



39th International Conference (ICDPPC)

Hong Kong

Public session, closing ceremony

Friday 29 September 2017

16.30-16.40

Presentation by Giovanni Buttarelli & Ventislav Karadjov

Giovanni Buttarelli

Everything has a beginning and everything has an ending, including this very successful conference.

Before Ventislav and I tell you about next year's conference which we will jointly be hosting in October next year we both believe that you Stephen, Fanny and your excellent team deserve a virtual standing ovation and a big round of applause from all of us. From the side and social events to the thought provoking panel discussions, you have done a sterling job. Hats off to you!

The theme of the Hong Kong conference, connecting the West with the East, was a welcome reminder that privacy is culturally nuanced, with different conceptions and regulations in different jurisdictions. It has been a full week of important reflections for us the data protection and privacy community but also societies in general in an era when data protection laws are national but personal data flows across borders.

You succeeded in connecting the West with the East and WE will endeavour to continue connecting each other next year.

As you know the next year edition will be on ethics. Why ethics and why now?

Data protection authorities and privacy regulators are first hand witnesses of how the digital arena is changing the notions of privacy and data protection.

For this reason, in 2015, we set up an Ethics Advisory Board to assess and analyse ethics and data protection. We believe that the Board's interim report, which will be delivered before our conference next year, will provide food for thought for the next year debate.

Companies large and small and governments are beginning to take big advantage of the internet of things, big data, biometrics and artificial intelligence.

Now is the moment to ensure that our values steer technology, based on a common respect for the individual and human dignity.

Data protection and privacy were founded on ethical principles. But can we honestly say that ethics exist in the digital arena? If they do, who do they serve and who do they protect?

But what is the ethical dimension of data processing?

And who should develop ethical policies?

How could we integrate it into our work as regulators and enforce governments, companies, public sector institutions, engineers, designers among others to do so?

These are not easy questions and there are no easy solutions.

We need an open, transparent conversation on a global level and across many disciplines, which we will have at next year's conference.

In a nutshell, we believe that a new Digital Ethics is essential for sustainable innovation in the decades to come.

Ventislav Karadjov

Ladies and gentleman, Giovanni has told you about the theme of our conference in 2018, which is not typically part of our day to day work as data protection and privacy regulators, when enforcing compliance. I am sure you are intrigued and interested.

Both the closed and public sessions of the 2018 conference will be held in Brussels with privacy events in Sofia, Bulgaria complementing the public session.

We live in a time of unprecedented change. It is a period where the political and social importance of privacy and data protection in the international arena are higher than they have ever been.

Across the world, new and revised legal frameworks are now in place in more than 121 countries.

Advances in artificial intelligence, digital health and fine-grain personalisation of services means that the relationship between humans and machines becomes more and more complex and call into question notions of controllership, purpose limitation, data retention, anonymity and even the notion of consent.

Along with its partners, the EU is active in seeking an international consensus on how to meet the challenges of such exciting but unpredictable technological developments.

Organisations within and outside the EU as well as regulators are preparing for modernised privacy and data protection rules. In 2018, Brussels will be the natural venue for our discussions and the events in Sofia will help to increase their reach in Europe, the Caucasus region, Asia and worldwide.

The 2018 conference, just a few months after the entry into force of the new European legal framework on data protection, together with an innovative approach to the ethical dimension of data protection will keep privacy and data protection high on the political, diplomatic and public agenda of the international community.

Let us start the movement towards respect and dignity for the individual in the digital environment. Join us in October 2018, your contributions are essential.

Giovanni Buttarelli

To entice you further, we invite you to watch a short film about the theme of the conference next year, made by the hard working colleagues of our two institutions who we both pay tribute to.