership fees. In case of payment of outstanding membership fees, the IOI debt management policy provides that the "oldest" claims are settled first. The Executive Board decides on requests for reduced membership fees after consultation with the Regional Vice-President.

IOI Publications

Editor Linda Reif presented the publication plan for the next two yearbooks. Within this context, I would like to point out that Linda Reif welcomes submissions of papers for the yearbook, the most important IOI publication, and is ready to discuss them with the authors.

World Conference 2009

Mats Melin, Chief Ombudsman of Sweden, gave detailed accounts of the advanced preparations for the 2009 World Conference to be held in Stockholm. The plan is for the 9th World Conference to be held during the first three days, followed by a Special Day of Celebration to celebrate the bicentenary of the world's first ombudsman institution.

With regard to the World Conference, Mats Melin stressed that this is a conference for the international community of ombudsmen, not primarily for the host office. He would, therefore, be most grateful if our members could let him know their wishes and suggestions for topics to be discussed (e-mail: jusititieombudsmannen@riksdagen.se). During the Special Day of Celebration, the original Swedish ombudsman model will be presented and Mats Melin hopes that some colleagues from other countries would like to contribute by describing how the original model has been transformed and developed when adopted in states on all continents.

World Conference 2012

The Board having agreed that it is more than justified to hold the IOI World Conference in Stockholm together with the anniversary celebrations of the Swedish Ombudsman Institution and thus make an exception of the four-year schedule of our World Conferences, decided to return to the original four-year schedule after Stockholm. Consequently, the 10th World Conference is expected to take place in 2012. The venue will be chosen after the Stockholm Conference.

European Conference 2010

The decision on the date of the next World Conference (after Stockholm) is important to the European Region insofar as the next European Conference will be held in Barcelona in 2010.

Regardless of this date, a General Assembly of the European Region will take place during the 2009 World Conference in Stockholm. The European Board of Directors will then be elected for the period 2009 – 2012.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank again our colleagues OM Mats Melin and OM Rafael Ribó for organising the two big events.

European Board Meeting

During the Meeting of the European Board we agreed that we would submit a strategy paper to all members by next spring. In doing so, we take up a suggestion we received at our last European Meeting in Vienna. We hope that lively discussions about the future key issues of the IOI Europe will follow.