



THE OMBUDSMAN OBSERVER

September 2025

An OIC Ombudsman Association Publication



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- Ombudsman of Chad Visits the Mediator of Morocco H.E Hassan Tariq
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The President's Message

Dear Esteemed OICOA Members and Colleagues,

It is my pleasure and honor to welcome you to the September edition of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Ombudsman Association (OICOA) Newsletter, which serves as a bridge connecting colleagues who share the same commitment to human rights, accountability, and good administration.

As Ombudsmen, we recognize that our decisions have the power to touch the lives of millions. This responsibility makes it essential to strengthen communication and collaboration among our Institutions, for it is through unity that society's trust in justice grows. Meaningful dialogue with public administrations, combined with international solidarity, allows us to learn from one another, expand our perspectives, and enhance the impact of our work.



As President of OICOA, I would like to conclude by expressing my deepest appreciation for your dedication to our shared mission. Together, we stand as defenders of justice, advocates of the people, and the voice of the voiceless. Through solidarity and cooperation, we will continue to protect human rights and promote the principles of good administration for the benefit of all.

Warm regards,

H.E. Mehmet Akarca
PRESIDENT OIC OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION
CHIEF OMBUDSMAN OF TURKIYE



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



H.E. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah
Federal Tax Ombudsman
of Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Dear OICOA Members,

Each edition of our newsletter reflects the living momentum of ombudsmanship in action—a tradition rooted in justice, yet ever evolving through the dedication of our member institutions. As we mark the September issue, I am pleased to highlight a set of exemplary developments that speak to the depth, diversity, and shared purpose of our Association.

We are especially proud to feature the institutional history of the Ombudsman of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, whose steadfast commitment to constitutional integrity and public accountability has made it an integral and dynamic force within the OICOA family. Their journey is emblematic of how ombudsman institutions can evolve with resilience and relevance.

I also extend my warm congratulations to Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi for his pivotal role in convening the recent Asian Ombudsman Association meetings in Beijing. His presence and leadership on this international platform reflect the clarity of purpose and collaborative spirit that define the best of our profession. It is my pleasure to welcome Justice Nazule Batala, newly appointed Inspector General of Government of Uganda, into the OICOA community. Her distinguished record and judicial insight will no doubt enrich our collective mission, and we look forward to the perspectives she will bring to our table.

I commend Chairman Abdullah Qaderboh of Libya's Administrative Control Authority for expressing principled solidarity with the Palestinian people during his recent meeting with the Palestinian Ambassador. His stance reflects the broader moral responsibility ombudsman institutions carry beyond national borders. OICOA stands with all efforts that affirm justice, dignity, and human rights.

As ever, I invite you to engage with this issue not only as readers, but as participants in a living archive of oversight, dialogue, and reform. I look forward to celebrating your continued accomplishments in the months ahead.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Respected OICOA Members,

Welcome to the September edition of the OICOA newsletter—a platform that continues to capture the momentum, purpose, and progress of ombudsman institutions across the OIC community. I extend heartfelt congratulations to H.E. Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi, Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan, for successfully hosting the 26th Board Meeting and General Assembly of the Asian Ombudsman Association in Beijing—a vital moment of regional engagement and institutional dialogue.

This issue proudly features Hon'ble Mohamed Benalilou as our *Legendary Ombudsman*, whose legacy continues to shape global oversight frameworks and OICOA's mission of excellence, and H.E. Ghada Hameed as *Ombudsman in Focus*, whose leadership in Bahrain exemplifies innovation, integrity, and resilience.

I also applaud our Board Member H.E. Sabina Aliyeva, Commissioner for Human Rights of Azerbaijan, for inaugurating a new regional center in Shaki, which is indeed a milestone in broadening access to justice. My appreciation extends to the Mediator of Côte d'Ivoire for launching a sustained civic campaign to safeguard free and democratic elections, reflecting the critical public role of ombudsman offices in electoral justice.

Lastly, congratulations to Mr. Sirajuddin Aziz, Banking Mohtasib of Pakistan, on organizing a commemorative conference marking the 20th anniversary of the institution—a celebration of two decades of service to financial fairness and customer protection. I hope this Newsletter edition informs and inspires our OICOA family and I look forward to continuing this shared journey of accountability and collaboration.



Almas Ali Jovindah
Executive Secretary
OIC Ombudsman Association

THE LEGACY OF MOHAMED BENALILOU

The Driving Force That Carried the Ombudsman Mandate to the Halls of United Nations

Hon'ble Mohamed Benalilou, former Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco, stands out as a transformative figure in the global ombudsman community. As a former board member of OIC Ombudsman Association (OICOA) and First Vice President of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI), he advanced oversight standards with intellectual clarity and institutional resolve. His leadership positioned the ombudsman institution as both a guardian of rights and a pillar of democratic governance.

Trained as a jurist and shaped by years of public service in Morocco's judiciary and Ministry of Justice, Benalilou brought a rare synthesis of courtroom discipline and policy craftsmanship to his appointment as Mediator in 2018. From the outset, his tenure was marked by an unambiguous commitment to restoring citizen confidence in state administration and embedding the principles of justice and good governance into the core of institutional conduct.

As Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco from 2018 to 2025, Mohamed Benalilou redefined the role of Institute of Mediator of Morocco by strengthening its legal authority, expanding public accessibility, and institutionalizing proactive investigations into maladministration. He championed the application of the Venice and Paris Principles within the national framework, reinforcing the Ombudsman's independence and alignment with international standards. Under his leadership, the office significantly increased its resolution rate for citizen complaints and launched initiatives to modernize administrative practices across sectors. He also prioritized public outreach and civic education, making the Mediator's office a visible and trusted platform for redress. His tenure is widely credited with elevating the institution from a reactive grievance body to a proactive driver of administrative justice.

In 2024, Mohamed Benalilou was elected First Vice President of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI), marking a significant milestone for Morocco and the wider Global South. His election followed his instrumental role in the adoption of the first United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Ombudsman and Mediator institutions, passed on 16 December 2020 during the 75th session. Initiated by Morocco and championed by Benalilou, the resolution affirmed the independence and global relevance of ombudsman bodies. He also played a central role in shaping the strengthened 2024 iteration, aligning it with the Sustainable Development Goals and reinforcing institutional safeguards. Through both diplomatic and institutional leadership, Benalilou helped position ombudsman institutions as foundational actors in global governance.

As a former Board Member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Ombudsman Association (OICOA), Mr. Benalilou was a pivotal architect of the association's modern trajectory. His imprint can be found not only in policy but in the ethos of OICOA itself; a forum he helped galvanize into a platform for cross-border collaboration, peer exchange, and capacity-building among Ombudsman institutions in the Islamic world. His strategic clarity and diplomatic persuasion elevated OICOA's ambition and scope, particularly through the promotion of transnational learning initiatives and nurturing the youth through OICOA Exchange-based International Internship Program. During the 11th OICOA Board Meeting in Morocco, Mr. Mohamed Benalilou led the passage of the Marrakech Declaration on Gaza—an assertive and timely statement that positioned OICOA as a vocal defender of human rights and humanitarian principles in the face of deepening crisis in Palestine.

Today, Mohamed Benalilou continues his public service as the President of Morocco's National Authority for Probity, Prevention and the Fight against Corruption (INPPLC), where he leads the country's institutional battle against corruption with the same rigor and integrity that defined his tenure as Mediator. His transition into this critical role reflects both the trust he commands and the enduring relevance of his principles in national governance. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation Ombudsman Association (OICOA) takes profound pride in his legacy as a board member, diplomat, and architect of reform—and extends its warmest congratulations and best wishes as he continues to advance the cause of transparency, accountability, and justice in Morocco and beyond.





H.E. GHADA HAMEED HABIB

A Trailblazer of Ombudsmanship and Advancement of Human Rights in the Gulf States

Her Excellency Ghada Hameed Habib, Ombudsman of the Kingdom of Bahrain and a distinguished Board Member of the OIC Ombudsman Association (OICOA), stands as one of the region's most dynamic voices in advancing accountability, citizen-focused oversight, and institutional professionalism. Appointed as the ombudsman of Bahrain in November 2022, she is the first woman to hold this position in Bahrain and the wider GCC. Ms. Habib was initially appointed in 2013 as Director of International Cooperation and Development during the formative days of Ombudsman office where she played a pivotal role in shaping its global partnerships and operational foundations. Her leadership led to her promotion as Deputy Ombudswoman in 2019, coinciding with her appointment as Chief of the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission (PDRC). In this dual capacity, she championed oversight of detention conditions and spearheaded reforms to ensure legal compliance and humane treatment within Bahrain's correctional system.

Since assuming leadership, Ombudsperson Ghada Hameed Habib has spearheaded numerous initiatives and reforms that bolster the effectiveness of Bahrain's Ombudsman Office. One of the notable accomplishments is the significant decrease in complaints received by the Ombudsman in recent years, which she attributes to successful reforms in the justice and penal system. In fact, the number of complaints submitted to the Ombudsman's Office fell by 50% over the two years up to 2024. This sharp decline is partly credited to progressive measures such as new legislation, royal pardons for prisoners, the implementation of an Open Prison Program, and the expansion of alternative sentencing options.

