

GPA 2020 SPECIAL EDITION NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

Message from the Chair

I wrote in our September newsletter about the pragmatism and value our privacy community has demonstrated over the past year.

That shone through at our virtual Closed Session Conference held last month.

We took a pragmatic approach to the logistical travel challenges of COVID-19 and held our event virtually. The result was a Conference with as many data protection and privacy authorities represented as previous years.

We had a hugely productive three days that continued the modernisation of our Assembly, showed the value of our community, and confirmed the importance of collaboration with those outside of the Assembly.

Central to that work was agreeing the continued strategic direction of the GPA for the coming year. The working groups can now take this work forward, with work already underway to continue fulfilling the mandate the Assembly has given.

The impact of COVID-19 featured heavily on the agenda, reflecting the impact the pandemic has had on all our workloads, our priorities, and the new questions posed to us by tracking technologies and public health initiatives. We dedicated the second day of the Conference to these discussions and confirmed the continuation of our COVID-19 Taskforce.

And we took steps toward our future, not only by welcoming new members and an additional observer to our Assembly, but



through our resolutions. We committed to a mechanism that will allow the GPA to make statements on issues that may emerge that could have an international impact on privacy, and set out our views on FRT, AI and international aid.

This progress is crucial. The adoption of digital technologies and innovations has accelerated faster than any of us could have predicted, bringing with it an enormous appetite for personal data. How society views such data collection, sharing and use continues to change.

As data protection and privacy authorities, we must respond. This newsletter sets out our Assembly's response, both at our Conference and looking ahead to 2021.

Best wishes for the end of 2020, and I look forward to speaking with you again next year.

Regards,

Elizabeth Denham CBE
Information Commissioner, UK



GPA Closed Session 2020 At your desk

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Day One:

The GPA's Strategic Direction

Information and Privacy Commissioner Angelene Falk, Chair of the GPA Strategic Direction Sub-Committee (SDSC) reviews the significant outputs of Day 1 of the GPA 2020 Closed Session Conference.

In a year full of unprecedented challenges, and a time when it would have been easy for GPA members to focus inwards on our domestic concerns, the GPA has instead come together, and shown the true strength of a globally connected community of data protection and privacy regulators.

The 2020 Closed Session conference marked the first-year anniversary, and half-way point, of the current GPA Strategic Plan. It was an opportunity for the GPA to take stock and celebrate the significant achievements over the course of 2020, and to look ahead to what we must focus on over the next 12 months.

The GPA resolved to be an active forum throughout the year, speaking with one voice...to ensure privacy and data protection is adequately considered in emerging global issues

During the Strategic Direction Session, we had the opportunity to hear from the GPA Working Groups who have maintained their focus on ensuring the successful delivery of the GPA Policy Strategy.

The GPA Policy Strategy identifies the issues that the GPA has prioritised to ensure a global regulatory environment with clear and consistently high standards of data protection. The Policy Strategy has identified three core pillars – global frameworks and standards, enforcement co-operation and key policy themes – which are essential to achieving regulatory co-operation.

- **Global Frameworks:**

- The GPA has undertaken an analysis of a number of global data protection frameworks and has identified several convergences across these frameworks. The GPA will continue to consider the value of the convergences identified and the core common elements of data protection and privacy frameworks.

- **Enforcement Co-operation:**

- The GPA Enforcement Working Group has enabled discussions on enforcement and regulatory activities between its members. This has resulted in co-operative actions, such as an open letter signed by six members of the IEWG with a joint statement on global privacy expectations of video conferencing companies.
- The GPA also continues to engage on cross regulatory co-operation between privacy, data protection, competition, and consumer protection authorities through its Digital Citizen and Consumer Working Group.

- **Policy themes:**

- The GPA has focussed efforts on Children's privacy, privacy in the digital economy, data protection in Artificial Intelligence and privacy in relation to democratic rights and political processes. The GPA will engage with external stakeholders on a number of these issues over the next 12 months.



