

The Office of the President of the International Ombudsman Institute and Ombudsman

International Ombudsman Institute

The International Ombudsman Institute (IOI), established in 1978, is the only global organisation for the cooperation of more than 205 independent Ombudsman institutions from more than 100 countries worldwide. The IOI is organised into six regional chapters: Africa; Asia; Australasian and Pacific; Europe; the Caribbean and Latin America and North America.

In May 2021, the Ombudsman commenced a three-year term as President of the IOI at the Closing Ceremony of the 12th quadrennial World Conference of the IOI held (virtually) in Dublin.

In the 45-year history of the IOI, the Ombudsman is the only Australian that has been elected President. It was also the first time a President was elected by a vote open to all members of the IOI. Historically, the President was elected by a majority vote of the World Board of the IOI.

The IOI is governed by a World Board, of which the Ombudsman has served as the President since May 2021, following a term as the Second Vice-President between 2016 and 2021. Before this, the Ombudsman served as Treasurer of the IOI from 2014 to 2016, and President of the Australasian and Pacific Ombudsman Region (**APOR**) of the IOI from 2012 to 2014.



2022-23 initiatives

IOI President is guest of honour at international human rights conference in Ukraine

The IOI President and IOI Vice President Europe and Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman of the United Kingdom, Rob Behrens CBE (**Ombudsman Behrens**), attended the International Conference “Human Rights in Dark Hours” in Ukraine. Due to the fact that Ukraine is under ongoing missile and drone attack from the Russian Federation, the conference was held in one of the deepest subway stations in the world. The Conference commenced with a poignant candlelight vigil for those Ukrainians who have made the ultimate sacrifice for democracy, freedom, the rule of law and the sovereign nation of Ukraine.



Left to right: Dmytro Lubinets, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Andrii Borysovykh Yermak, Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine; and Volodymyr Zelensky, President of Ukraine.

Time Person of the Year, President Zelensky, provided a powerful opening speech. In his speech, President Zelensky specifically noted the visit to Ukraine by the IOI: “I am glad that Chris Field is present among us today - it’s my pleasure, good afternoon - President of the International Ombudsman Institute, a representative of a system whose potential can provide much more for the protection of human rights for Ukraine.”

The IOI President followed President Zelensky in addressing the conference. An entire session of the conference was dedicated to Ombudsman Behrens undertaking a Q & A session with the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets. The IOI President also undertook an international press conference.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, addresses an international press conference at the International Conference "Human Rights in Dark Hours" in Ukraine.

IOI President meets Chairman and Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, Ruslan Stefanchuk in Ukraine

The IOI President and Ombudsman Behrens were honoured to meet the Chairman and Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, Ruslan Stefanchuk in Ukraine. The Chairman and Speaker issued a press statement following the meeting noting that, “This is an example of professionalism and courage for the leaders of the world human rights institutions. You demonstrate your commitment to the ideals of human rights and freedom not in words, but in deeds,” and that “He expressed personal gratitude to the President Chris Field for his contribution to the exclusion of the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation Tatiana Moskalkova from the Institute”, calling it “an act of justice”.



Left to right: Ombudsman Behrens; Ruslan Stefanchuk, Chairman and Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and Dmytro Lubinets, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights.

IOI President visits Kyiv, Ukraine

The IOI President and Ombudsman Behrens, visited the bunker used by the staff of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights during Russian Federation missile attacks. This was followed by a formal exchange with the Commissioner and his senior staff, before attending a meeting of the Coordination Council of the Ombudsman of Ukraine, a senior advisory council of civil society human rights experts. Both the IOI President and Ombudsman Behrens had the privilege of addressing the Council.



Captured Russian Federation military equipment in Kyiv.

The IOI President and Ombudsman Behrens visited places of destruction in Kyiv. One particularly tragic moment was seeing an operational power station that was intended to be destroyed by a Russian missile. Instead, this missile destroyed a residential apartment building on the other side of the road with the loss of lives of Ukrainian civilians.

The visit then included inspecting captured Russian Federation military equipment, prior to paying respect to those soldiers who have given their lives for their country. The day finished by visiting a 'Point of Invincibility', an 'inflatable' building that has power, tea, coffee, water and beds for Ukrainian citizens, and particularly as the temperature starts to fall to -10 or less, these buildings are heated.



Loss of life and destruction in Kyiv.



A memorial to fallen Ukrainian soldiers.



A point of invincibility in Kyiv.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, meets with Commissioner Lubinets.

IOI President visits Irpin, Ukraine

The IOI President and Ombudsman Behrens undertook a visit to the city of Irpin in Ukraine. Only twenty kilometres from Kyiv, the Russian Federation invaded Irpin, with Kyiv its next target. What followed was a battle that initially saw hundreds of civilians killed and a huge number of internally displaced persons and refugees. The invasion wrought mass destruction with 70% of this thriving city destroyed. President Zelensky named Irpin the 'Hero City of Ukraine'. The IOI President and Ombudsman Behrens spoke at length to just one of those heroes.



Left to right: Dmytro Lubinets, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights; Negresha Dmytro Mykhailovych, Deputy Mayor of Irpin; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and Ombudsman Behrens.



Destruction in Irpin, Ukraine.



Destruction in Irpin, Ukraine.



A memorial in Irpin, Ukraine.



Destruction in Irpin, Ukraine.

IOI President meets with Australian Ambassador to Poland, His Excellency Mr Lloyd Brodrick, and Australian Ambassador to Ukraine, His Excellency Mr Bruce Edwards, during visit to Poland

Immediately prior to his visit to Ukraine, the IOI President visited Poland. The IOI President met with Australian Ambassador to Poland, His Excellency Mr Lloyd Brodrick, and Australian Ambassador to Ukraine, His Excellency Mr Bruce Edwards. The Ambassadors and the IOI President were able to discuss a large number of matters relevant to the valued relationship between Poland and Australia as well as the current situation in Ukraine.



