

AOM Strategy and Plan of Action for 2017

- Proposition –

The Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmen (AOM), along with the other three networks of Ombudsmen (AOMF, FIO and IIO), has strongly committed to implementing the Tirana Declaration of September 8, 2016, on the role of Ombudsmen and to remind States of their international commitments to protect and promote the rights of migrants and refugees. This Declaration has enabled other international organizations to commit themselves to financially and morally support the future work of the AOM.

In 2017, the AOM chose to prioritize the commitments of the Tirana Declaration. The strategy and the AOM action plan for 2017 will thus implement various actions, which will be based and draw on the Declaration's innovative text.

1. Meetings of the AOM

The AOM Bureau could meet on the occasion of its visit to Macedonia in **February or March 2017**, either in Skopje or in Albania. A meeting of the Administration Council will also be held; however the venue and timing remain to be confirmed.

2. Projects of the Committee on Migration

The Committee on Migration and Refugees (CMR) was formally established at the AOM meeting in Malta on 10 March 2016.

The members of the AOM will be invited by the General Secretariat, in January 2017, to express their interest in joining this Committee. The committee's objective in 2017 will be to implement the following two main projects during the year 2017:

- ✓ **Visits in Macedonia and Italia** to reception and / or accommodation centres for migrants between January and March 2017, in particular to check the conformity of migrants' living conditions with international standards
Commitment n°4 of Tirana Declaration
- ✓ Implementation of the **project between the AOM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** in order to strengthen regional coordination to protect the rights of migrants and refugees. After validation by the members of the AOM office, this project will be submitted to UNHCR for review and/or funding agreement
Commitments 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8

- ✓ Implementation of the action plan of the AOM-AOMF working group on the rights of migrant children. Validated by the members of the AOM Bureau of January 16, 2017 and following agreement of the AOMF office, the members of the working group will develop an action plan for 2017 and 2018.

The AOM Secretariat will work jointly with the AOMF Permanent Secretariat to seek collaboration and / or funding from international organizations (UNHCR, IOM, etc.)

Commitments 1, 4, 7 and 8

3. Continued institutional strengthening of AOM members

Institutional strengthening activities will be funded mainly by the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, a faithful partner of the AOM, for the Association and the Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco.

- ✓ **Training in October 2017** in Rabat on the deontology of security and migrants heading for AOM member countries. Organized around three / four modules, the training sessions will aim to reinforce the skills of member institutions and to share best practices in this field. High-level experts from international organizations, non-governmental organizations as well as practitioners will participate.
- ✓ Two last institutional strengthening missions to the **Tunisian Mediator**. These follow on from the first audit mission, which was held in February 2016, on the one hand to make recommendations on the modification of the legal status of the institution and on the other to elaborate the program of the two missions as a result of the training needs expressed by the Tunisian institution.
- ✓ **Institutional support/strengthening of an AOM member institution**. This member will be selected following a questionnaire of identification needs.

4. Development of AOM communication

The Office of the AOM President will be supported by the General Secretariat to optimize the management of the new website. Proposed in English and French, the web will require close collaboration between the two structures with a view to:

- ✓ finalize **the translation into English** (President Office)
- ✓ create an **interface of the members** in order to update relevant member information
- ✓ develop new sections of the website
- ✓ publish the various activities carried out during the year

5. Protocols for cooperation between Ombudsman

As the AOM-AOMF-FIO-IOI cooperation agreement was not signed as planned on 8 September 2016, it is proposed that the AOM sign bilateral cooperation agreements with AOMF and FIO. The General Secretariat will submit draft agreements to that effect.