The GPA also took significant steps to ensure that as a modernised conference we continue to be a global voice of influence. The GPA resolved to be an active forum throughout the year, speaking with one voice, wherever possible, to ensure that privacy and data protection is adequately considered in emerging global issues.

Twelve months ago, at our 41st meeting in Albania, the GPA recognised that regulatory co-operation was at the heart of the GPA's Vision of an environment in which data protection and privacy authorities are able to effectively fulfil their mandates in concert through the diffusion of knowledge and supportive connections. This year, when faced with unprecedented challenges in the wake of the global pandemic, we have witnessed firsthand the benefits that regulatory co-operation provides.

Day Two:

COVID-19 Taskforce Session: Highlighting Gains and Sustaining Momentum

Chair of the Taskforce and Privacy Commissioner and Chairman, Philippines National Privacy Commission (NPC), Raymund Enriquez Liboro, outlines the achievements of Day 2 of the GPA 2020 Closed Session Conference



In October 2020, the Philippines' National Privacy Commission (NPC) led Day 2 of the Closed Session for all Global Privacy Assembly (GPA) members and observers. This enabled participants' reflection on the successes resulting from the capacity-building campaign of the COVID-19 Taskforce and to map out the future work in strengthening the voice of data privacy and protection champions in the global fight against the pandemic.

This session detailed the significant outcomes of the five-months' work of the Taskforce. This included the '[Compendium of Best Practices](#)', a document embodying the whole-of-society approach carried out by the GPA as it took on its role of guiding privacy authorities and officers as they face the pandemic.

The '[Compendium of Best Practices](#)' is a trove of measures that governments and businesses are utilising to negotiate the delicate balance between upholding privacy rights and responding to the health crisis.

The Compendium is a product of five capacity-building events – four webinars and a workshop – that tackled issues that the majority of members considered most pressing: contact-tracing and location tracking, employee data handling in remote and return-to-work situations, and handling of students' data amid the shift to e-learning.

The events, spearheaded by

experts from both the public and private sectors and across different regions, revolved around what organizations were doing and could still do to uphold privacy rights as they coped with continuing operations and businesses in the 'new normal'.

Discussions showed the critical role that privacy and data protection authorities played in providing assistance and guidance in handling and sharing personal data. Authorities were also pivotal in ensuring that the principles of effectiveness, necessity, and proportionality were applied and adopted when processing personal data on COVID-19 matters.

The new Working Group will build and strengthen the GPA's collective capacity in responding to the issues arising from the pandemic

Moreover, as most jurisdictions resorted to using technology and digital solutions to track and prevent the further spread of the virus, the 'privacy-by-design' approach was repeatedly emphasized to promote public trust and thus render contact tracing effective.

As the Taskforce proved useful to the international community despite its short duration, the GPA

community adopted a resolution that recognizes the need to address the intensified collection, use, and disclosure of sensitive personal data in contact-tracing measures developed in this protracted crisis.

More importantly, the resolution creates a new COVID-19 Working Group with a longer work term of one year. This new Working Group will continue the Taskforce's remit by promoting the Compendium of Best Practices and engaging GPA members and observers in updating the document whenever new issues emerge.

It will lead to a more intense promotion of regulatory cooperation, including relevant non-privacy supervisory authorities and regional networks. It must also encourage key actors involved in contact-tracing measures to take a privacy-by-design approach and ensure sustained efforts to build and strengthen collective capacity through workshops and webinars.

Ultimately, it will build and strengthen the GPA's collective capacity in responding to the issues arising from the pandemic.

Given its effective leadership of the Taskforce, the NPC was chosen to continue the work ahead in the GPA. The NPC issues a call for further vital collaboration, encouraging members and observers to rise above the pandemic to achieve a 'better normal collectively'.