Left to right: His Excellency Mr. Lloyd Brodrick, Australian Ambassador to Poland; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and His Excellency Mr. Bruce Edwards, Australian Ambassador to Ukraine.

IOI President meets with His Excellency Mr Vasyl Zvarych, Ambassador of Ukraine to Poland during visit to Poland

The IOI President, accompanied by His Excellency Mr Bruce Edwards, Australian Ambassador to Ukraine, met with His Excellency Mr Vasyl Zvarych, Ambassador of Ukraine to Poland, during his official visit to Poland. During the meeting it was indicated to His Excellency that the IOI stands resolutely and unambiguously with the people of Ukraine.



Left to right: His Excellency Mr Vasyl Zvarych; Ambassador of Ukraine to Poland; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and His Excellency Mr Bruce Edwards, Australian Ambassador to Ukraine.

IOI President meets with the Commissioner for Human Rights of Poland, Professor Marcin Wiącek, during official visit to Poland

The IOI President met with Professor Marcin Wiącek, Commissioner for Human Rights of Poland, during his visit to Poland. At this meeting, the IOI President was delighted to be joined by Ombudsman Behrens and His Excellency Mr Lloyd Brodrick, Australian Ambassador to Poland.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Professor Marcin Wiącek, Commissioner for Human Rights of Poland; Rob Behrens CBE, IOI Vice President Europe and Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman of the United Kingdom.

IOI President attends border crossing points at the Hungarian-Romanian and Hungarian-Ukrainian borders during visit to Hungary

The IOI President attended border crossing points at the Hungarian-Romanian and Hungarian-Ukrainian borders during his visit to Hungary which followed an invitation from Dr Ákos Kozma, Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary. Over a period of two days, the IOI President was privileged to meet local Mayors, doctors, nurses, Red Cross staff, and border crossing officers, all of whom have played a vital role in ensuring the well-being and safe passage of more than one million refugees escaping the Russian Federation’s brutal and unlawful invasion of Ukraine. The visit included the Csengersima-Petea crossing point at the Hungarian-Romanian border and the Záhony, Beregsurány and Lónya crossing points at the Hungarian-Ukrainian border.



Left to right: Dr Ákos Kozma, Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary; and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, speaking with an official at a crossing point at the Hungarian border.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President visits field office of the Commission of Fundamental Rights of Hungary.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and Dr Ákos Kozma, Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary at Hungary and Ukraine border.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President addresses the media.

IOI President plants memorial tree in Nyírerdő Nyírségi Erdészeti Zrt State Forest in honour of his visit to Hungary

The IOI President was invited to plant a memorial tree in Nyírerdő Nyírségi Erdészeti Zrt State Forest in honour of his visit to Hungary. The Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary, Dr Ákos Kozma, has a mandate to protect the rights of future generations. In recognition of this important mandate, and on the occasion of the IOI President’s official visit to Hungary, it was a great honour for the IOI President to be invited to plant a memorial tree. The IOI President was also deeply humbled to be awarded the 2022 *Justitia Regnorum Fundamentum* Award granted by the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary for “those who have achieved extraordinary, exemplary results in the field of protecting fundamental rights”.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President and Dr Ákos Kozma, Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary.



Plaque displayed on the occasion of Chris Field PSM, IOI President, planting a memorial tree in Nyírerdő Nyírségi Erdészeti Zrt State Forest in honour of his official visit to Hungary.

IOI President meets Dr. Tamás Sulyok, President of the Constitutional Court of Hungary, during visit to Hungary

The IOI President attended a meeting with the President of the Constitutional Court of Hungary, Dr. Tamás Sulyok, during his official visit to Hungary which was organised by the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary, Dr Ákos Kozma.



Left to right: Dr. Tamás Sulyok, President of the Constitutional Court of Hungary and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.

IOI President attends meeting with the new Secretary General of the IOI, Ms Gaby Schwarz, during visit to Austria

Immediately prior to visiting Hungary, the IOI President was delighted to meet Ms Gaby Schwarz, the new Secretary General of the IOI and Chair of the Austrian Ombudsman Board, during his visit to Austria. This was the first meeting between the President and the new Secretary General, who is the first woman to hold the office of Secretary.

IOI President attends formal luncheon at the residence of His Excellency Mr Richard Sadleir, (former) Australian Ambassador to Austria and Head of the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Vienna, in honour of his visit to Austria



Left to right: Gaby Schwarz, Secretary General of the IOI and Chair of the Austrian Ombudsman Board; His Excellency Mr. Richard Sadleir, (former) Australian Ambassador to Austria and Head of the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Vienna; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and Werner Amon, Minister for European and International Affairs, Education and Human Resources, Government of Styria and immediate former Secretary General, IOI.

The IOI President attended a formal luncheon at the private residence of His Excellency Mr Richard Sadleir, (former) Australian Ambassador to Austria and Head of the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Vienna, in honour of his visit to Austria. The luncheon created an outstanding opportunity to discuss, at this critical time for both Europe and the world, the role of oversight agencies in promoting human rights and the rule of law.

IOI President attends meeting with His Excellency Mr Vasyl Myroshnychenko, Ambassador of Ukraine to Australia

The IOI President attended a meeting with His Excellency Mr Vasyl Myroshnychenko, Ambassador of Ukraine to Australia, as part of the Ambassador's visit to Western Australia. Ambassador Myroshnychenko and the IOI President had a warm and positive exchange and it was indicated to His Excellency that Western Australians, Australians and the IOI unequivocally support the people and sovereign nation of Ukraine.