Under H.E. Ghada Hameed's tenure, the Ombudsman Office has also enhanced its accessibility and specialization in handling grievances. In December 2024, she launched a new dedicated Children's Complaints Division, focusing on cases involving juveniles between 15–18 years old in detention or custodial facilities. This initiative was developed in collaboration with international partners (including the British Embassy and UNICEF-affiliated experts) and accompanied by specialized training workshops on best practices for interviewing and protecting minors. The new division aligns with Bahrain's commitments under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and represents a proactive step to strengthen child protection frameworks within the justice system. By tailoring complaint-handling mechanisms to vulnerable groups like juveniles, Ms. Habib's office is ensuring that no segment of society is left unheard. Another core area of achievement has been the development of clear standards and protocols for inspections of detention centers. Earlier in her career, as Deputy Ombudsperson, Ghada Hameed Habib played a key role in formulating the principles for prison visits, aligning them with United Nations Rules (such as the Mandela Rules for prisoner treatment) and international treaties. These standards, now institutionalized, guide the Office's regular visits to prisons, jails, and juvenile centers to verify the treatment of inmates and the services provided to them. Her contributions helped the Ombudsman Office set a benchmark for oversight that mirrors international norms – a first in Bahrain's history.

As the Board Member of OICOA, H.E. Ghada Hameed continues to play a pivotal role in the Association. Within this capacity, she has been instrumental in shaping the OICOA's strategic direction, particularly in advancing its *Specialized Training Program*. Under her guidance, the Ombudsman Office of Bahrain has actively participated in the program's design and delivery by hosting technical workshops, contributing subject matter expertise, and supporting the capacity-building of peer institutions across OIC member states. Her commitment to fostering high standards of practice, grounded in both Islamic ombudsman traditions and international legal principles, has elevated OICOA's training efforts into a practical and impactful resource for emerging oversight bodies.

H.E. Ghada Hameed Habib's leadership is defined by a blend of discipline, diplomacy, and institutional foresight. She has firmly anchored the Ombudsman Office of Bahrain as a guardian of procedural justice and human dignity within Bahrain, while also serving as a regional catalyst for ombudsman collaboration and professional development. Through her contributions to OICOA and her reformist agenda at home, she has positioned Bahrain's oversight architecture as a model of principled evolution—marked not by rhetoric, but by measured progress and enduring institutional credibility.



Ombudsman of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

Three Decades of Dedication to Advancement and Protection of Human Rights



The Ombudsman Institution of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) stands as a cornerstone of accountability and good governance in the Turkish Cypriot community. Established in 1996, this independent office – officially termed the *Yüksek Yönetim Denetçisi* (High Administrative Auditor/Ombudsman), was created to ensure that the administration's actions remain within the bounds of law and justice.

Today it is led by H.E. İlkan Varol, who brings a seasoned legal background to the role and continues to reinforce the institution's mission on both domestic and international fronts. As a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Ombudsman Association (OICOA), the TRNC Ombudsman Institution actively collaborates with sister institutions across the Islamic world, sharing in the collective endeavor to safeguard citizens' rights and uphold the rule of law.

Historical Evolution & Legal Foundation

The Ombudsman Institution in Northern Cyprus has its legal roots in the TRNC Constitution and a dedicated parliamentary law. Article 114 of the 1985 TRNC Constitution (as amended) provided for an Ombudsman (also called the "High Supervisor of the Administration"), appointed by the President with the approval of Parliament, tasked with reviewing the acts and services of the administration for legality and fairness.

To give life to this constitutional idea, the Parliament enacted Law No. 38/1996 on 16 July 1996, formally establishing the Ombudsman's Office and defining its mandate. By this act, the Turkish Cypriot polity joined many modern administrations in adopting the classical Ombudsman model as an impartial watchdog over the executive.

The Leadership History of TRNC Ombudsman

The first Ombudsman of the TRNC, Mr. Nail Atalay, was appointed in January 1997. Mr. Atalay had previously served as Auditor General and as the Turkish Cypriot community's representative to the United Nations, bringing considerable public service experience to the new office. His tenure as Ombudsman began on 16 January 1997 and continued until his retirement on 30 April 2002.



In the ensuing years, the Ombudsman institution weathered a brief interregnum until a successor was appointed. Hon'ble Mr. Feridun Önsav assumed the post as the second Ombudsman on 17 November 2006. Önsav's appointment revitalized the office; he served for roughly nine years, during which the Ombudsman's role in administrative oversight became firmly entrenched in the TRNC's governance framework.

By the mid-2010s, the institution saw its first female head when Hon'ble Justice Emine Dizdarlı was appointed as Ombudswoman. President Mustafa Akıncı nominated Ms. Dizdarlı – then a respected Supreme Court judge – and with parliamentary approval on 26 October 2015 she officially assumed office. Under Ms. Dizdarlı's watch, the Ombudsman's Office continued to mature, tackling sensitive issues of administrative justice and expanding the visibility of the institution.



H.E. İlkan Varol: The Incumbent Ombudsman of the TRNC



Upon Judge Dizdarlı's departure, the baton passed to the H.E. İlkan Varol who was duly appointed as the Ombudsman of TRNC, and she has served as the Ombudsman since 28 March 2022.

Ms. Varol brings a depth of legal expertise and administrative acumen to her role as Ombudsman of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, having assumed office in March 2022 following a career that included senior roles in government, notably as Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers. Known for her principled, consultative leadership style, she has prioritized institutional transparency, public accessibility, and procedural efficiency within the Ombudsman's Office.

Under her guidance, the institution has intensified its focus on citizen outreach, addressed structural bottlenecks in complaint processing, and fostered a professional culture centered on fairness, service, and rights protection. Varol's approach reflects a careful balance between safeguarding the Ombudsman's constitutional independence and adapting its practices to meet contemporary expectations of administrative justice.



Mandate & Institutional Structure

The Ombudsman of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) serves as an independent authority overseeing the administration to ensure fairness and legality in government actions. The office reviews administrative decisions and public services to verify they comply with the law and court rulings, and it investigates citizens' complaints of maladministration. In essence, it acts as an impartial watchdog of the executive branch, safeguarding citizens' rights. However, the Ombudsman's oversight does not extend to sensitive areas like the judiciary, foreign policy, or defense.

The Ombudsman's independence is strongly protected by law. The office's powers and duties are defined by statute, and the Ombudsman cannot be arbitrarily removed—dismissal is as difficult as it is for a Supreme Court judge. Furthermore, the appointment process requires broad political consensus: the Ombudsman is appointed by the President but must be approved by Parliament, ideally with a two-thirds majority of the 50-seat Assembly in the first round of voting.

Structurally, the Ombudsman Institution in Northern Cyprus is a relatively lean organization. It is headed by the single Ombudsman, supported by a small cadre of investigators (often termed *denetçi*, meaning inspectors or auditors) and administrative staff. Despite the limited human resources, the team operates with dedication and professionalism. The institution's budget and staffing are provided for by the state, but by law it functions autonomously and is not subject to direction by the executive. The Ombudsman's Office is headquartered in the capital, Lefkoşa (Nicosia), and maintains an open-door policy for citizen petitions.

Engagement with International Ombudsman Bodies and H.E. İlkan Varol's Leadership



Under the leadership of H.E. İlkan Varol, the TRNC Ombudsman Institution not only continues its robust domestic role but also actively engages with the international community of ombudsman offices. Despite the political constraints of Northern Cyprus's status, the Ombudsman has established a presence in global and regional networks to exchange best practices and affirm the universal principles of justice and good governance. The TRNC Ombudsman is a full voting member of the Ombudsman bodies like oIC Ombudsman Association and International Ombudsman Institute. This membership enables access to training, research, and collaboration with peers around the globe.

As a committed OICOA Member Institution and a founding member of the Association of Ombudsmen and National Human Rights Institutions of Turkic States, TRNC Ombudsman engages in cross-border cooperation and regularly contributes to regional forums—sharing the TRNC's experiences and gaining valuable comparative insights. These affiliations not only elevate the TRNC Ombudsman's profile but also offer solidarity in the face of Northern Cyprus's unique challenges. Domestically, Ms. Varol has upheld the institution's constitutional independence while modernizing its operations, emphasizing public outreach, internal efficiency, and professional development. Her balanced, consultative leadership ensures that the Ombudsman's Office remains responsive, credible, and aligned with the evolving standards of justice and administrative accountability.



OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTION OF TURKIYE

Ambassador of Ukraine to Türkiye H.E. Nariman Dzhelialov visits the OICOA President H.E. Mehmet Akarca

Building on the momentum of the importance of intergovernmental dialogue and institutional diplomacy, H.E. Nariman Dzhelialov, Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Türkiye, paid a courtesy visit to Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye and OICOA President, H.E. Mr. Mehmet Akarca.

Held at the headquarters of the Ombudsman Institution in Ankara, the meeting centered on prospects for strengthening cooperation between the ombudsman institutions of the two countries. Both sides discussed mechanisms for enhancing administrative accountability, sharing institutional best practices, and exploring frameworks for future collaboration in the field of public service oversight.

Also in attendance was Mr. Mehmet Doğan, Secretary General of the Ombudsman Institution of Türkiye, who underscored the relevance of such exchanges in reinforcing the ombudsman's role as a pillar of democratic governance and citizen engagement. The meeting reflected a mutual commitment to expanding cross-national dialogue on good governance and administrative justice, and laid the groundwork for deepening institutional ties between Türkiye and Ukraine in the spirit of transparency, cooperation, and rule of law.



H.E. Mehmet Akarca attends the Asian Ombudsman Association meetings and international workshop in China

Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye, H.E. Mr. Mehmet Akarca, and Ombudsman Mr. Sadettin Kalkan attended the 26th Board of Directors and 18th General Assembly Meetings of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), held in Nanjing, China on 9th to 10th September 2025. During the program, Chief Ombudsman Akarca held bilateral meetings with Mr. FU Kui, Vice Chairman of the National Commission of Supervision of China, and Ms. Tatiana Moskalkova, High Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Russian Federation, to discuss enhancing cooperation and institutional dialogue.