Day Three:

A day of decision-making and future proofing

Highlights from the third and final Core Business Session of the GPA 2020 Closed Session

The focus for day 3 of the Closed Session 2020, was the core business of the Conference, the time to recap on progress made against the strategic plan of the GPA, the formal adoption of Conference resolutions and the election of the Executive Committee 2020-2021.

The GPA 2020 Closed Session and this session in particular demonstrated that the value of the GPA comes from the diversity of views, the different experiences and perspectives, sharing a common goal of supporting global privacy and data protection and the continued modernisation, collaboration and capacity building within the GPA community.

Adoption of the Working Group Reports

Future of the Conference Working Group

The [Future of the Conference Working Group](#) is an operational workstream. This lays the stable foundations for the future of the GPA community, focusing on the two workstreams remaining from the original mandate; establishing a secure online platform and the plans for a GPA funded and stable Secretariat.

The secure online platform was to provide a mechanism for increased sharing of information on regulatory approaches. A survey conducted by the Working Group earlier in the year which sought to identify a secure online platform to meet members' needs was inconclusive. The International Enforcement Working Group is now the main driver for this work and will consider the need for

any further technical solutions for regulatory cooperation going forward.

The Conference agreed to postpone the decision on creating a more stable Secretariat until 2021. In the coming year, the working group will focus on four aspects: data gathering via the census; exploring options for further funding; a member consultation to identify significant barriers to various secretariat models; and exploring how those barriers can be overcome. Members are encouraged to respond to the consultation to help progress the work towards consensus and a definitive vote on this topic in Mexico in 2021. The membership was reminded of the commitment from the current Secretariat to aid this process as long as the ICO holds the Chair, to October 2021.

The member vote successfully adopted all nine Working Group reports and their forward looking plans ...The working groups will now take their work forward into 2021

GPA Working Groups 2020-2021

Working Groups have made good progress across a broad and deep range of issues, despite the circumstances of this challenging year. Their work has delivered substantive achievement against the first year of the GPA Policy Strategy.

The member vote successfully adopted all nine [Working Group](#)

[reports](#) which are now published on the GPA website, together with the GPA Annual Report of the Executive Committee 2019-2020. The working groups will now take their work forward into 2021.

Working Groups 2020-2021:

- Policy Strategy Working Group Workstream 1: Global Standards and Frameworks
- Policy Strategy Working Group Workstream 2: Digital Economy
- Policy Strategy Working Group Workstream 3: The relationship between privacy/data protection and other rights and freedoms
- International Enforcement Cooperation
- Ethics and Data Protection in Artificial Intelligence
- Digital Education
- Digital Citizen and Consumer
- Future of the Conference
- Data Protection Metrics

New Working Groups:

- COVID-19 related Privacy and Data Protection Issues
- Personal Data Protection in International Development Aid, International Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management

The GPA 2020 Resolutions

The five Resolutions adopted by the Conference reflect and represent the underlying theme of the 2020 Closed Session, to continue modernising, collaborating and building capacity in the GPA community:

The Resolution on Facial Recognition Technology aims to address serious concerns about the increasing use of facial recognition technology in various aspects of our daily lives, in ways often invisible to the public. Its affordability and therefore accessibility to both large and small organisations across sectors, together with the use of data being combined with other databases to create comprehensive profiles, pose real and significant risk. Risks not only for data protection and privacy but to wider human rights; this technology can change the world, societies and cultures that we are used to.

The value of the GPA comes from the diversity of views, the different experiences and perspectives, sharing a common goal of supporting global privacy and data protection

The Resolution sends a clear message that GPA members are committed to working with each other on these challenges given the global prevalence of technology, followed by engagement with external stakeholders, so that the principles have the best chance of being implemented. A timely reminder to companies using and developing facial recognition of the need to do so with proportionality, transparency, ethics and accountability front of mind.

