

Message

for

the 12th Conference of AOA



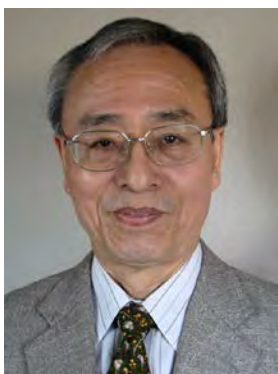
Mr. Hideo Arai
Director-General,
Administrative Evaluation Bureau,
Ministry of Internal Affairs and
Communications (MIC), JAPAN

It gives me great pleasure to host the 12th Conference of the Asian Ombudsman Association, thanks to the support of members of the AOA and I extend a hearty welcome to all participants in this Conference.

We are each of us throughout the region facing a number of socio-economic challenges, such as how to deal with an aging society, how to take effective countermeasures against large-scale natural disasters, such as have recently struck Japan, and so on. In recognition of these issues, at this conference we will be holding 5 sessions under the main theme, "Challenges for the Ombudsman in a Changing Socio-Economic Environment". I sincerely hope all participants will share their experiences, views and ideas on this theme.

In Japan, there are presently some 5,000 administrative counselors who are available for consultation at every citizen's nearest 'grievance resolution' window. This unique system started in 1961 when 882 members of the public were asked for their help in bringing it to reality, since when it has grown exponentially. A total of more than 6.21 million complaints have been received by our administrative counselors over the past 50 years. On the occasion of the recent major earthquake, it should be noted that our administrative counselors performed to great effect in the hardest hit areas. On this occasion therefore, I very much hope Conference participants will take the opportunity of gaining insight into our unique system.

Finally, may I thank members of the AOA for your friendship and cooperation in this regard, and for your kind support and words which encouraged us greatly at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake.



Dr. Wataru Omori
Chairman, the Administrative Grievance
Resolution Promotion Council,
Emeritus Professor, Tokyo University, JAPAN

On the occasion of the 12th Conference we most warmly welcome all of you who have assumed the grave responsibility of being an Ombudsman in each Asian country.

The Administrative Grievance Resolution system of our country is the product of the unique Japanese political and social features. Our system performs an ombudsman-like role through its tripod structure , Administrative Counselors who are volunteer citizens commissioned by the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), the Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Council (AGRPC) and the Administrative Evaluation Bureau (AEB).

The AGRPC is an advisory body under the Minister for MIC, composed of seven magisterial experts from non-governmental circles, i.e. Judicial, academic, journalism and so on. In order to expedite solutions for the more difficult issues arising from the grievances received via administrative counseling, our Council has the function and capacity to reflect its own opinion to the mediation carried out by Ministry. Our judgments are based on freely-expressed ideas which derive from common sense and not subject to the restrictions imposed by mazy administrative practice.

Our challenge is how to deal appropriately with complaints and troubles brought by the public administrative services and how to correct governmental inadequacy. I believe everyone gathered here shares this responsibility and occasionally burden of having to make a judgment based only on our own good sense. I am also in that position, therefore I am keenly interested in the knowledge and experience you will contribute in this regard.

I have no doubt that each ombudsman from the various countries and regions will obtain from this year's Conference useful information to take home with you and apply to your activity. I hope that this Conference will strength our ever-lasting friendship and communication. Thank you very much, and have a nice stay in Japan.



Mr. Noboru Tani
President, the National Federation of
Administrative Counselors' Associations,
JAPAN

Welcome to Japan, ombudsmen from 25 countries and regions of the AOA. I represent the organization which serves as Japan's Ombudsman system which is made up of 5,000 administrative counselors distributed throughout this country.

Within the larger framework of a society governed by public administration, the voices of each and every citizen in difficulties or feeling trapped in a corner by the system are the principal trigger for the intervention of the ombudsman. I believe that in your countries or regions you are also taking great pains expand your operational base in order to be better able to pick up these cries of distress.

In Japan we administrative counselors, being able to carry on our activity independent of government agencies have been successful in detecting and responding to these voices and distress calls. It is already over half a century since this system was first introduced in our country, nevertheless I consider it very important to make continuous efforts to heed and respond to socio-economic change in the way we go about our activity, so that we continue to remain helpful to the public. I'm very much looking forward to hearing about your own experience in this regard and about other matters at this Conference.

In conclusion, may I express my hopes and wishes for the success of this Conference, for the prosperity of each of your countries and regions, and for the continued development of ombudsman activity in today's world. Thank you.



Dr. Hiromitsu Kataoka
Chairman, the Japan Association for
Ombudsman Studies/
Emeritus Professor, Waseda University

Congratulation for the 12th Conference of AOA. It is my honor and privilege to speak before the distinguished members of AOA and those concerned.