Left to right: Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and His Excellency Mr Vasyl Myroshnychenko, Ambassador of Ukraine to Australia.

IOI President attends meeting with His Excellency Mr Bruce Edwards, Australian Ambassador to Ukraine

The IOI President attended a meeting with His Excellency Mr Bruce Edwards, Australian Ambassador to Ukraine, as part of the Ambassador's official visit to Western Australia. The IOI President expressed his appreciation for the significant and gracious support offered to him by all Australian Ambassadors and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in his role as IOI President.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President and His Excellency Bruce Edwards, Australian Ambassador to Ukraine.

IOI President meets the Chief Minister of the Sindh Province and addresses the Launching Ceremony of a Research Study undertaken by the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh into Malnutrition and Stunting in Tharparkar

The IOI President met Chief Minister Sindh, His Excellency Syed Murad Ali Shah. His Excellency and the IOI President enjoyed a warm exchange and the IOI President was honoured that His Excellency presented him a traditional Sindhi cap and Ajrak, which the IOI President wore with great pride during his address at the Launching Ceremony of the Research Study “Assessment of Malnutrition (Stunting) in District Tharparkar” held in the main hall of the Chief Minister’s House.

The Research Study, undertaken by the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, is in the context that access to food and nutrition is a fundamental right for the citizens of Pakistan as enshrined in the Constitution. The IOI President was deeply pleased that this Research Study received funding through the IOI Regional Subvention Program that seeks to fund projects of significance in regions around the world.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President addresses the Launching Ceremony held in the Chief Minister’s House.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, at the Launching Ceremony held in the Chief Minister’s House with dignitaries including (to the immediate right of the IOI President), Chief Minister Sindh, His Excellency Syed Murad Ali Shah; Ombudsman of the Sindh Province Ajaz Ali Khan; and Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi.

IOI President and Provincial Ombudsman Sindh jointly inaugurate new library and plant palm tree at the office of the Ombudsman Sindh

The IOI President was honoured to plant a palm tree in the gardens of the office of the Ombudsman Sindh. Alongside of this tree, Ombudsman Ajaz Ali Khan planted an identical tree, and a marble plinth memorialises this occasion. Following this, the IOI President was humbled to join Ombudsman Khan in jointly inaugurating the magnificent new library of the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, again with a plaque that records this moment for posterity. From here, the IOI President enjoyed a very extensive and highly fruitful bilateral exchange with Ombudsman Khan and his senior executive, including an extensive question and answer session, as well as a separate meeting with Ombudsman Khan.



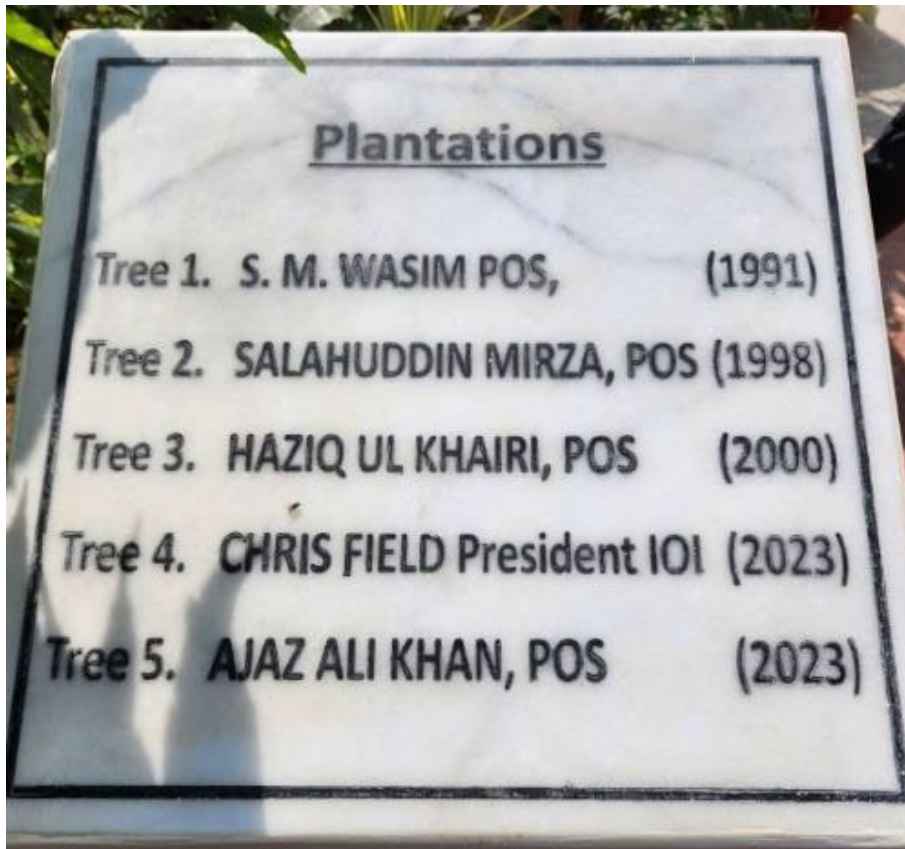
Left to right: Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Ajaz Ali Khan and Chris Field PSM, IOI President, unveiling a plaque to commemorate the new library of the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh.



Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Ajaz Ali Khan and Chris Field PSM, IOI President planting a tree.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President planting a tree.



A marble plinth to memorialise the occasion of a tree planting at the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh.