The Resolution on the Role of Personal Data Protection in International Development

Aid includes an action to establish the new working group to be taken forward by the Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner (FDPIC), Switzerland. This is an area that remains crucial and impacts populations globally; the complexity of carrying out humanitarian action, the complexity of processing data through increasingly new technologies in responding to very volatile situations and for vulnerable populations.

The Resolution on Accountability in the Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence calls for organisations, GPA members, governments and other stakeholders around the world to adopt measures that facilitate and promote accountability in the development and use of AI. This Resolution aims to address the increased threat to personal data privacy associated with the AI boom; such as excessive collection of data, lack of transparency and unnecessary retention.

The Ethics and Data Protection in AI Working Group conducted a survey among GPA members early in 2020, to identify practical measures for implementing accountability on the use of AI. Based on the survey results, this Resolution urges organisations that develop or use AI systems to implement accountability measures which are appropriate regarding the risk of interference with human rights.

The Resolution sets out 12 accountability standards, representing an ethical framework for AI development from 'cradle to grave' to ensure the responsible use of AI throughout this life cycle. Highlighting the importance of the human actor, the ultimate supervisory and evaluating authority and advocating ethics by design through early assessment

of the potential risks.

The Resolution on the Privacy and Data Protection Challenges arising in the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought extraordinary times and now, beyond a short-term crisis, decisions taken with regard to significant data collection or the shifted relationships between citizen and state are expected to have a long-term effect.

The Resolution lays out the path forward to build on the work of this year and continue the work with the establishment of the new temporary Working Group on COVID-19 related issues, to build and strengthen the GPA's capacity in responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Resolution on Joint Statements on Emerging Global Issues

The Resolution on Joint Statements on Emerging Global Issues amends the GPA Rules and Procedures, setting out a clear mechanism for GPA statements to be drafted and issued outside of the Closed Session. This is an additional and vital tool for the GPA voice to be heard by contributing to the broader international conversation in the privacy arena and thereby to deliver on the first strategic priority, to advance global privacy in the digital age.

All of the GPA resolutions above will be subject to follow-up tracking by the Strategic Direction Sub-Committee which will keep the Executive Committee updated. It is important for the GPA's strategic direction that resolutions are implemented and evaluated which will assist in defining the GPA's future work.

The GPA Reference Panel

The creation of the GPA Reference Panel, a contact group with

external stakeholders, in particular civil society organisations, was endorsed by the membership at the 41st Annual Conference in Tirana, as presented by the Future of the Conference Working Group. The Reference Panel, now in the final stages of its establishment, will allow the Assembly to draw on a pool of knowledge and expertise that exists outside of the membership. The geographical, legal culture, gender and cultural balance of the Panel is of paramount importance to its legitimacy.

Given the importance of this Panel, the Assembly decided to rerun the process of selection to gain additional applications, and to establish an Assessment Group drawn from the membership to assist in the assessment process. The final decision on applicants should be reviewed and ratified by the Executive Committee. The Reference Panel will be operational

by early 2021, in order to report back to the Assembly at the annual event to be hosted by Mexico in 2021.

The GPA Executive Committee

The core business of the Closed Session culminated with elections for the new GPA Executive Committee 2020-2021. The German Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (BfDI), Ulrich Kelber was elected as the new member of the GPA Executive Committee and Information and Privacy Commissioner Angelene Falk, of the Office of the Australian Information Commission (OAIC) was re-elected to the Executive Committee for a further two years.

Extensive tributes were received for the outstanding contribution to the GPA community by Privacy Commissioner and Chairman

Raymund E. Liboro, the outgoing Executive Committee member of the National Privacy Commission, the Philippines.

Forward Look

The GPA 2020 Closed Session – At your Desk Conference concluded with a forward look to the GPA 2021 Conference in Mexico, with a presentation given by President Commissioner, Francisco Javier Acuña Llamas of the National Institute for Transparency, Access to Information and Protection of Personal Data (INAI), Mexico and the GPA 2021 Conference host.