As part of the official agenda, Chief Ombudsman Akarca delivered a speech at the International Workshop on "Effective Ombudsman for People's Livelihood," where he emphasized the role of Ombudsman institutions in safeguarding fundamental rights, ensuring good governance, and fostering public trust. He underscored that strong, independent Ombudsman offices contribute not only to improved public service delivery but also to broader social harmony and democratic resilience.



Polish Ambassador to Türkiye H.E. Maciej Lang paid a visit to Ombudsman Institution of Türkiye

On 2 September 2025, H.E. Mr. Maciej Lang, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Türkiye, paid a courtesy visit to Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye, Mr. Mehmet Akarca, at the Ombudsman Institution in Ankara. The meeting was attended by Ombudsman Ms. Fatma Benli Yalçın and Secretary General Mr. Mehmet Doğan, reflecting the importance accorded to bilateral engagement at the institutional level.

The discussion focused on the evolving role of ombudsman institutions in addressing administrative grievances, promoting state accountability, and protecting individual rights. Both sides considered avenues for deepening cooperation through technical exchange and dialogue between the respective oversight bodies of Poland and Türkiye. In particular, the meeting affirmed the value of independent complaint mechanisms in supporting democratic resilience, legal certainty, and citizen trust in public administration.



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER OF AZERBAIJAN

H.E. Sabina Aliyeva participates in International Seminar on 'Effective Ombudsmanship for People's Livelihood' in China

Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan and OICOA Board Member H.E. Sabina Aliyeva, took part in the international seminar titled "Effective Ombudsmanship for People's Livelihood", held in Nanjing, People's Republic of China, under the auspices of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA).

In her address, Ms. Aliyeva emphasized the growing strategic partnership between Azerbaijan and China, noting that the bilateral relationship also offers significant scope for deeper cooperation in the field of human rights and good governance. She underscored the value of international platforms such as AOA in fostering mutual learning and institutional development among national oversight bodies.

She provided an overview of Azerbaijan's national human rights institution, outlining the legal frameworks and procedural mechanisms in place to ensure citizens can submit complaints easily and without obstruction. Her presentation also focused on the Ombudsman Institution's work in legal education, public outreach, and the protection of the rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups, which remains a central pillar of its mandate. The presentation was met with strong interest and positive reception from participants, reflecting international recognition of the Ombudsman's ongoing efforts to promote rights-based governance and institutional accessibility.





H.E. Sabina Aliyeva inaugurates Shaki Regional Centre to enhance citizen access to Ombudsman services

On 23rd September 2025, Azerbaijan's Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) and OICOA Board Member, H.E. Sabina Aliyeva, presided over the opening of the new North-West Regional Centre of the Azerbaijani Ombudsman, located at the "ASAN Service" complex in Shaki.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Aliyeva emphasised that the ombudsman institution, active for over two decades, serves to protect human rights and secure citizen satisfaction. She observed that relocating the regional centre to a new, more accessible venue facilitates faster processing of applications, while the deployment of electronic innovations expands reception capacity. She also noted that volunteers will assist citizens during the reception process, and that the presence of the regional centre within the "ASAN Service" complex allows applicants to resolve many documentation and administrative issues onsite.

Following the inauguration, Ms. Aliyeva conducted a citizen reception in Shaki, meeting individually with twelve applicants – including First Karabakh War and Patriotic War veterans and persons with disabilities. Immediate action was taken on some issues, while other cases requiring more detailed investigation were placed under oversight and referred to the relevant state bodies in accordance with legislation.



H.E. Sabina Aliyeva received the Chairman and delegation of the Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution

The delegation of the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Türkiye, led by its Chairperson Prof. Dr. Fahrettin Altun, visited Azerbaijan on a working mission from Türkiye. During the visit, OICOA Board Member and Azerbaijan's Human Rights Commissioner H.E. Sabina Aliyeva, together with a group of her office's staff, received the chairperson and delegation at the Ombudsman's Office. The Turkish Ambassador to Azerbaijan, H.E. Birol Akgün, also took part in the meeting.

The visit began with a respectful homage at the Alley of Honor, where the national leader's grave was visited, wreaths were laid. The delegation then proceeded to the Alley of Martyrs and the Turkish Martyrdom in Baku to pay tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for Azerbaijan's independence and territorial integrity.



Sabina Aliyeva provided the Turkish delegation with an overview of the Azerbaijani Ombudsman Institution's mandate and ongoing activities in the field of human rights protection, with particular emphasis on its collaborative work with the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Türkiye. She underscored the strategic significance of deepening bilateral cooperation and highlighted existing joint initiatives. Prof. Dr. Fahrettin Altun expressed his appreciation for the hospitality extended by the Ombudsman and noted the importance of sustained dialogue between national human rights institutions. The visit concluded with a tour of the Citizens' Reception Centre and media engagement, reflecting the high level of transparency and public outreach characterizing the Azerbaijani Ombudsman's operations.



MEDIATOR OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO



Ombudsman of Chad Visits the Mediator of Morocco: Expresses Keen Interest in Inter-Institutional Cooperation and Bilateral Exchange of Best Practices

During an official visit to the Kingdom of Morocco, the Ombudsman of Chad H.E. Saleh Kebzabo, expressed his country's interest in drawing upon Morocco's institutional experience in the field of mediation. Speaking on the sidelines of his meeting with OICOA Board Member and Mediator of Morocco, H.E. Hassan Tariq, Mr. Kebzabo emphasized that the visit was intended to explore best practices and institutional models, identifying the Moroccan Ombudsman Institution as a leading reference in the region.

Mr. Kebzaboh underscored the importance of mutual exchanges and inter-institutional cooperation, particularly in the field of public mediation, and advocated for ongoing visits as a means of deepening knowledge-sharing and comparative learning.

Mr. Hassan Tariq reaffirmed Morocco's commitment to deepening bilateral and pan-African cooperation among ombudsman institutions. He highlighted the international profile of the Moroccan Ombudsman, built over two decades of active global engagement. Strengthening ties within the African ombudsman community, he noted, is a key priority of the institution's 2026–2030 strategic plan. Morocco's longstanding relationship with Chad was cited as a model for such partnerships. The visit was described as an opportunity to advance South–South institutional collaboration.

H.E. Hassan Tariq addresses the Moroccan Youth on 'Social Cohesion & Equitable Values' in his Keynote Address at the Tamkine Academy

On 17 September 2025, the first operational phase of Morocco's national programme "Towards a Gender-Equal Administration" was launched under the theme: "Moroccan Administration and the Challenge of Gender Equality."

The opening interactive workshop, attended by representatives from civil society, was formally launched by Dr. Hassan Tarik, Ombudsman of the Kingdom. In his opening remarks, Dr. Tarik emphasized the strategic importance of the programme as a lever for modernizing public administration, highlighting the need to build an institutional culture rooted in fairness, equal opportunity, and active rejection of gender-based discrimination.



This programme forms part of a broader trajectory of administrative reform in Morocco that seeks not only to modernize institutional structures but to interrogate and reshape the normative frameworks that govern them. By placing gender equality at the centre of this agenda, the initiative moves beyond rhetorical commitments to pursue concrete, systemic change. Its success will depend not only on legal and procedural adjustments, but on sustained political will, institutional accountability, and the active participation of civil society in redefining the values that shape public service.



OMBUDSMAN OF THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

Secretary General of the Ombudsman of Bahrain meets with a delegation of staff members from the US House of Representatives and Senate

OICOA Board Member and the Secretary-General of the Ombudsman of Bahrain, H.E. Ghada Hameed Habib, received a delegation of staff members from the US House of Representatives and Senate, as part of their current visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain, and within the framework of the periodic visits made by staff members of the Senate and House of Representatives to the Ombudsman's Office.



During the visit, the visiting delegation was given a detailed explanation of the role of the General Secretariat for Grievances and its tasks in serving the public, stressing that it operates as an independent body that examines complaints and grievances in its areas of competence.

The members of the Secretariat also reviewed with the American delegation the procedures followed in dealing with complaints, from receiving them until reaching a decision on how to act on them, with an emphasis on the principles of transparency and impartiality that govern its work. For their part, the members of the American delegation praised the role played by the General Secretariat of the Ombudsman of Bahrain, and expressed their appreciation for the efforts it is making under the leadership of H.E. Ghada Hameed to promote human rights and protect the interests of individuals, stressing the importance of such visits in strengthening ways of cooperation and knowledge exchange between the two sides.

Bahrain Ombudsman Supports Inmate University Education at Jaw Rehabilitation Center

In a significant step to promote human rights and inmate rehabilitation, the Ombudsman's Office of Bahrain, in coordination with the Jaw Reform and Rehabilitation Center, conducted an inspection visit focused on monitoring educational services and announcing a new initiative enabling eligible inmates to pursue university education.



Admission tests, supervised by Bahrain Polytechnic, were held to assess applicants' readiness. Ombudsman Secretary-General H.E. Ms. Ghada Hameed Habib emphasized the initiative's alignment with Bahrain's commitment to human dignity and the right to education, noting the collaboration of multiple national institutions.

Mr. Hamad Salman Taqi, Director of the Correctional and Detention Centers Monitoring Department, highlighted that such programs not only offer academic skills but foster discipline, increase employability, and support reintegration—reinforcing Bahrain's broader reform agenda, including alternative sentencing and the Open Prisons project.



OMBUDSMAN OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

The Indonesian Ombudsman Highlights Maladministration and Violence by Officials During Mass Protests

The Indonesian Ombudsman presented the initial findings of its monitoring of the handling of demonstrations that took place throughout August-September 2025. This presentation was delivered during a Hearing (RDP) with Commission XIII of the Indonesian House of Representatives at the DPR Building on 29th September.