IOI President lays a floral wreath at the tomb of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the revered founder of Pakistan, at the Mazar-e-Quaid Mausoleum

Following a Guard of Honour, a beautifully sung recitation of the Holy Quran and the Republic of Pakistan Naval Band playing the National Anthem of Pakistan, the IOI President laid a floral wreath inscribed with the details of his visit to Pakistan at the tomb of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the revered founder of Pakistan, laid to rest in the Mazar-e-Quaid mausoleum. It was a deeply humbling and reverential occasion. The IOI President was then provided a private tour of both the Mausoleum and the museum of the Mausoleum, a perfectly preserved record of the great life of Muhammad Ali Jinnah.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President and Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Ajaz Ali Khan, accompanied by dignitaries and senior officers of the Pakistan Navy (and Naval Band) lay an inscribed floral wreath at the tomb of Muhammad Ali Jinnah under full ceremonial Naval Guard.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Ajaz Ali Khan, Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President and other dignitaries lay an inscribed floral wreath at the tomb of Muhammad Ali Jinnah under Guard of Honour.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Ajaz Ali Khan and other dignitaries lay an inscribed floral wreath at the tomb of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, followed by a sung recitation from the Holy Quran.

IOI President received by the Bishop of Karachi and Balochistan Diocese, visits Holy Trinity Cathedral and tours Mohatta Palace Museum

The IOI President was honoured to be received by the Right Reverend Frederick John, the Bishop of Karachi and Balochistan Diocese, for afternoon tea as well as visiting the exquisite Holy Trinity Cathedral. The Right Reverend John and the IOI President discussed the numerous good works that the Anglican Church undertake in the Sindh Province. The IOI President also toured the ornately beautiful Mohatta Palace Museum, which includes among its cultural treasures, vibrantly colourful handcrafted traditional clothing of the Sindh Province.



Left to right: The Right Reverend Frederick John, the Bishop of Karachi and Balochistan Diocese and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.



Left to right: The Right Reverend Frederick John, the Bishop of Karachi and Balochistan Diocese; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President and Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President meet with the Right Reverend Frederick John, the Bishop of Karachi and Balochistan Diocese.

IOI President is guest of Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan and President of Asian Ombudsman Association at a formal working lunch

The IOI President was very pleased to accept the kind invitation of the Honourable Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan and President of the Asian Ombudsman Association, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, for a formal working lunch at the Sindh Club in Karachi. The working lunch was focussed on greater collaboration between the IOI and the Ombudsman institutions of Pakistan, as well as engagement with the Ombudsman of Asia.

IOI President meets Governor of Sindh Province, tours Government House and the National Museum of Pakistan

The IOI President had the privilege of meeting the Governor of Sindh, the Honourable Kamran Tessori, during his official visit to Pakistan. The Governor discussed matters not only regarding the Ombudsman institution, but also the very positive attitude that the people of the Sindh Province and Pakistan are bringing to recovery from both COVID-19 and tragic and devastating floods. Following the meeting with Governor Tessori, the IOI President enjoyed a tour of Government House provided by the Honourable Governor, followed by a comprehensive tour of the National Museum of Pakistan.



Left to right: The Honourable Kamran Tessori, Governor of Sindh; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Ajaz Ali Khan, Provincial Ombudsman Sindh; and Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President.



The Holy Quran in Bahar Script.



IOI flag being flown as Chris Field PSM, IOI President departs the Sindh Province, Pakistan.

IOI President addresses International Conference on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Institution du Médiateur du Royaume (Maroc)

The IOI President had the great honour of providing a welcome address in the Opening Ceremony of the International Conference on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Institution du Médiateur du Royaume (Maroc).



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, addresses International Conference on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Institution du Médiateur du Royaume (Maroc).

The International Conference was held in the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Rabat, a venue that features the most stunning expression of Moroccan architecture and which comfortably accommodated the 300 guests from around the world.

Later in the day, the IOI President was further delighted to address the Third Session of the conference on examining the Venice Principles and the United Nations Resolution on *'The role of Ombudsman and mediator institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights, good governance and the rule of law'*.



The International Conference on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Institution du Médiateur du Royaume (Maroc).



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, attending the International Conference on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Institution du Médiateur du Royaume (Maroc) with dignitaries, including (to the left of the IOI President), Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mohamed Benaillou.



Attendees of the International Conference on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Institution du Médiateur du Royaume (Maroc).

IOI President undertakes cultural exchange in Rabat and Fes

The IOI President undertook cultural exchange in Rabat and Fes on the occasion of his visit to the Kingdom of Morocco. The Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mohamed Benalilou, took the IOI President on a tour of Fes El Bali, the ancient walled Medina, where they spent considerable time in the vast 9th century Karaouiyne University, a university originally founded as a Mosque by Fatima al-Fihri in 857–859. The tour included examining one of the most ancient copies of the Holy Quran in the world. The IOI President also met with expert craftspeople refurbishing and preserving invaluable Islamic texts that are many centuries old. The IOI President was provided a tour of the extraordinary site of the Royal Mausoleum of King Mohammed V, with a very large number of structures extant from the 12th century, including the Hassan Tower. From here, the IOI President visited the Kasbah of the Udayas, overlooking the Bou Regreg River, the Atlantic Ocean, the city of Salé and its stunning Andalusian gardens.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Mohamed Benalilou, Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco; and Şeref Malkoç, Chief Ombudsman of Turkey.



The City of Fez, Morocco.



One of the oldest versions of The Holy Quran in the world.