After three days of intensive debate and decision-making, the GPA Community now looks forward to ongoing work in 2020-2021 and the next GPA conference in Mexico, 18-22 October 2021.

Access the latest data protection and COVID-19 guidance and resources from GPA members and observers at:



globalprivacyassembly.org/covid19

The GPA Executive Committee: A Collective Strategy in Forging a Global Mission

Privacy Commissioner and Chairman, Raymund Enriquez Liboro, National Privacy Commission (NPC), Philippines, outgoing Executive Committee member, reflects on the role of the GPA Executive Committee during the COVID-19 crisis and next steps

The Executive Committee responded early and acted swiftly to the global COVID-19 crisis, with a clear and firm direction during this unfamiliar pandemic. It began by endorsing creation of a series of events on data protection and privacy trends and best practices during the crisis to help data protection and privacy authorities worldwide fulfill their mandate of fostering regulatory environments.

For the NPC, our goal as a member of the Committee was to promote the cause for data protection and privacy authorities to assume the role of protector of privacy rights and enabler of the free flow of vital information. This will help save lives in this unique global juncture

The Executive Committee then paved the way for meaningful cross-border action and collaboration. In establishing the Joint Statements cooperation mechanism, the Executive Committee has attained its goal of



NATIONAL PRIVACY COMMISSION

furthering the GPA's influence in the international community.

Our focus on identifying and acting on emerging trends relevant to the work of data protection and privacy authorities has been reinforced by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic that has cost many lives and threatens to undermine data protection and privacy.

The ongoing collaborative work of the Executive Committee is extensive, as it coordinates the efforts of more than 130 data protection and privacy authorities and observers in its membership community who engage in setting policy priorities and offer insights to convert goals into sustained actions, with worldwide impact.

For the National Privacy Commission (NPC), our goal as a member of the Committee was to promote the cause for data protection and privacy authorities to assume the role of protector

of privacy rights and enabler of the free flow of vital information in order to help save lives in this unique global juncture.

It is an honour for the NPC to lead the international dialogue on data protection and privacy through the COVID-19 Taskforce created by the Executive Committee.

With this significant role, we hope we can replicate the collaborative environment the Executive Committee has established with its partners to adequately equip data protection and privacy authorities worldwide, as they face the many challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The GPA Executive Committee 2020-2021



As the newly elected member of the Executive Committee, the German Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (BfDI), Ulrich Kelber, writes for the first time for the GPA Newsletter on his election to the GPA Executive Committee

As a matter of fact, unprecedented times and circumstances, such as those we are experiencing now, do require unprecedented means and measures. This meant that in 2020, for the first time in its more than 40 years of history, the annual meeting of the Global Privacy Assembly (GPA) took place not as planned as an attended conference in Mexico City, but as a virtual Closed Session of GPA members who gathered by videoconference. I highly appreciate the thorough preparations and all the efforts taken by our Chair and Secretariat to make this new and unique annual meeting possible.

As to the future of the Conference, it will be crucial to further establish the GPA as a leading voice for data protection and privacy on the global level

In my view, our 2020 Closed Session can be deemed a real success since representatives of more than a hundred GPA members and observers came together for three consecutive sessions on the days of 13-15 October 2020. Of course, we missed meeting in person, discussing specific matters over dinner, or liaising with external stakeholders in the Open Session

of the Annual Meeting. But taking into account the special circumstances dictated by the COVID-19 pandemic, I do believe that we did have an Annual Meeting in the best possible way and format. Therefore, please let me send a big “Thank you” to our Chair, UK Information Commissioner Elizabeth Denham and her team.

The 2020 edition of the GPA Closed Session meeting was very special to me for another reason as well: I was, and still am, very pleased that you have voted for me to be a member of the Executive Committee. It is the first time that a Commissioner from my country has been elected to this dedicated group. Let me express my sincere gratitude for your unanimous vote as well as for your trust and confidence with regard to me fulfilling this important function.