The Chairman of the Indonesian Ombudsman and OICOA Board Member, H.E. Mokhammad Najih, revealed allegations of maladministration in the handling of the demonstrations. These practices included prolonged delays, a lack of transparency, discriminatory treatment, and excessive use of force by officers. "This situation falls into the category of maladministration in the provision of public services, which must be systematically corrected by the National Police and related agencies," Mr. Najih asserted. The Ombudsman also highlighted the lack of a national mechanism to guarantee medical care and legal protection for civilian victims. Mr. Najih assessed that the Jakarta Provincial Government's current steps in drafting a gubernatorial regulation were still insufficient.

The Indonesian Ombudsman emphasized that it would continue its investigation, monitor the performance of relevant agencies, and formulate recommendations for systemic improvements. Mr. Najih also urged the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) and the government to fully support the formation of an independent fact-finding team, along with human rights institutions, to ensure transparency, accountability, and responsibility of officials in handling mass demonstrations.



"Public Service is a Constitutional Right and Part of Human Rights" says H.E. Mokhammad Najih

At a Focus Group Discussion on corruption and human rights in Jakarta, Indonesian Ombudsman Chair and OICOA Board Member H.E. Mokhammad Najih emphasized that good public service is a constitutional and human right, rooted in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution. He warned that maladministration in public service is often the first step toward corruption, undermining both citizens' constitutional rights and broader human rights.

Najih advocated for the urgent passage of the Asset Confiscation Bill, urging that it include not only the seizure of corrupt officials' assets but also an acknowledgment of the tangible losses suffered by the public. He argued that corruption, often mischaracterized as a "victimless crime," in fact harms individuals and communities, particularly the most vulnerable, by denying them access to development, equity, and justice. Komnas HAM Commissioner Uli Parulian Sihombing echoed these concerns, stating that corruption undermines conditions essential for the fulfillment of human rights, and stressed the need to ensure that the forthcoming legislation fully aligns with human rights principles.



FEDERAL TAX OMBUDSMAN OF PAKISTAN

OICOA Secretary General & Federal Tax Ombudsman H.E. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah Visits Shaheed Benazirabad Chamber of Commerce to Promote Taxpayer Awareness

As part of the Taxpayers Awareness Campaign, the Honourable Federal Tax Ombudsman of Pakistan and Secretary General of OICOA, H.E. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, visited the Shaheed Benazirabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SBCC&I) on 11th September. He was warmly received by the Chamber President, Dr. Muhammad Ayub, and office bearers. In his welcome remarks, the President emphasized the importance of creating awareness about the FTO's role in addressing taxpayer grievances against injustice and maladministration by FBR officials.



In his keynote address, Dr. Jah underscored the need for ensuring an environment of "ease of doing business" and treating taxpayers with the respect they deserve. He highlighted the FTO's mission of timely redressal of grievances and systemic reforms for a fairer tax regime. Executive Secretary of OICOA, Mr. Almas Ali Jovindah Advisor also accompanied Dr. Jah and presented an overview of FTO's historic performance under his leadership, noting that 55,000 complaints were filed in the past four years alone, compared to 35,000 complaints filed in the institution's first 21 years since its inception in 2000.



Federal Tax Ombudsman orders disciplinary action against FBR officials after the violation of the verdict of the Supreme Court of Pakistan

The Federal Tax Ombudsman of Islamic Republic of Pakistan has initiated proceedings against senior officials of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) after they allegedly violated a binding judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the Pakistan LNG case. The Tax Ombudsman took suo motu notice following public complaints and credible media reports indicating that Inland Revenue officials had issued tax orders against Pakistan LNG Ltd despite a clear stay order issued by the apex court.

In response, the Tax Ombudsman issued notices under Section 10(4) of the FTO Ordinance, 2000 to the Secretary Revenue Division and the Chief Commissioner of Inland Revenue, calling for a detailed explanation and submission of the official record.

OICOA Secretary General and Federal Tax Ombudsman of Pakistan H.E. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah characterized the incident as a troubling breach of administrative discipline and judicial propriety. He noted that the deliberate disregard of a Supreme Court directive by tax authorities reflects a deeper institutional malaise that undermines both the credibility of the tax apparatus and the principle of constitutional supremacy. The Tax Ombudsman's intervention, grounded in its statutory mandate to address systemic maladministration, signals a necessary assertion of oversight aimed at restoring procedural integrity, reinforcing the rule of law, and protecting the rights of taxpayers from arbitrary executive action.



INSPECTORATE GENERAL OF UGANDA



H.E. Justice Naluze Aisha Batala Appointed as the Inspector General of the Government of Uganda

The President of Republic of Uganda has appointed H.E. Justice Naluze Aisha Batala as the new Inspector General of Government (IGG). Her nomination, announced by the Inspectorate of Government and submitted to Parliament for vetting, comes at a time when demands for transparency and administrative integrity remain central to national governance discourse.

Justice Batala, a seasoned jurist, succeeds the former Inspector General of Uganda and OICOA Member, Hon'ble Beti Kamya Turwomwe. Ms. Batala's appointment has been described by the Inspectorate as a significant moment in the trajectory of Uganda's anti-corruption efforts. It is expected to bring a renewed legal and institutional focus to the office's mandate, particularly in navigating the complex intersection of enforcement, public trust, and state accountability.

Hon'ble Ms. Beti Kamya Turwomwe Addresses Senior Cadet Officers on Integrity and Public Accountability

In a session held at the Prisons Training School in Luzira, former Inspector General of Government (IGG), Hon. Beti Kamya Turwomwe, delivered a lecture to senior cadet officers titled "Public Financing, Accountability, and the Role of the IGG."



Drawing on her tenure in public office, Hon. Kamya emphasized that integrity must be foundational to leadership in Uganda's public service. She noted that transparency is not simply a bureaucratic requirement but a condition for sustaining public trust, and that patriotism should inform the conduct of all civil servants. Without meaningful accountability, she warned, governance systems risk collapse.

The engagement aimed to orient Uganda's next generation of correctional leaders toward principles of ethical stewardship, institutional responsibility, and civic duty. Hon. Kamya underscored that accountability must extend beyond procedural compliance to embody a commitment to the efficient and equitable use of public resources for the collective good.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL AUTHORITY OF LIBYA



Administrative Control Authority of Libya Joins Global Anti-Corruption Academy through Strategic MoU

In a move signalling Libya's growing commitment to international anti-corruption norms, the Chairman of the Administrative Control Authority of Libya and OICOA Member, H.E. Abdullah Qaderbouh, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ms. Salayana Tasiva, Dean of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA). The agreement, signed in Vienna, establishes a framework for institutional cooperation in combatting corruption, money laundering, and promoting governance reforms.

The MoU outlines joint initiatives including capacity building, advanced investigative training, research collaboration, and formal engagement with global oversight networks. Mr. Qaderbouh described the agreement as a milestone in Libya's institutional development, highlighting its potential to elevate professional standards, foster a culture of transparency, and reinforce Libya's role in the international anti-corruption agenda. The event also marked Libya's official membership in the IACA, symbolizing its formal integration into a global alliance of institutions dedicated to integrity and accountability.

H.E. Abdulla Qaderbouh Reaffirms Commitment to the Palestinian Cause in Meeting with the Ambassador of State of Palestine

The Chairman of Libya's Administrative Control Authority and OICOA Member, H.E. Abdullah Qaderbouh, hosted H.E. Mohamed Rahal, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Libya, at the Board's headquarters in Tripoli. The meeting served to reaffirm Libya's longstanding support for the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and statehood.



In addition to reinforcing political solidarity, discussions addressed issues faced by the Palestinian community residing in Libya—particularly in health and education. Mr. Qaderbouh assured the Ambassador of the Board's commitment to resolving community concerns in line with Libyan law. Ambassador Rahal, in turn, expressed appreciation for Libya's unwavering position and emphasized the value of oversight institutions in safeguarding rights and advancing cooperation between the two nations. Both sides agreed on the importance of continued coordination to protect the dignity and legal entitlements of Palestinian residents in Libya. The meeting also highlighted the broader role of oversight bodies in ensuring that foreign communities are not only acknowledged but meaningfully integrated into national frameworks of justice, welfare, and institutional accountability.



MEDIATOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF IVORY COAST

Ivory Coast's National Mediator Rallies Botro Community in Call for Peaceful Elections

Against the backdrop of heightened political sensitivity in the lead-up to the presidential elections, the Mediator of the Republic convened a public forum in Botro, delivering a clear and urgent message: reject violence, uphold peace. The initiative forms part of a broader national effort to foster civic responsibility and safeguard social cohesion during a politically delicate period.



Addressing a diverse assembly of local residents, the Mediator's office underscored the imperative of tolerance, dialogue, and collective vigilance. The call resonated deeply across the community, with participants unanimously pledging to promote nonviolence and extend awareness efforts within their respective spheres of influence—before, during, and after the electoral process.

Adding a powerful human dimension to the event, a group of children delivered an emotional appeal to political actors, urging them to prioritize the nation's stability over partisan interests. Their intervention served as a poignant reminder of what is at stake: the country's future and the wellbeing of the next generation. The gathering not only reflected grassroots support for the Mediator's mission but also reaffirmed the enduring relevance of civic dialogue in the consolidation of Ivorian democracy.