IOI President attends an official reception at the Residence of the Australian Ambassador to Morocco in honour of his visit to the Kingdom of Morocco

The IOI President was delighted to meet the Australian Ambassador to Morocco, His Excellency Michael Cutts and discuss a range of matters regarding the valued relationship between Australia and the Kingdom of Morocco, including that the Kingdom of Morocco has responsibility for the UN Resolution on *The Role of the Ombudsman and Mediator Institutions in the Promotion and Protection of good governance, human rights and the rule of law*. The previous evening, the IOI President had the privilege of attending an official Reception in honour of his visit to the Kingdom of Morocco at the Residence of the Australian ambassador. The Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mohamed Benalilou and senior officers of the Mediator Institution were also guests of honour at this event.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President, and His Excellency Michael Cutts, Australian Ambassador to Morocco.

The IOI President was also honoured that the Ambassador and Director for Asian Affairs and Oceania of the Kingdom of Morocco, His Excellency Abdelkader El Ansari attended, as did Ministre Déléguée Chargée de la Transition Numérique et de la Réforme de l'Administration, Ghita Mezzour, PhD. The President was further honoured that the Pakistan Ambassador to Morocco, His Excellency Hamid Asghar Khan; Indonesian Ambassador to Morocco, His Excellency H. Hasrul Azwar, MM and Korean Ambassador to Morocco, His Excellency Keeyong Chung attended. With each Ambassador, the IOI President discussed the deeply valued relationships that Western Australia and Australia share with Korea, Indonesia and Pakistan as well as matters of importance to the role of the Ombudsman.

IOI President meets with the Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr Mohamed Benalilou

The IOI President met with the Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr Mohamed Benalilou. Following the meeting, the IOI President undertook a press conference and toured the office of the Mediator. The IOI President was given the honour of signing a very large framed replica of the postage stamp commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Institution that is displayed in the reception of the office of the Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco. The postage stamp also bears the signatures of the Mediator and the Director General of the Barid Al-Maghrib (the Moroccan Postal Service).



Left to right: Mohamed Benalilou, Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.

IOI President chairs the 2023 World Board Meeting of the IOI in Vienna

The IOI President had the pleasure of chairing the 2023 meeting of the World Board of the IOI in Vienna (and the Executive Committee meeting of the World Board and the United Nations Working Group meeting of the World Board).



Members of the Executive Committee of the World Board of the IOI.

Left to right: Caroline Sokoni, IOI Treasurer; Gaby Schwarz, IOI Secretary General; Peter Boshier, IOI Second Vice-President; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Diane Welborn, IOI First Vice-President; Nashieli, Ramírez Hernández Regional President Caribbean and Latin America Region of the IOI; Somsak Suwansujarit, Regional President Asia Region of the IOI; and Andreas Pottakis, Regional President European Region of the IOI.



Left to right: Gaby Schwarz, Secretary General of the IOI and Chair of the Austrian Ombudsman Board; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, chairs the meeting of the UN Working Group of the World Board of the IOI.



Left to right: Peter Kostelka, former Secretary General of the IOI; Antonia Florbela De Jesus Rocha Araujo, Provedoria de Justiça de la República de Angola; Florence Kajuju, IOI Africa Regional President and Ombudsman, Commission on Administrative Justice (Ombudsman) of Kenya; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Kholeka Gcaleka, Acting Public Protector of South Africa, Caroline Sokoni, IOI Treasurer and Public Protector Zambia; and Mats Melin, former President of the IOI.

IOI President provides a Welcome Address to a Reception and charity event co-hosted by the Ukraine Ambassador to Austria, His Excellency Dr Vasyl Khymynets and the charity, Voices for Children

The IOI President was deeply honoured to provide a Welcome Address to a Reception and charity event co-hosted by His Excellency Dr Vasyl Khymynets, the Ukraine Ambassador to Austria, and the charity, Voices for Children. The IOI President was joined by his dear friend Dmytro Lubinets, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as His Excellency Dr. Michael Carpenter, US Ambassador to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and His Excellency Bruce Edwards, Australian Ambassador to Ukraine.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President, providing a Welcome Address, alongside fellow distinguished speakers Dmytro Lubinets, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, and Dr Vasyl Khymynets, Ukrainian Ambassador to Austria.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President, Dmytro Lubinets, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, and Dr Vasyl Khymynets, Ukrainian Ambassador to Austria.

IOI President presents the Golden Order of Merit for exceptional service to the IOI to former IOI Regional President Europe and Catalan Ombudsman, Mr Rafael Ribó, in Vienna

The IOI President had the privilege of presenting the Golden Order of Merit to former IOI Regional President Europe and Catalan Ombudsman, Mr Rafael Ribó, during his visit to Austria.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, providing an address at the Golden Order of Merit ceremony for Mr Rafael Ribó.



Mr Rafael Ribó receiving the Golden Order of Merit.

IOI President attends a formal Welcome Reception to the World Board of the IOI at the Australian Embassy in Vienna in honour of his visit to Austria

In honour of the IOI President's visit to Austria, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Australian Embassy in Vienna, Mr Emil Stojanovski, invited a large number of guests to the Australian Embassy for a formal Welcome Reception to the World Board of the IOI. The IOI President was delighted to provide a Welcome Address to his colleagues.

It was a further honour that the Australian Ambassador to Ukraine, His Excellency Mr Bruce Edwards, was able to attend on an evening where the IOI President's special guest was the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Dmytro Lubinets. A further special guest was former IOI Regional President Europe and Catalan Ombudsman, Mr Rafael Ribó, and recipient earlier that evening of the Golden Order of Merit for his exceptional service to the IOI.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President and Emil Stojanovski, Chargé d'Affaires of the Australian Embassy in Austria.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President addressing the Welcome Reception.

IOI President presents guest of honour of the 2023 IOI World Board meeting in Vienna, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets

The IOI President was honoured to introduce Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, as the guest of honour at the meeting of the 2023 World Board of the IOI in Vienna. Alongside of Commissioner Lubinets, the IOI President was deeply grateful that the Australian Ambassador to Ukraine, His Excellency Bruce Edwards, was able to join the IOI President and Commissioner Lubinets for the presentation.



