Preface

Based on the Austrian Federal Constitution the Austrian Ombudsman Board has independently and impartially controlled national, provincial and municipial public administration since 1977. Once a year its members submit a report to the National Council and the Federal Council outlining the institution's work, priorities and main findings throughout the past year.

The present volume is a short version of the annual report 2008 compiled in German and consists of a general section, which outlines the activities of the three members of the Austrian Ombudsman Board. All key data such as statistics on investigative proceedings and the number of cases can be found in this section. Section two gives an overview of the international activities of the institution which covers a broard range from the International Ombudsman Institute to the Council of Europe and bilateral contacts.

In addition, section three of the report focuses on human rights. Already since 2001 the Austrian Ombudsman Board adds a specific chapter on human rights to its annual reports. In this context the present report also deals with legal problems relating to human rights which the Ombudsman Board had to solve in 2008 when assessing complaints about administrative misconduct and infringements of legal provisions by public authorities. Cases touching upon the fundamental constitutional requirements of the Federal Constitution are as well considered as complaints on the principle of equality, data protection and the right to respect for private and family life. Different aspects of discrimination such as discrimination based on religion, nationality or ethnicity are covered as well.

Both the original report written in German and the English translation are available free of charge from the Office of the Austrian Ombudsman Board (Volksanwaltschaft) and can be downloaded from the institution's website www.volksanwaltschaft.gv.at.

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Ombudsman Dr. Peter Kostelka
Ombudswoman Dr. Gertrude Brinek
Ombudswoman Mag.ᵃ Terezija Stoisits
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