Mediator of Ivory Coast Hosts Women's Leadership Workshop on Social Cohesion During Electoral Periods in Sikensi Region

In a decisive step to reinforce grassroots peacebuilding ahead of the national elections, Madame Marie Chantal Kouamé, Médiateur Délégué of the Agnéby-Tiassa region, convened a capacity-building session for women in Sikensi under the theme: "Women and Social Cohesion in Electoral Periods." Held at the prefecture's hall, the event brought together several local women's associations for a dialogue on the essential role of women in preserving stability during politically sensitive times.

Speaking with clarity and conviction, Madame Kouamé urged participants to position themselves as agents of peace and moral anchors within their communities. Emphasizing the transmission of values such as tolerance, dialogue, and forgiveness, she called on women to safeguard traditions that bind society, particularly during moments of political contestation.

Following the training, the Médiateur Délégué addressed the broader public via Sikensi Radio, delivering a message of unity on behalf of OICOA Member and Mediator of Ivory Coast H.E. Mr. Adama Toungara. Her public remarks reinforced the call for restraint, civic responsibility, and community-led vigilance to ensure a peaceful electoral process, underscoring the enduring relevance of women as custodians of social cohesion in Ivory Coast.



OMBUDSMAN OF MOZAMBIQUE

The Ombudsman of Mozambique Critiques Judicial System's Shortfalls at UPM's 50th Independence Symposium

Speaking at the launch of the Student Scientific Days at the University of Pedagogical of Maputo (UPM), Mozambique's Ombudsman and OICOA Member H.E. Isaque Chande, offered a sobering assessment of the country's justice system over the past five decades. While acknowledging strides made since independence, he characterized the system's ongoing challenges as "enormous and complex."



Delivering the keynote address under the theme "50 Years of Independence: Lessons, Breaks, and Challenges of the Education System and Administration of Justice," Chande traced the historical transformation of Mozambique's judiciary—from the racially bifurcated colonial courts to post-independence reforms that redefined justice as a pillar of liberation. He emphasized milestones such as Law No. 12/78, the country's first judicial organization law, and the constitutional reforms of 1990 and 2004 that institutionalized pluralism and participatory justice.

Despite these advances, the Ombudsman outlined persistent structural deficiencies: weak judicial independence, geographic gaps in court access, institutional distrust, systemic corruption, and sluggish legal proceedings. He called for targeted reforms to modernize infrastructure, combat corruption, and broaden access. "The justice system must evolve to match the country's development—becoming more inclusive, efficient, and transparent," he stressed.



Ombudsman Isaque Chande Advocates Legal Empowerment for Displaced Communities at Metuge Rights Fair

In a resolute call for justice and institutional trust, the Ombudsman of Mozambique and OICOA Member H.E. Isaque Chande, addressed internally displaced persons at the Human Rights and Access to Justice Fair held at the Welcoming Center in Metuge, one of the largest camps for people displaced by the ongoing insurgency in the province.

Speaking to hundreds of women, children, and elderly citizens, Mr. Chande underscored the centrality of state institutions in safeguarding rights and ensuring peaceful dispute resolution. "The rule of law must remain accessible to all, especially those most affected by conflict and displacement," he stated, urging citizens to make use of legal channels and available institutional mechanisms.

H.E. Isaque Chande emphasized the transformative role of education and civic engagement in rebuilding lives, calling on parents to prioritize their children's schooling and health as foundations for a resilient future. His presence reinforced the state's commitment to inclusion, justice, and dignity for all Mozambicans, regardless of their circumstances.

Ombudsman of Mozambique Leads National Dialogue on Human Rights Amid Conflict in Cabo Delgado

In a landmark effort to reinforce democratic governance and strengthen human rights protections in regions affected by conflict, Mozambique's Ombudsman and OICOA Member H.E. Isaque Chande, convened a national roundtable in Pemba, Cabo Delgado, under the theme "Challenges and Opportunities for the Promotion of Human Rights in Contexts of Conflict."

The dialogue, organized in collaboration with the National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH), followed the inauguration of the Ombudsman's first provincial office outside the capital — a move Mr. Chande described as a strategic step toward rebuilding citizen trust and reinforcing the rule of law in one of Mozambique's most vulnerable provinces.



Bringing together representatives from the judiciary, public administration, civil society, security forces, and international partners, the roundtable aimed to facilitate inter-institutional dialogue to strengthen Mozambique's human rights system. Mr. Chande emphasized that the protection of fundamental rights is a core responsibility of the state, calling on all public institutions to uphold this mandate. "The State exists because Mozambicans exist. We must never lose sight of the duty to serve. Our common interest is to protect the members of our society," he stated. In his remarks, H.E. Isaque Chande highlighted that the promotion of human rights serves as a foundation for social harmony and national stability, especially in regions affected by insurgency and displacement. He also noted that the event provided a space for reflection on the activities of the Ombudsman's Office and CNDH within the broader scope of the Access to Justice Programme, implemented with the support of the Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD) and funding from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



MEDIATOR OF TUNISIA



Secretary General of Mediator of Tunisia Chairs a Meeting to Unblock Legal Barriers to SIMSO Innovation in Tunisia

In a strategic move to advance digital transformation, the Office of the Mediator of Tunisia (an OICOA Member Institution) led by Secretary-General H.E. Najat Al-Gharbi, convened a meeting to assess the development of the Liberty Com System and its pioneering virtual SIMSO technology.

The session brought together institutional stakeholders and company representatives, including Mr. Ali Bouali, Head of Economic and Financial Rights, to identify and address legal and administrative obstacles slowing the project's rollout. Liberty Com officials underscored the technology's potential to position Tunisia at the forefront of global digital communications innovation. Ms. Najat Al-Gharbi reaffirmed her office's commitment to easing bureaucratic bottlenecks and pledged coordinated engagement with the Presidency of the Republic, the Government, and the Central Bank. She emphasized that promoting high-value innovations aligns with the Conciliator's institutional mandate and with Tunisia's national objectives for technological leadership and economic competitiveness. The Liberty Com initiative is seen as a flagship effort within Tunisia's digital modernization agenda, holding the promise of strategic economic gains and enhanced global positioning.



JORDANIAN INTEGRITY & ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

Jordan's Integrity and Anti-Corruption Board Praised for Strengthening National Integrity Framework

A delegation from the Committee of National Steering and Representative Media, led by MP Faras Qablan, paid a working visit to the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Committee of Jordan - JIAAC (an OICOA Member Institution) to assess its institutional progress in advancing financial and administrative reform and consolidating the national integrity system. Commending the Board's role in reinforcing public trust and safeguarding ethical standards in public service, MP Qablan emphasized the imperative of sustained legislative cooperation. He reiterated the House of Representatives' commitment to aligning legal frameworks with national reform priorities, particularly in the fight against corruption.



Chairman JIAAC H.E. Dr. Mohannad Hijazi welcomed the committee's engagement, describing the Board's work as pivotal to transparency and governance. He highlighted ongoing capacity-building programs targeting procurement officers and public servants, designed to reinforce audit and compliance standards. Dr. Hijazi also noted Jordan's commendable regional and global ranking — 4th in the Arab world and 58th globally — on integrity metrics, attributing this to sustained institutional investment in reform, public engagement, and international benchmarking. The session included a strategic presentation by Dr. Asim Al-Jadou, Director of Institutional Development, in the presence of Vice President Sami Al-Salayta and senior officials. The presentation outlined the Board's priorities, including the promotion of justice, rule of law, technological modernization, youth engagement, and cross-border cooperation, positioning Jordan as a proactive actor in the global integrity landscape.



JIAAC Trains the Academics from University of Jordan on Anti-Corruption and Integrity Standards

The Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (JIAAC) concluded a two-day training program designed for 34 faculty members from the University of Jordan, focusing on enhancing understanding of national anti-corruption strategies, prevention mechanisms, and institutional integrity. The training was organized by JIAAC's Center for Innovation and Training.

Delivered by expert trainers and specialists, the program provided in-depth insight into Jordanian Integrity and Anticorruption Commission's three operational pillars: law enforcement, preventive measures, and the promotion of integrity. Participants were briefed on key legal definitions of corruption, the protection framework for whistleblowers and informants, and the procedures for managing public complaints.

This initiative underscores JIAAC's strategic drive to foster academic partnerships and promote a culture of accountability within public institutions. It forms part of broader efforts to institutionalize transparency and embed integrity at all levels of governance and education.



FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN (WAFAQI MOHTASIB) OF PAKISTAN



Pakistan's Federal Ombudsman Showcases Regional Leadership of Pakistan and Stellar Performance of his Office at Asian Ombudsman General Assembly in China

Pakistan's Federal Ombudsman and OICOA Member, H.E. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi apprised about Pakistan's leading role in international ombudsmanship and highlighted the Federal Ombudsman's exemplary performance in grievance redressal at home, during his address at the 18th General Assembly and 26th Board of Directors Meeting of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), held in Nanjing, China. Mr. Qureshi chaired the proceedings in his capacity as AOA President — a position Pakistan has held since the Association's establishment in 1996.

Addressing the high-level gathering, which brought together ombudsman leaders from China, Japan, Korea, Iran, Türkiye, Azerbaijan, and Hong Kong, Mr. Qureshi emphasized that ombudsman institutions are crucial pillars for advancing the rule of law, transparency, and people-centric governance. He called for intensified collaboration and knowledge-sharing to strengthen service delivery and bolster public trust across the region. Acknowledging Pakistan's longstanding commitment to the AOA's core values, he noted that the organization had witnessed a surge in activity — from 148 initiatives in 2022–23 to 347 in 2024–25 — leading to recognition by the United Nations as a dynamic regional platform.