Dmytro Lubinets, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights (centre) presenting to the 2023 IOI World Board at the invitation of Chris Field PSM, IOI President.



His Excellency Bruce Edwards, Australian Ambassador to Ukraine, at the World Board meeting presentation.

IOI President attends an official Reception at the Parliament of Austria hosted by the President of the Austrian National Council, His Excellency Wolfgang Sobotka

The IOI President had the privilege of being provided a private tour of the Austrian Parliament, along with IOI World Board colleagues. The IOI President and the IOI World Board were welcomed to the Parliament by the President of the Austrian National Council, His Excellency Mr Wolfgang Sobotka and the IOI President was honoured to give the speech in response and renew his acquaintance with His Excellency. In the evening, the IOI World Board had a formal dinner at the Parliament.



IOI World Board members tour the Austrian Parliament and are welcomed by President of the Austrian National Council, His Excellency Wolfgang Sobotka.



Left to Right: His Excellency Mr Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian National Council and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.



Left to Right: His Excellency Mr Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian National Council and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.

IOI President provides the commemoration speech for the presentation of the Golden Order of Merit to former IOI Secretary General, Minister Werner Amon

The IOI President provided a commemoration speech for the presentation of the Golden Order of Merit to former IOI Secretary General, Minister Werner Amon MBA, a very rare award reserved only for those who make an exceptional contribution to the IOI. Among other things, the Minister changed the status of the IOI as an international institution under Austrian law, achieved a significant increase in resources and staff for the General Secretariat of the IOI and, with his Austrian Ombudsman Board colleagues achieved GANHRI “A” Status, for the Austrian Ombudsman Board. The ceremony followed the IOI’s official side event in Styria, where guests were incredibly graciously welcomed by the Governor of Styria, His Excellency Mr Christopher Drexler.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, providing the commemoration speech for the presentation of the Golden Order of Merit to former IOI Secretary General, Minister Werner Amon.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President and Werner Amon MBA, Minister for Education, Human Resources, Europe and International Affairs.

IOI President undertakes cultural exchange in Graz and Styria at the invitation of Werner Amon MBA Minister for Education, Human Resources, Europe and International Affairs

The IOI President undertook an official visit to Graz and Styria at the invitation of the Minister for Education, Human Resources, Europe and International Affairs, Minister Werner Amon MBA. Graz was the first European human rights city, is multicultural and a city of the richest history and art. Styria is home to advanced manufacturing, including cars, semi-conductors, pharmaceuticals and new energy sources. The visit included private guided tours of the Schloss Eggenberg and the modern art museum, the Kunsthaus Graz.



Left to right: Arthur Winker-Hermaden, Chief of Cabinet to Minister Amon; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Werner Amon MBA, Minister for Education, Human Resources, Europe and International Affairs; Meinhard Friedl, Head of International Affairs for Minister Amon; and Barbara Schrank, International Coordination, Office of Minister Amon.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, at the Lannach Spring Festival where he was given the honour of conducting the Lannach Band in a rendition of the Josef Niggas March. The March was specifically composed to honour the birthday of Herr Burgermeister, Josef Niggas, such a popular Mayor that he has served for 28 years, with increased support at each election.

IOI President meets the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr Nataša Pirc Musar, at the Presidential Palace, on the occasion of his visit to Slovenia

The IOI President had the honour of meeting the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr Nataša Pirc Musar, at the Presidential Palace, on the occasion of his visit to Slovenia. Her Excellency, the first woman to hold the office of President, has a deeply impressive background. President Pirc Musar and the IOI President had a highly positive meeting regarding the work that must be done to protect human rights and act on climate change, among other important matters.



Left to right: Chief of Staff to the IOI President, Rebecca Poole, Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia, Peter Svetina; President of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr Nataša Pirc Musar.



Left to right: Peter Svetina, Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia; Dr Nataša Pirc Musar, President of the Republic of Slovenia; and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.

IOI President accompanies President Pirc Musar to the day care centre, Hiša dobre volje, in Miren near Nova Gorica, on the occasion of his visit to Slovenia

It was a great privilege for the IOI President to accompany President Pirc Musar and Human Rights Ombudsman Peter Svetina to visit the day care centre, Hiša dobre volje, in Miren near Nova Gorica, which is a unit of Nova Gorica Home for the Elderly, where individual support is championed and the inclusion of older people in the community in their home environment is promoted.



Dr Nataša Pirc Musar, President of the Republic of Slovenia; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Peter Svetina, Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia; and Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President, with members of the community at the Nova Gorica Home for the Elderly.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, visits the Hiša dobre volje, at the Nova Gorica Home for the Elderly.

IOI President undertakes a live interview for the RTV Channel 1 Slovenia program, Odmevi

On the occasion of his visit to Slovenia, the IOI President was very pleased to undertake a live interview for the RTV Channel 1 Slovenia program, Odmevi. Odmevi is Slovenia's most viewed news television show and offers evening news analysing the most important events of the day.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, being interviewed by Mr Igor Bergant.

IOI President meets President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia

It was an honour for the IOI President to meet the President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, Ms Urška Klakočar Zupančič. Her Excellency has a strong interest in human rights and the meeting was an exceptionally enjoyable and wide-ranging discussion about the role of the Ombudsman, IOI and the many significant human rights achievements in Slovenia. President Zupančič, the first woman to hold this very senior office, could not have been more generous with her time.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President and Urška Klakočar Zupančič, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Urška Klakočar Zupančič, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia; and Peter Svetina, Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia.