I will endeavour to contribute to the work of the Executive Committee by providing input not only from my office and myself, but rather to facilitate the GPA benefiting from the broader data protection and privacy expertise available in Germany. Our country hosts a network of 18 Data Protection Supervisory Authorities on a federal level (this is my office) as well as in the federal states or “Laender”, such as Northrhine-Westphalia, Bavaria or Berlin; indeed, most of my Laender colleagues (all but two) are members of the GPA too. We have a long and fruitful tradition

of working together; this month, we are holding our 100th German Data Protection Conference.

In addition to that, I want to strive to ensure that there will be a close link to the European Data Protection Board (EDPB) in the Executive Committee and vice versa, because I think it will be beneficial to both groups, if they keep one eye on what is being done in the other respective group. As to the future of the Conference, it will be, in my view, crucial to further establish the GPA as a leading voice for data protection and privacy on global level. Therefore, I do welcome the adoption of the Resolution on GPA Joint Statements, which I was happy to support as a Co-Sponsor.

The Annual Meeting has been proven to be the appropriate forum for discussing medium- or long-term trends and developments and adopting related resolutions offering guidance on how to handle such matters in a data protection friendly way. But now, after having established the Joint Statements mechanism, the GPA will be even better able to react to new or unforeseeable issues in a coordinated and common way. I am firmly convinced that this will enhance the GPA’s visibility and voice in the global ‘concerto’ on data protection and privacy, making it, hopefully, more harmonious and, eventually, providing better solutions for people all over the world.

Closed Session 2020: A Mirror of GPA Community Strengthening

Eduardo Bertoni, Director of the AAIP, Argentina gives a regional perspective on the achievements and impact of the GPA 2020 Conference

At the beginning of this year, many of us probably wondered: "Would 2020 be a lost year?"

Reality finally showed us that on the contrary; the Global Privacy Assembly (GPA) meetings never stopped, the Working Groups were kept busy and we finally, arrived at today.

The GPA Secretariat has fulfilled its mission and completed an extraordinary constant workload during an unusual and complex year characterised by the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, global cooperation among its members has remained intact.

Agendas, format and regulatory priorities were adapted, and the GPA 2020 Closed Session - At your desk Conference was a great celebration of this year's achievements.

I have been attending GPA meetings since 2016. The Closed Session that we had during this 2020 was unique and all the goals planned were achieved which reflected the successful organisational efforts of the community.

At this event, I observed through a video screen the participation of a large number of GPA members and observers, with an agenda which included a great diversity of topics.

Multiple resolutions were adopted. Data protection issues during the pandemic were discussed. The official launch of a 'Compendium of Best Practices' adopted by different

countries was also announced. In addition, some procedures on the Reference Panel were reviewed in a transparent and expeditious manner, showing even more signs of the strengthening of the GPA community and its future work in 2021.

meetings as a privacy community.

The second extremely important element for the future of the GPA will be to achieve the establishment of a permanent secretariat and to find new ways to finance it. This factor will be key to ensuring plurality and

Resolutions and declarations issued by the GPA working groups... are very useful as international standards to follow in our country and our region

Eduardo Bertoni, Director of the AAIP



Regarding the future of the GPA, I would like to highlight two elements to consider.

First, the importance of past resolutions and declarations issued by the GPA Working Groups, which are very useful as international standards to follow in both our country and our region. Moreover, it will be very important to continue, as we have done up to now, in different contexts, sharing experiences and knowledge through statements, resolutions and discussions during our

increased participation in the GPA community for example, for those small data protection authorities in our countries.

All signs point to much work ahead on these matters and that the GPA will be a bigger and stronger community every year. Again, my congratulations to the GPA Secretariat and my gratitude to this community for all the challenges and lessons learned on this road.