In a subsequent media interaction in Islamabad, Mr. Qureshi lauded the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat's domestic achievements, revealing that the institution received over 226,000 public complaints in 2024, with an extraordinary disposal rate of over 98%. By mid-September 2025, nearly 180,000 complaints had already been addressed, indicating a projected annual caseload exceeding 250,000. He further highlighted targeted initiatives for the welfare of overseas Pakistanis and children, noting that 149,060 overseas citizens were facilitated in 2024, and more than 90,000 had already received assistance in 2025. Mr. Qureshi also confirmed that the AOA will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2026 in Hong Kong, marking a pivotal milestone in its efforts to institutionalize integrity, justice, and human rights across Asia.





FEDERAL BANKING OMBUDSMAN OF PAKISTAN

Two Decades of Redress and Reform: Banking Ombudsman of Pakistan Charts the Way Forward at its 20th Anniversary Conference

Marking its 20th anniversary, the Federal Banking Ombudsman of Pakistan (an OICOA Member Institution), convened a high-profile national conference that reflected not only on its journey of safeguarding banking consumers but also on the evolving demands of financial accountability and public service in a rapidly digitizing economy. Held under the stewardship of the Banking Ombudsman and OICOA Member, H.E. Sirajuddin Aziz, the conference brought together a distinguished panel of thought leaders and policy influencers, including Chief Legal Consultant to the President of Pakistan, Honourable Justice (R) Irfan Qadir, and eminent economist and former Governor of the State Bank, Dr. Ishrat Husain.



In his keynote address, Justice (R) Irfan Qadir praised the institutional maturity and legal rigour demonstrated by Banking Ombudsman, particularly in dealing with complex and high-volume cases involving digital fraud, ATM scams, interbank fund transfers, dormant accounts, and service-related disputes. Drawing from his experience of adjudicating over 500 cases, he affirmed that Federal Banking Ombudsman of Pakistan had not only provided substantive redress but had also upheld procedural fairness and ensured equitable remedies — often enhanced through the inclusion of mark-up or KIBOR-based compensation. Dr. Ishrat Husain, while commanding Banking Ombudsman's critical role in fostering financial justice, urged the institution to extend its reach beyond urban centres into Pakistan's rural heartlands. He emphasized that while the bulk of administrative focus remains confined to Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad, the financial challenges in smaller towns are often more acute due to limited awareness and access. He stressed that true institutional efficacy would be measured not only by monetary restitution but by Banking Ombudsman's capacity to resolve grievances promptly, minimize bureaucratic delay, and embed banking literacy across the board.

In his address, H.E. Sirajuddin Aziz reflected on the institution's evolution over the past two decades, emphasizing its transformation into a credible and people-centric redressal mechanism. He reiterated the Banking Ombudsman's commitment to impartiality, speed, and accessibility in handling public grievances against banks. Highlighting the surge in digital banking and corresponding challenges, Mr. Aziz stressed the need for regulatory innovation and customer awareness campaigns to keep pace with emerging risks. He reaffirmed that his Office will continue to evolve as a guardian of trust between financial institutions and the public, anchored in transparency, justice, and institutional independence.





FEDERAL OMBUDSPERSON FOR PROTECTION AGAINST HARASSMENT

H.E. Fauzia Viqar Explores Partnership with World Bank to Advance Gender Equity in Pakistan

The Honourable Federal Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace (FOSPAH), Ms. Fauzia Viqar, received a high-level delegation from the World Bank, reaffirming Pakistan's ongoing commitment to gender equity and institutional reform. The delegation was led by Ms. Meskerem Brhane, Regional Director for Planet (Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, Pakistan), and included Ms. Kamakshi Mubarak, Senior Social Development Specialist.



During the meeting, the World Bank representatives commended FOSPAH's measurable contributions to improving the lives of women across Pakistan through redressal of harassment complaints, advocacy for safe workplaces, and legal empowerment. The delegation expressed strong interest in forging collaborative ties, particularly in the areas of institutional capacity building, public awareness, and outreach efforts to ensure the law's broader and more equitable implementation.

Ms. Viqar discussed the systemic nature of harassment and institutional resistance, noting that while legal remedies exist, their effectiveness hinges on proactive public engagement, responsive mechanisms, and sustained political will. She welcomed the prospect of collaboration with the World Bank, not merely as a donor-recipient dynamic, but as a partnership grounded in shared principles of equity, justice, and dignity at work. This visit marked a significant opportunity to leverage multilateral expertise in advancing gender-sensitive policy reform in Pakistan, while embedding anti-harassment safeguards more firmly within both public and private institutional cultures.



H.E. Fauzia Viqar Delivers Lecture on Gender & Policing to Balochistan Police Officers at the National Police Academy

In an effort to deepen institutional understanding of workplace protection laws, the Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment (FOSPAH) conducted a high-level awareness session at the National Highways and Motorway Police Training College in Sheikhupura. The session was attended by senior officers, including Superintendents of Police, Deputy Superintendents, Inspectors, and Sub-Inspectors.

OICOA Member and Pakistan's Federal Ombudsperson for Protection Against Harassment H.E. Fauzia Viqar, delivered a keynote address in which she emphasized the importance of robust legal awareness and institutional responsiveness in ensuring a safe, equitable working environment.

She urged officers to not only uphold the law under the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, but to also lead by example in fostering respectful and inclusive workplace norms. The session unpacked the legal and procedural contours of the Protection Against Harassment Act of 2010, drawing attention to key definitions, reporting channels, and institutional obligations under the law. The discussion also explored how gender-based discrimination manifests in hierachal structures and underscored the importance of prompt, fair redressal.



PROVINCIAL OMBUDSMAN OF PUNJAB

Pakistan's Provincial Ombudsman of Punjab Achieves the Prestigious ISO Certification

The Office of the Ombudsman Punjab has been awarded the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS) certification, marking a significant milestone in its journey towards excellence in public service delivery. ISO 9001 is the world's most recognized standard for quality management systems. Its certification demonstrates that an organization has established effective mechanisms to ensure public satisfaction, continuous improvement, and employee involvement, while meeting regulatory requirements.



According to a spokesperson from the Ombudsman Office, the certification process was comprehensive and multi-phased, which showcased the institution's commitment to operational excellence and institutional accountability. It began with a meticulous gap analysis to assess existing practices against international quality standards. This was followed by the structured implementation of a robust Quality Management System (QMS) designed to streamline internal processes, enhance service delivery, and promote continual improvement. Internal audits were conducted to evaluate compliance and effectiveness, culminating in a formal, independent certification audit by an accredited body. To sustain these standards, the institution will also undergo regular surveillance audits, ensuring that quality benchmarks are consistently met and that the organization remains aligned with global best practices.

H.E. Ayesha Hamid Represents Provincial Ombudsman of Punjab at the Asian Ombudsman Assembly in China

In her quest of international engagement, OICOA Member and Punjab Ombudsman H.E. Ayesha Hamid, led the delegation of Provincial Ombudsman of Punjab at the 18th General Assembly and 26th Board of Directors Meeting of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), held in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. The event, was hosted by the National Commission of Supervision of China, and convened under the banner of "Effective Ombudsman for People's Livelihood."



Under the leadership of Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan and President AOA, H.E. Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi, this high-level gathering brought together Ombudsman institutions from across Asia to deliberate on the evolving challenges of governance and the essential role of ombudsman in safeguarding citizens' rights. Discussions ranged from institutional transparency to mechanisms for inclusive service delivery, especially in post-pandemic and economically constrained contexts. H.E. Ayesha Hamid emphasized the growing relevance of subnational ombudsman offices, particularly in federated systems like Pakistan's, where provincial mechanisms play a critical role in bridging the gap between state services and the public. She highlighted initiatives from Punjab aimed at improving administrative justice, particularly for marginalized groups, and called for more robust cross-border learning among AOA members.



PROVINCIAL OMBUDSMAN OF SINDH

Sindh Ombudsman H.E. Sohail Rajput Hosts Capacity-Building Seminar to Bolster Public Service Delivery

In a move to reinforce institutional efficiency and citizen-centered service delivery, the Office of the Ombudsman Sindh, under the leadership of H.E. Sohail Rajput, convened a one-day training seminar for its Regional Directors and Officers. The seminar aimed to enhance administrative responsiveness, foster better grievance redressal mechanisms, and further the principles of good governance across the province.



The event was graced by Honourable Justice Muhammad Faisal Kamal Alam as Chief Guest, who underscored the critical role of the Ombudsman institution in ensuring timely, accessible justice for the public. In his remarks, Justice Alam noted that strengthening the ombudsman system directly contributes to reducing the caseload of the judiciary by resolving matters through alternative administrative redress.

H.E. Sohail Rajput, while welcoming the participants, reiterated his commitment to institutional reform through staff development and procedural modernization. He emphasized that public confidence in state institutions is closely tied to how swiftly and fairly citizen grievances are handled. The training included sessions on best practices in case handling, investigation ethics, and legal frameworks governing the Ombudsman's mandate.



PROVINCIAL OMBUDSPERSON OF SINDH FOR PROTECTION AGAINST HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE

Sindh Ombudsperson Leads High-Impact Training on Workplace Harassment Prevention in Karachi

On the directions of Sindh Ombudsperson and OICOA Member H.E. Justice (R) Shahnawaz Tariq, the Ombudsperson Office for Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace held a day-long awareness and training workshop aimed at fostering safe, inclusive, and respectful workplaces for women across public and private sectors.