IOI President meets the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr Dominika Švarc Pipan

The IOI President had the great pleasure of meeting the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr Dominika Švarc Pipan, on the occasion of his visit to Slovenia.

The Minister is a very impressive leader and the IOI President and the Minister enjoyed a particularly warm exchange. The IOI President and the Minister discussed the work of the IOI and the work of Ombudsman institutions to uphold the great principles of justice, human rights and the rule of law.



Left to Right: Peter Svetina, Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President; and Dr Dominika Švarc Pipan, the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Slovenia.



Left to Right: Peter Svetina, Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia; Dr Dominika Švarc Pipan, the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Slovenia; and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.

IOI President meets the Minister for Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians Abroad, Mr Matej Arčon

The IOI President had the pleasure of meeting Mr Matej Arčon, Minister for Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and the Autochthonous Slovenian National Community in Neighbouring Countries, and between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians Abroad. Minister Arčon and the IOI President had a very enjoyable and productive discussion regarding the work of the IOI and its more than 200 members from over 100 countries.



Left to right: Matej Arčon, Minister for Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and the Autochthonous Slovenian National Community in Neighbouring Countries, and between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians Abroad; Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to IOI President; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Vesna Humar, State Secretary Government Office for Slovenians Abroad; and Peter Svetina, Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, at the office of the Minister for Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and the Autochthonous Slovenian National Community in Neighbouring Countries, and between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians Abroad.

IOI President undertakes significant cultural exchange, visiting Postojna Cave, Lake Bled and Piran

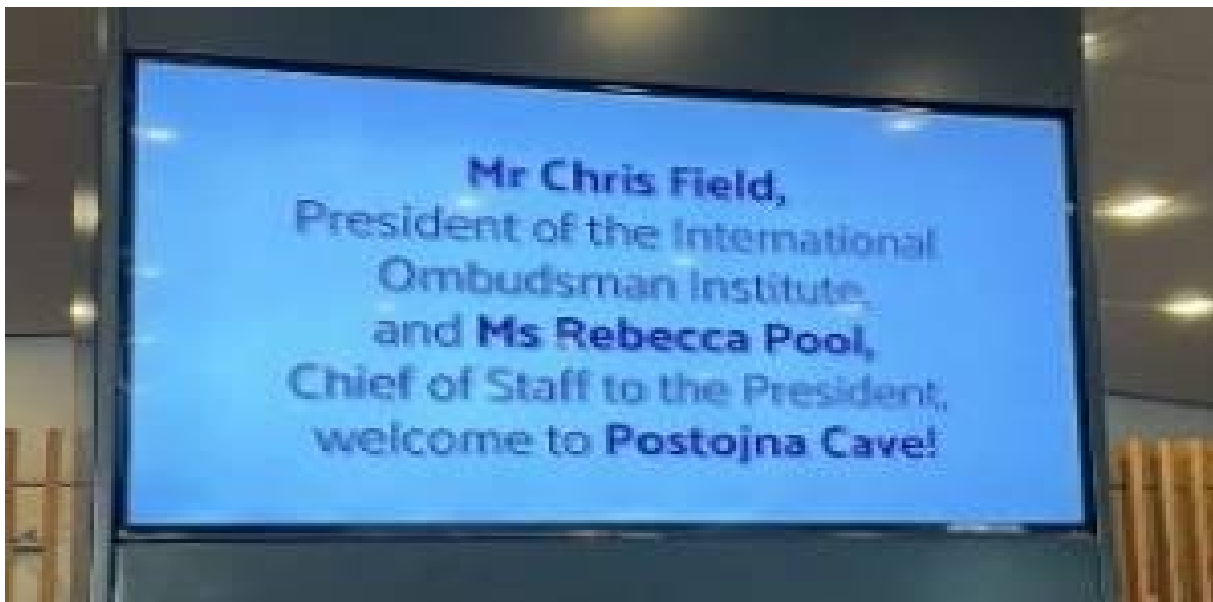
Alongside bilateral exchanges and a number of meetings with the most senior members of Government, the IOI President was given the great honour of undertaking cultural exchange in Slovenia.

One such place was Postojna Cave, where the IOI President was privileged to be given a personalised welcome and a private guided tour. At the end of the tour, the IOI President was asked to sign the “Golden Book” of visiting dignitaries, first signed by Hasburg Emperor Franz Joseph. The IOI President also visited Lake Bled and was provided a private guided tour by the former Mayor.

The IOI President and Ombudsman Svetina were also shown, and operated, a replica Gutenberg press. As a final visit in Slovenia, the IOI President travelled to Piran, a town of great historic importance on the Adriatic Sea, in the southwest of Slovenia.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President, signing the “Golden Book” of visiting dignitaries.



Welcome message to Chris Field PSM, IOI President, and Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President, displayed at the entrance of Postojna Cave.

IOI President meets with the Agent General for Western Australia in the United Kingdom/Europe Region, Mr John Langoulant AO

The IOI President met with the Agent General for Western Australia in the United Kingdom/Europe region, Mr John Langoulant AO, and followed this with a visit to his offices at Australia House.

The IOI President and Agent General discussed the work of the IOI and the Agent General’s outstanding work in promoting important investment attraction, trade promotion and state representation for Western Australia within the United Kingdom and European markets.



Left to Right: John Langoulant AO, Agent General for Western Australia in the United Kingdom/Europe Region; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; and Rebecca Poole, Chief of Staff to the IOI President.

IOI President meets with His Excellency the Honourable Mr Stephen Smith, Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom

Immediately following his visit to Slovenia and immediately prior to his visit to Manchester, it was a great pleasure for the IOI President to meet with His Excellency the Honourable Mr Stephen Smith, Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, on the occasion of the IOI President’s official visit to London. The meeting took place in the High Commissioner’s office at the Australian High Commission in Australia House, London.