A viewpoint from the Africa Region

Marguerite Ouedraogo Bonane, President of the Commission on Information Technology and Freedoms (CIL), Burkina Faso, and Chair of the African Network of Personal Data Protection Authorities (RAPDP), while also serving as one of our GPA Executive Committee members, reviews the GPA 2020 Closed Session Conference

The Global Privacy Assembly (GPA) held its annual Closed Session online from 13 to 15 October 2020, due to the inability to meet in person owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Burkina Faso's Commission on Information Technology and Freedoms (CIL), which chairs the African Network of Privacy Authorities (RAPDP), a GPA Observer, congratulates the members of the Global Privacy Assembly (GPA) on the success of this Conference, despite the difficult global health environment.

CIL, Burkina Faso, co-sponsored the Resolution on Facial Recognition Technology and welcomes the relevance of the themes discussed, which have helped to identify new issues on the protection of personal data

The meeting, which was attended by hundreds of delegates from data protection and privacy authorities, including those in Africa, discussed several topics. These included Artificial Intelligence, facial recognition, data protection in humanitarian action, the functioning of the GPA and its regulatory role in relation to the latest developments in Information and Communication Technologies

(ICT).

As a member of the GPA and President of the RAPDP, the CIL of Burkina Faso, co-sponsored the Resolution on Facial Recognition Technology. The CIL welcomes the relevance of the themes discussed, which have helped to identify new issues related to the protection of personal data.

The Closed Session also presented the results of the activities of the GPA COVID-19 Working Group, chaired by the National Privacy Commission, Philippines. The work of this group, involving several African data protection authorities, provided guidance on safeguarding individuals' rights, including confidentiality in the processing of personal data during a pandemic.

In addition, the election of new members to the Executive Committee took place. This re-elected the Australian Information Commissioner and Privacy Commissioner, Angelene Falk, for a second term and welcomed the German Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (BfDI), Ulrich Kelber, who succeeded Privacy Commissioner and Chairman, Raymund E. Liboro of the National Privacy Commission (NPC), Philippines on the Executive Committee.

Four new members, as well as one observer, joined the GPA this year. We are also pleased to admit these new members, which is a testament to the vitality of



democracy within the GPA.

While the CIL would like to work with the GPA on options for how to improve interpretation, especially for the French-speaking participants. We reiterate our warm congratulations to the organisers and participants of this Closed Session 2020 online. It was a real success. It is also a working framework for the exchange of experiences and knowledge, with topical themes, lively communication, top notch moderators and diplomatic exchanges.

Thank you.

GPA 2020 Members and Observers: Your comments

We conclude this Special Edition GPA Newsletter with a warm welcome to our new members and observers and feature some of your views on the ‘GPA 2020 Closed Session – At your Desk Conference’

The Global Privacy Assembly first met in 1979, and since then has come together annually for more than 40 years from Strasbourg to Sydney, from Marrakech to Montreal to share expertise, experience, vision and friendship. The GPA continues to this day to provide leadership at an international level in data protection and privacy matters.

In that time, the GPA has grown substantially and now consists of more than 130 privacy and data protection authorities and observers in its membership community from across the globe, encompassing geographic, cultural and linguistic diversity.

Consequently, a key moment in our Global Privacy Assembly 2020 – At your Desk conference was the warmest welcome given to our new members and observers who have applied to join the Assembly. Prospective members undergo a standard application process undertaken by a dedicated Accreditation Committee, which makes a recommendation to the full membership for review with the applications tabled at the annual Closed Session.

This year, the Assembly

welcomed four new member authorities:

- Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Bermuda, The Islands of Bermuda
- Cayman Islands Ombudsman, The Cayman Islands
- Data Protection Commissioner of Canton of Bern, Canton of Bern (Switzerland)
- Data Protection Commissioner, Dubai International Financial Centre

The Assembly also welcomed one new observer organisation:

- The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC)

As part of the GPA support for new members and observers, and aligned with the themes of the GPA 2020, focusing on collaboration and community, the [GPA Welcome Kit](#) aims to provide capacity building advice and institutional guidance on privacy and data protection regulatory matters. The Welcome Kit is also a handbook on the Assembly's structure, functioning and

useful contacts.