Organized in collaboration with the Human Rights Department, Government of Sindh, Bantva Hospital, The Jagruti Foundation, Directorate of Education TMC Chanesar (District East), and Bath Towel (Pvt.) Ltd., the session brought together stakeholders from education, healthcare, social advocacy, and industry. Justice Tariq, in his keynote remarks, condemned silence in the face of harassment, underscoring the need for societal and institutional courage in standing by victims. He further noted the importance of internal inquiry mechanisms, proactive sensitization, and a culture of zero tolerance to break cycles of abuse and impunity. Ms. Kiran Zubair, Communications Specialist (Labor Rights) from The Trafficking in Persons Program, Solidarity Center, and other partners reiterated the need for stronger grievance redressal structures and implementation of the law across all sectors, particularly in labor-intensive environments. Legal insights and responsibilities under the Act were also shared to clarify institutional obligations.



PROVINCIAL OMBUDSMAN OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA



H.E. Muttafhir Zeb Reviews Monthly Progress of Provincial Ombudsman of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pushes for Digital Expansion

The Office of the Provincial Ombudsman Khyber Pakhtunkhwa convened its monthly review meeting under the leadership of H.E. Mr. Muttafhir Zeb, to assess institutional performance and explore avenues for improved citizen service delivery.

The meeting highlighted key metrics for August 2025, during which 572 new complaints were registered and 255 cases successfully resolved, reflecting the office's ongoing commitment to efficient redressal of public grievances.

In a strategic move to enhance accessibility and streamline procedures, the Ombudsman directed further digitization of the Complaint Management System, ensuring faster and more user-friendly interaction with the public.

Deliberations also focused on expanding awareness initiatives aimed at strengthening the public's understanding of the Ombudsman's role and mandate. Participants discussed outreach strategies to bridge gaps between citizens and the institution, particularly in underserved regions. Mr. Zeb commended the dedication of his team and emphasized that the principles of transparency, accountability, and good governance must remain central to all institutional activities. He reaffirmed the Ombudsman Office's mission to act as a reliable mechanism for justice and administrative fairness.



PROVINCIAL OMBUDSMAN OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA



Balochistan Ombudsman Secretariat Conducts an Advanced IT Training Program to Empower its Staff to Address Public Grievances Effectively

In a forward-looking initiative to strengthen institutional efficiency and digital competency, the Provincial Ombudsman Secretariat Balochistan conducted a comprehensive capacity-building program, aimed at equipping its staff with cutting-edge I.T. skills and knowledge.

Spearheaded by the I.T. Wing under the leadership of System Analyst Mr. Noman Siddiqui, the training program targets Computer Operators, Assistant Computer Operators, Stenographers, and clerical personnel.

It offers a robust curriculum that integrates Artificial Intelligence applications, advanced Microsoft Office tools, intranet systems, data sharing protocols, and essential cybersecurity practices. The program reflects the Ombudsman Secretariat's commitment to institutional excellence and innovation. During the third training session, instructions were provided on practical I.T. tools. The fourth session delved into the intricacies of networking systems and cybersecurity frameworks. Participants gained practical insights into safe data handling, internal communication networks, and information security—skills critical to modern governance and administrative integrity.

With this program, the Balochistan Ombudsman Secretariat not only aims to prioritize staff development but also aligns with its broader mandate of ensuring responsive and tech-enabled public service delivery in the province of Balochistan for disposal of speedy and efficacious justice.



**OICOA President and Chief Ombudsman of
Turkiye H.E. Mehmet Akarca paid a visit to
Ukraine's Ambassador to Ankara
H.E. Naryman Dzhelialov**



**H.E. Mehmet Akarca alongwith the
Commander of the Turkish Land Forces
General Metin Tokel**



**Ombudsman of Turkiye H.E Ms. Fatma Benli
Yalçın visited the President of Ankara Bar
Association Mr. Mustafa Köroğlu**



**OICOA Board Member and Human Rights
Commissioner of Azerbaijan H.E. Sabina Aliyeva
inaugurates the North-West Regional Center of
the Ombudsman in Shaki Region**



OICOA Board Member and Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan H.E. Sabina Aliyeva visiting the Alley of Honor alongwith the Chairman of Turkish Human Rights and Equality Organization



OICOA Board Member and Mediator of Morocco H.E. Hassan Tariq chairs the Workshop on 'Moroccan Administration and Stake of Equality'



Moroccan Mediator and OICOA Board Member H.E. Hassan Tariq presides over a commemorative ceremony to distribute excellence awards to the students who succeeded in the baccalaureate exams



OICOA Board Member and Chairman of Indonesian Ombudsman H.E. Mokhammad Najih presents the SMBP Report to the Indonesian Minister of Primary and Secondary Education



Delegation of Indonesian Ombudsman paid a working visit to Sabang Free Trade Zone Authority to discuss avenues for supporting investment and tourism in the region



OICOA Board Member and Ombudsman of Kingdom of Bahrain H.E. Ghada Hameed receives the delegation of United States House of Representatives & Senate at the Secretariat of Grievances in Manama



Mediator of Ivory Coast (an OICOA Member Institution) held an awareness session in Bingerville region to promote the role of Mediator's office in holding peaceful and democratic Presidential Elections



Delegation of Mediator of Ivory Coast (held an awareness session in Hambol region for Violence free and peaceful upcoming Presidential Elections



OICOA Member and Chairman of Administrative Control Authority of Libya H.E. Abdullah Qaderboh held a meeting with the Vice President of the Libyan Council of Liberty & Human Rights Ms. Naima Al-Aribi



OICOA Member and Chairman of Administrative Control Authority of Libya H.E. Abdula Qaderboh chairs the Annual Meeting of 'Closure of Final Accounts' of the Libyan Government



OICOA Member and Chairman of Administrative Control Authority of Libya H.E. Abdula Qaderboh alongwith the Chairman of Libyan Supreme Council Dr. Mohamed Takala



Ombudsman of Mozambique and OICOA Member H.E. Isaque Chande on the occasion of inauguration of a new regional office in Cabo Delgado - Mozambique



OICOA Member and Ombudsman of Mozambique H.E. Isaque Chande addresses the Roundtable on 'Challenges and Opportunities for Promotion of Human Rights in the Context of Conflict'



Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan and OICOA Member H.E. Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi chairs the 26th Board Meeting of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) as its President



A Group Photo of Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan alongwith OICOA President H.E. Mehmet Akarca, Vice President H.E. Zabiullah Khodaeian, and Board Member H.E. Sabina Aliyeva at the 26th AOA Board Meeting



Group Photo of the participants at the International Workshop on 'Effective Ombudsmanship for People's Livelihood' held under the banner of Asian Ombudsman Association at Beijing



Pakistan's Federal Ombudsperson for Protection Against Harassment H.E. Fauzia Viqar delivers a lecture on Workplace Harassment Act 2010 at the National Highway and Motorway Police Training College



Pakistan's Federal Ombudsperson for Protection Against Harassment H.E. Fauzia Viqar presenting a shield to the World Bank's Regional Director for Planet, Ms. Meskerem Brhane



FOSPAH holds an Awareness Session regarding Safety Against Workplace Harassment at the HeadQuarters of Punjab Mass Transit Authority



FOSPAH (Karachi Regional Office) holds GenderTalks Session on "Importance of Grievance Mechanisms for Harmonious Industrial Relations", hosted at Towel Manufacturers Association



Vice President OICOA H.E. Justice Zabiullah Khodaeian and Provincial Ombudsman of Punjab H.E Ayesha Hamid at the Asian Ombudsman Association General Assembly in Beijing, China



'Awami Khidmat Van' of Provincial Ombudsman of Punjab visits Lodhran District to hear complaints of the citizens at their doorstep



H.E. Muttahir Zeb chairs the monthly performance review meeting at the Provincial Ombudsman of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Secretariat



Provincial Ombudsman of Balochistan conducts a specialized IT program training session for capacity building of its staff for effective complaint management and resolution

Statement of H.E. Sabina Aliyeva (OICOA Board Member and Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan) on the 5th Anniversary of the Day of Remembrance in Azerbaijan



27 Sentyabr - Azərbaycan Respublikasında Anim Günüün beşinci ildönümü ilə əlaqədar Ombudsmanın Bəyanatı

Five years have passed since September 27, 2020, when the Armenian armed forces, in violation of universally recognized norms and principles of international law, launched large-scale military operations that resulted in the loss of numerous civilians by intensive and heavy weapons fire on densely populated civilian settlements.

At that time, Azerbaijan, exercising the right to self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter, launched counter-offensive operations to ensure the right to life of the civilian population and liberate our lands that had been under occupation for nearly thirty years. As a result, the implementation of decisions and resolutions of reputable international organizations that had remained on paper for many years was ensured, and the violated rights of more than one million refugees and internally displaced people were restored.

During the 44-day Patriotic War, the Armenian armed forces, in gross violation of international law, including International humanitarian law, fired long-range operational-tactical and ballistic missile systems at one of the country's largest cities, regional centers, and other settlements, which are densely populated with civilians and located far from the area where hostilities were taking place.

As a result of war crimes deliberately committed by Armenia in violation of international law, including the requirements of the 1949 Geneva Conventions¹ Relating to the Protection of War Victims² and their Additional Protocols, about 100 civilians, including 12 children, were killed and more than 450 civilians were injured. In addition, 12 thousand civilian infrastructure facilities in Azerbaijan, including more than 3410 houses, 120 apartment buildings and a large number of schools, hospitals, kindergartens, were destroyed or left in a state of emergency due to heavy artillery fire.

In the post-war period, local anti-terrorist measures were implemented in September 2023 to prevent provocative acts by separatist forces that pose a threat to peace and security in the region and to protect human rights and freedoms.

As a result of the Patriotic War and anti-terrorist measures, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our state were fully ensured and new opportunities opened up for the protection of human rights in the region.