Following a distinguished senior Ministerial career in the Australian Government, the High Commissioner undertakes vital work with one of Australia’s closest and most important friends.

IOI President attends the offices of Ombudsman Behrens

The IOI President and Ombudsman Behrens met at his Citygate offices in Manchester.

The Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman of the United Kingdom is one of the world's largest and best-regarded Ombudsman offices, led by Ombudsman Behrens and his senior executive team. A tour of the office was a chance to hear from, and discuss issues with, deeply knowledgeable, dedicated and passionate staff; a series of briefings from senior staff exemplified Ombudsman best practice; and a deeply enjoyable Q and A session with 250 staff finished the day.



Left to right: Ombudsman Behrens and Chris Field PSM, IOI President.

IOI President provides address at the Parliament of New Zealand on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Office of the Ombudsman of New Zealand

The IOI President joined the Honourable Chris Hipkins, (then) Minister for the Public Service (and now Prime Minister of New Zealand) and the IOI Second Vice President and Chief Ombudsman of New Zealand, Peter Boshier, in addressing a very special event held at the Parliament of New Zealand to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Ombudsman of New Zealand.



Left to right: Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Peter Boshier, IOI Second Vice President and Chief Ombudsman of New Zealand; and Hon Chris Hipkins, (then) Minister for the Public Service (and now Prime Minister of New Zealand).



Chris Field PSM, IOI President providing an address at the 60th Anniversary of the Ombudsman of New Zealand.

IOI President meets with Her Excellency Ms Harinder Sidhu, Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, during official visit to New Zealand

The IOI President met with Her Excellency Ms Harinder Sidhu, Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, at the Australian High Commission in Wellington. The IOI President and Her Excellency discussed the work of the IOI and Ombudsman institutions, both in Australia and New Zealand, but also at this most critical time in Europe and globally.

IOI President presents the Golden Order of Merit to two former IOI Presidents, and Life Members, of the IOI, during official visit to New Zealand

The IOI President presented the Golden Order of Merit to two former IOI Presidents, and Life Members of the IOI, Dame Beverley Wakem DNZM CBE and Sir Brian Elwood CBE JP. The Golden Order of Merit recognises exceptional contribution in respect of the purposes of the IOI. Sir Brian was the President of the IOI between 1999 and 2002. Dame Beverley was President between 2010 and 2014 and the first woman to hold the position of Chief Ombudsman of New Zealand.



Left to right: Peter Boshier, Chief Ombudsman of New Zealand; Dame Beverley Wakem DNZM CBE; Chris Field PSM, IOI President; Sir Brian Elwood CBE JP; and Deborah Glass, Victorian Ombudsman and IOI Regional President.

IOI President attends annual conference of the Australasian and Pacific Ombudsman Region, in Wellington

The IOI President attended the annual conference of the Australasian and Pacific Ombudsman Region, in Wellington, New Zealand. The conference was led by IOI Regional President and Victorian Ombudsman, Deborah Glass, and hosted by IOI Second Vice President and Chief Ombudsman of New Zealand, Peter Boshier.



Members of the Australasian and Pacific Ombudsman Region of the IOI.

IOI President's addresses

In 2022-23, the IOI President:

- Provided a Welcome Address to the International Mediation Congress, *An approach to Conflict in the Global Agenda*, held in Rosario, in the province of Santa Fe, Argentina, from 5 to 7 July 2022;
- Participated in a live panel discussion at the commencement of the final day of the International Mediation Congress, *An approach to Conflict in the Global Agenda*, held in Rosario, in the province of Santa Fe, Argentina, on 7 July 2022;
- Provided a briefing on the Office of the Ombudsman's current work program, to the Public Sector Commission Leadership Council, in August 2022;
- Provided a Welcome Address at the international conference, *The rights of older persons and role of ombudsman and mediator institutions*, held in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 27 September 2022;



- Provided an address at the Parliament of New Zealand on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Ombudsman of New Zealand, in October 2022;
- Provided a keynote address at the Conference for Ombudspersons and National Human Rights Institutions within the framework of the First Parliamentary Summit of Crimea Platform, on 26 October 2022;
- Provided a keynote address on the occasion of a ceremony to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Croatian Ombudsman, on 30 November 2022;
- Provided an address to the 32nd Annual Silent Domestic Violence Memorial March, on 29 November 2022;
- Provided a keynote address on the occasion of an international conference and celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Cyprus Ombudsman, on 2 December 2022;
- Spoke in the opening ceremony at the International Conference, *Human Rights in Dark Hours*, in Ukraine, on 9 December 2022;
- Provided a keynote session and closing session, *A career in law and Q&A* to University of Western Australia students as part of the Government Accountability Law and Practice Unit, in January 2023;
- Provided a welcome address at the International Conference on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Institution du Médiateur du Royaume (Maroc), and an address at the third session of the conference on *The role of Ombudsman and mediator institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights, good governance and the rule of law* on 28 February 2023;
- Provided an address at the Launching Ceremony of a Research Study undertaken by the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh into malnutrition and stunting in Tharparkar, on 13 March 2023; and
- Provided a welcome address to a reception and charity event in Vienna, Austria, co-hosted by the Ukraine Ambassador to Austria, His Excellency Dr Vasyl Khymynets and the charity, Voices for Children, on 7 May 2023.



Chris Field PSM, IOI President addresses international conference by virtual means from Perth Western Australia

Video recorded and written speeches by the Ombudsman as President of the IOI are available on the [President's Speeches and Engagements page of the Ombudsman's website](#).