I am Chairman of the Japan Association for Ombudsman Studies consisting both of practitioners and academicians to make a joint research and inquire into the future of the Japanese Ombudsman system.

Tenshin Okakura, a pioneer of fine art in Meiji Era declared that Asia was the one, the site of whose monument in Izura washed by the Tsunami following the Great Earthquake of Eastern Japan is under reconstruction. Meanwhile, ex-premier and the founder of Waseda University Shigenobu Ohkuma told bolder that the World had been already one, in that the waves of Eastern and of Western civilizations had traveled around the globe in different directions to meet and being gotten intermingled, about a hundred years ago.

For example, all of us believe that the Ombudsman system comes from Sweden, some scholars trace its immediate origin to Russia, but more remote origin either to Islamic World or to China.

We have learn a lot from the Western civilization, to be sure. But it has had a bias of emphasis upon goals since Machavelli and of result-orientations since Thatcher and Reagan, and pursued the cost-benefit efficiency, or value for money.

On the other hand, Mahatma Gandhi of India used to urge us to act rightly irrespective of the results, and to consider the means first, and then follows an end. He took this idea from a Hindu scripture. Recently Professor Ho of Lingnan University of Hong Kong points out that happiness is in general more successfully pursued by action based on general rules, than by measuring the consequence of each action.

The result orientation leads to a causal responsibility. But if a caused result is irreversible, there is no way to take a responsibility. Therefor an enough care must be taken both before and during action to infuse ethics and morality.

Of course, we can not manage to support the population on the earth without a result-oriented development accompanying a causal responsibility. But its deadlock has been already apparent. We need badly te merger of the Western and Eastern way of thinking.

An initiative must come from Asia, Especially from you Asian Ombudsmen standing for human dignity. Thank you very much, and have a nice stay here in Numazu.



Ms. Conchita Carpio Morales
Vice President,
Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA)/
Ombudsman, PHILIPPINES

With utmost delight, I greet and welcome the participants to the 12th Conference of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA).

I am humbled by the AOA's act of warmly welcoming a "*Benjamin* of the Association" who, by happenstance of two successions,¹ has to assume the functions of an interim President for the remaining period of the current term. Allow me then to join you and march beside you as we move to end the cycle of impunity, engender a culture of integrity, and cut off the remaining tentacles of this social plague called corruption.

The view is settled that corruption is universally morally reprehensible. I could not think of a country that holds corruption as a *mores*. No state encounters a clash between law and morality. It is in capitalizing on the strength of this concurrence that the vital support of the private sector, regardless of beliefs and persuasions, could be tapped. The unanimity of the underlying ethical position is an impetus to our **combat** against corruption through prosecution, **crusade** against corruption through corruption prevention, and **campaign** against corruption through anti-corruption promotion.

As the year 2012 draws near, it is fitting that the AOA gathers fellow workers for good governance to a Conference that will explore "challenges for the Ombudsman in a changing socio-economic environment." The theme, which shall be amplified by five relevant sub-themes, is both timely and timeless. Indeed, challenges await us as soon as we conclude this Conference and return to our respective areas of work. Meantime, let us equip ourselves with sufficient armor through capacity-building throughout the duration of the Conference.

It has been said that if governance is what governments do,² then good governance is what good governments do.³ The task that lies ahead, therefore, is to instill and install good Asian governments.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Conchita Carpio Morales". The signature is fluid and cursive.

¹ Bye-Laws of the AOA, Par. 7, subpar. (6) in relation to subpar. (9).

² *Vide* <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governance>> [visited: October 11, 2011].

³ *Vide* M.G. Quibria, "Does Governance Matter? Yes, No or Maybe: Some Evidence from Developing Asia" 59 *Kyklos* 99-114 (Issue 1, February 2006).

Message



Ms. Beverley A. Wakem, CBE.
President,
International Ombudsman Institute (IOI)/
Chief Ombudsman, NEW ZEALAND

I am delighted to join with your host, Hideo ARAI, the Ombudsman of Japan, and the staff of the Ombudsman Office in welcoming you to this important meeting of the Asian Ombudsman Association.

The theme of the Conference is very timely as we face considerable change in the world's social, economic and political environment and try to accommodate the challenges of new technology. All of these affect how we approach the Ombudsman's functions and the expansion of our jurisdiction into the broader field of human rights.

The need for closer co-operation for mutual support, training and professional development among the Ombudsman community has never been stronger. The International Ombudsman Institute is committed to trying to encourage these developments and find ways to enable more and wider dialogue on issues of concern to all of us.

For that reason I am looking forward to learning about the issues which are of concern to all colleagues in the AOA region. I expect that the many and varied presentations on the Conference agenda will greatly stimulate our thinking and offer ways to collaborate on matters of mutual interest.

Warm good wishes for a successful conference!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beverley A. Wakem". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Program and Delegates