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Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman Endorses Key Principles to Strengthen Oversight and Public Trust

Charlottetown, PEI — The Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman (CCPO) has formally endorsed a set of key principles designed to ensure the independence, effectiveness, and accountability of Ombudsman institutions across Canada. These principles, adopted during the Council's gathering in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, reaffirm the essential role of Ombudsman offices in upholding good governance, protecting individual rights, and reinforcing public trust in democratic institutions.

Summarizing internationally recognized frameworks, including the Venice Principles of the European Commission and the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the Role of the Ombudsman, the CCPO's document outlines seven principle themes: independence and autonomy, appointment and security of tenure, mandate, powers of investigation, transparency, accountability, and interpretation.

"These principles reflect our collective commitment to ensure Ombudsman institutions across Canada remain robust, impartial, and accessible to all," said Sandy Hermiston, Chair of the CCPO. "They are also a clear signal to legislators and the public that effective oversight is essential to a healthy democracy."

Parliamentary Ombudsman offices across Canada serve as independent bodies that receive and investigate public complaints about government services. They help resolve issues of unfairness, improve public service delivery, and protect the rights of individuals—all while being independent from political or administrative influence.

The CCPO's work builds on the foundation of international standards that recognize the Ombudsman's critical role in safeguarding human rights and democratic values:

"The European Commission and United Nations have established global standards to define, promote, and protect the role of the Ombudsman institution. As IOI Regional President, I applaud my CCPO colleagues for developing a summary of these internationally accepted principles for the benefit of legislators and the people we serve. Thank you for this great collaborative work in the public interest."

— Paul Dubé, Ontario Ombudsman and President of the North American Region of the International Ombudsman Institute

The CCPO invites all Canadian legislators and public authorities to recognize and uphold these principles to ensure Ombudsman institutions can continue serving the public with integrity, fairness, and independence.

The principles can be found at <https://ccpo-ccop.ca/resources/>.

Media Contact:
Sandy Hermiston
902-288-1105

About the CCPO:

The Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman is a collaborative body representing 11 provincial and territorial Ombudsman offices across Canada. It works to promote best practices, share knowledge, and strengthen the capacity of independent oversight institutions.