Some time ago, during the meeting of the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia in the United States of America, the "Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and Interstate Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia" was initiated. This historic event marked significant progress in ensuring lasting peace and stability not only between the two countries, but also in the region as a whole.

As the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan, I would like to emphasize once again that it is extremely important to ensure fundamental issues based on international law, such as the restoration of human rights and freedoms violated during the occupation and war, clarification of the fate of missing persons, provision of accurate mine maps in order to accelerate the process of clearing our liberated territories from mines, as well as the safe and dignified return of former internally displaced persons to their native lands.

In this regard, it is of particular importance for international organizations, world states, ombudsmen and national human rights institutions of foreign countries to take joint initiatives to ensure the norms of international law, punish those who commit war crimes, restore violated human rights, and establish sustainable development and lasting peace.

I pay tribute to the dear memory of our martyrs who lost their lives for the full protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan, the protection of the right to life of the civilian population, and the restoration of the rights and freedoms of former internally displaced persons, which have been grossly violated for many years, and I wish peace for our country, the region, and the world.



World Bank Delegation Visits FOSPAH

Federal Ombudsperson Fauzia Viqar met with a delegation from the World Bank, including Meskerem Brane, Regional Director for Planet, MENAAP Region, and Kamakshi Mubarak, Senior Social Development Specialist

ISLAMABAD, (UrduPoint / Pakistan Point News - 8th Sep, 2025) Federal Ombudsperson Fauzia Viqar met with a delegation from the World Bank, including Meskerem Brane, Regional Director for Planet, MENAAP Region, and Kamakshi Mubarak, Senior Social Development Specialist.

During the meeting, Fauzia Viqar briefed the delegation about the mandate of FOSPAH, its legal framework, and the Secretariat's role in ensuring protection against harassment across workplaces and educational institutions and upholding women's property rights in the Islamabad Capital Territory.

Meskerem Brane commended FOSPAH for the tangible impact it has made on the lives of women in Pakistan, emphasizing that this real change on the ground is both impressive and inspiring.



Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman)'s Secretariat
وafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) کا سکریٹریٹ
Government of Pakistan
کوہاٹ پاکستان

WAFAQI MOHTASIB EXPRESSES GRAVE CONCERN OVER THREAT TO OLD CITIZENS & CHILDREN DUE TO GROWING POPULATION OF STRAY DOGS .

DIRECTS CDA AND MUNICIPAL CORPORATION TO INITIATE URGENT REMEDIAL MEASURES.

Islamabad: 25 September 2025 – Expressing his grave concern over the rapidly growing population of stray dogs in the federal capital and increasing number of dog bite cases, the Wafaqi Mohtasib (Federal Ombudsman), Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, taking suo moto notice, has asked CDA and the Municipal Corporation to take urgent remedial measures in view of the public suffering.

It may be recalled that the problem of stray dogs is increasingly becoming acute due to negligence on part of the Municipal authorities in Islamabad and is causing serious hardship to senior citizens, women and children. However, sufficient attention is not being paid to this critical area. According to reports, a large number of people including the children and the elderly are bitten by the stray dogs.

In view of the magnitude of this problem, the Wafaqi Mohtasib Office, had commissioned a professional study, which inter alia, revealed that the policy of Islamabad Wild Life Management Board has not been implemented in letter and spirit. Besides suggesting practical measures, the study also shed light on ways and means adopted by other countries of the region for tackling the issue. In this regard, Wafaqi Mohtasib had also constituted a high level committee tasked to hold meetings with the authorities concerned for recommending measures to tackle this menace. Resultantly, a dog centre was established at Tarlai under the name of Stray Dogs Population Control Centre (SDPCC). The project, however, failed to deliver and the problem remained.

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Regional Director Ombudsman Sindh holds open court for redressal of public complaints

MURSHIDABAD - Regional Director Ombudsman Sindh Fazal Muhammad Sheikh held an open court for redressal of public complaints at the District Council Hall Murgur Mathelo. On this occasion, a large number of citizens participated and presented their problems directly before the Regional Director. During the court, the public especially piled up complaints against the Union Council Secretaries. The citizens were of the view that the UC Secretaries were neglecting their responsibilities, public problems were being ignored and unnecessary obstacles were being created in daily work. The citizens told the Regional Director that despite hearing public complaints, the concerned officers often did not show seriousness due to which the problems remained as they were. Regional Director Fazal Muhammad Sheikh listened to the complaints very seriously and issued orders for immediate action. He strictly directed the Deputy Director Local Government to immediately redress all the complaints and no negligence in resolving public issues will be tolerated. Furthermore, he clearly warned the Union Council Secretaries to resolve public issues on priority basis and discharge their duties responsibly, otherwise action will be recommended against them. At the end of the open court, the citizens appreciated the initiative of the Sindh Ombudsman and said that such steps are very important for resolving public issues and they provide relief to the common man.

Punjab Ombudsman orders relief of Rs40m in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD - The Ombudsman Punjab has provided relief of more than Rs40 million to the applicants in Faisalabad.

According to Advisor to Punjab Ombudsman Faisalabad Regional Office-II Muhammad Nawaz Khalid Arabi, the process of redressing complaints and providing relief to affected citizens is continuing and a relief of more than Rs.40 million was provided to the applicants in various payments under death, marriage and scholarship grants from August 1 to September 12, 2023.

He said that the payments were made through Punjab Workers Welfare Fund Lahore in response to long-pending claims of the complainants.

The beneficiaries had been waiting for nearly six years as their applications for marriage grants, death grants and scholarships remained pending with the concerned departments, he added.

Meanwhile, the applicants expressed their gratitude for timely action of Ombudsman's office and said that the intervention of Punjab Ombudsman not only resolved their prolonged issues but also restored their confidence in the grievance redressal system.

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Federal Ombudsman Takes Action Against FBR Despite Board's Denial

The Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) has taken immediate notice of an alleged illegal move by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to amend the Wealth Statement section of the Income Tax Return Form for Tax Year 2023, requiring taxpayers to declare the market value of their movable and immovable assets.

In response to a complaint filed by prominent tax lawyer Wahab Shahzad Butt, the FTO has issued notices to the Secretary, Revenue Division, Member (Operations-II), Member (Policy), Member (Legal), and DG (IT & TD) of the FBR.

These officials have been summoned for a hearing on Monday, September 25, 2023, and are directed to appear with para-wise documents on the issue.

There is a strong likelihood that the FBR may withdraw the amendment to the wealth statement following the FTO's intervention.

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POSPAH rules invasive CCTV monitoring as workplace harassment

Islamabad - The Federal Ombudsman for Protection Against Harassment (POSPAH) has ruled that excessive CCTV surveillance in the workplace amounts to harassment. The ruling was issued in the case of Saneem Afshain vs. Azhar Abbas, CEO of Yashal English House on Thursday, where the complainant was subjected to persistent monitoring and intimidation through surveillance. POSPAH found this conduct violated her dignity and privacy, ordering Rs. 50,000 in compensation and a censure against the accused. The decision also mandates workplace reforms, including forming an inquiry committee and displaying the Code of Conduct in English and Urdu. POSPAH emphasized that harassment includes any behavior that creates fear or violates dignity, not just physical or verbal misconduct.

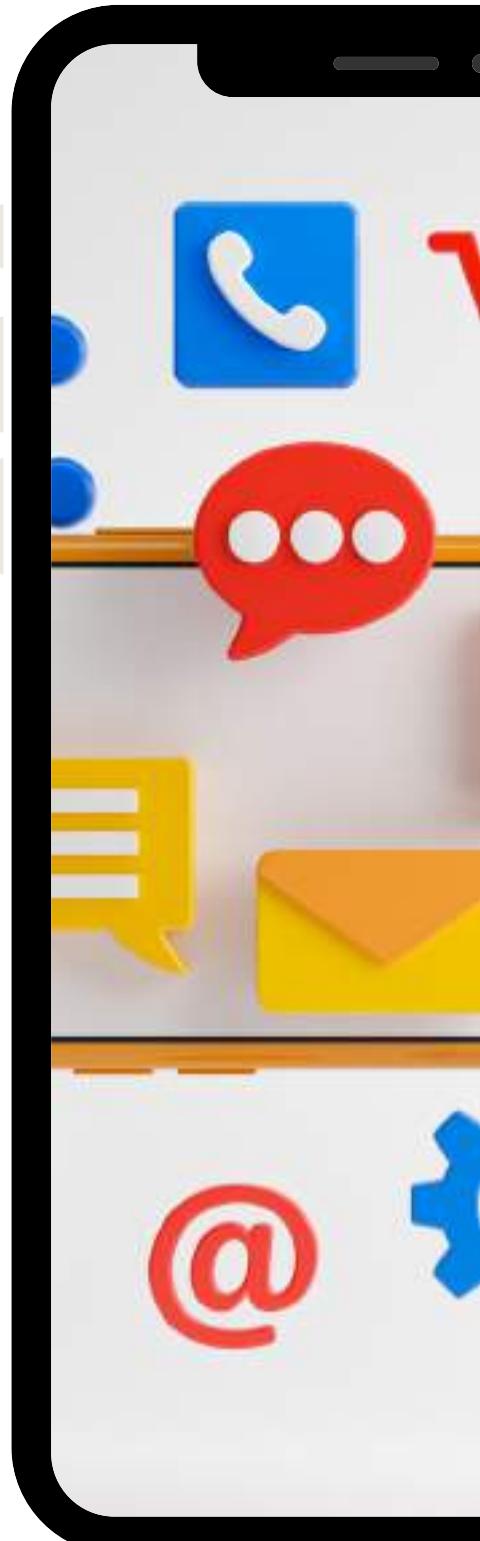


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