The Welcome Kit announces the GPA initiative of buddying new members with older members who are willing to provide support, sharing information about their own experience. If you are a member of the Assembly who would be interested in supporting our newer additions to the Assembly, please contact the Secretariat at secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org and we will add you to the contact list made available to the newer members.

Furthermore, if you know of a new authority in your regional neighbourhood which is already or is about to be made responsible for data protection and privacy matters then we would welcome to hear from you at the GPA Secretariat at secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org. The 2021 accreditation application process will be opening soon, and we will provide more news on the GPA website in due course.

Reflecting on the diversity and enthusiasm of our membership, we publish some comments received from members giving their views on the GPA 2020 Conference and issues raised of particular importance to their communities:

“The GPA 2020 Closed Session was a sound example of the resilience and perseverance of the GPA members in the face of an unprecedented health crisis in which data protection authorities all around the globe have a crucial role to play in the search for innovative, yet privacy respecting solutions.

“The adoption of the resolution on the COVID-19 pandemic showed that the GPA is able to react swiftly to crisis situations and played a crucial role in enabling its members to share information and coordinate their actions.

“In spite of this acute crisis, the GPA did not lose sight of crucial evolutions that can have a profound impact on the daily lives of data subjects. In this respect, I am particularly pleased with the adoption of the

resolution on facial recognition technology which shows the resolve of the GPA to ensure that all forms of technological progress should go hand in hand with respect for fundamental rights.”

Hielke Hijmans, Director at the Belgium Data Protection Authority, and President of the Litigation Chamber.

“Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) Commissioner’s Office, first in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region to enact a data protection law in 2004, is privileged to have earned GPA Member recognition.

“The 2020 Closed Session was a first for DIFC, providing it not only with a platform to contribute its views to the global regulatory community but coming away with a much more profound understanding of how to be a better regulator in a technology and innovation-driven, high stakes environment.

“The Working Group reports and resolution proposals were meaningful and demonstrate the trend toward sophisticated, efficient, and effective data protection regulation. Connecting with other passionate privacy professionals in the Closed Session let DIFC show the world that data protection really is a vital part of a jurisdiction’s legal framework, and the Middle East is no exception. DIFC genuinely looks forward to participating going forward as a reliable, supportive Member jurisdiction.”

Vice President – Legal & Director of Data Protection, Lori Baker,
The Dubai International Financial Centre, Commissioner’s Office.

“This year turned out to be a challenging year for all the DPAs trying to strike the right balance between the protection of individual’s rights/interests and public interest, in response to COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, GPA 2020 Closed Session provided a solid platform for all of us who work hard for ensuring privacy and protecting personal information on the daily basis.

“The PPC Japan participated in the debate on COVID-19 highlighting the importance of applying the emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence to the fight against COVID-19, and also made a remark on the benefit for the community to be able to deliver a statement on the emerging global issues such as COVID-19 pandemic in a timely manner.

“In addition to above, the PPC Japan also highlighted the importance of proper handling of personal information in adopting facial recognition technologies. As we have made it clear during the Closed Session, the PPC Japan is ready to work on a variety of topics with other members of the GPA.

“Last but not least, I would like to send my sincere gratitude to Commissioner Elizabeth Denham, Chairperson of GPA, and her team for the excellent organization of the first ever virtual Closed Session.”

Commissioner for International Cooperation, Hisato Asada,
Personal Information Protection Commission, Japan.

“The Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Bermuda had the honour of joining as a new member during the GPA 2020 Closed Session. The session served as a shining example of the need for, and value of, co-operation between data protection supervisory authorities.

“The problems we all face are not unique to our national borders. Even nation-states have limits to the leverage they may place on multi-national corporations. By working through GPA, each regulator gains the support of the global community to demonstrate how requirements match consensus views of best practices. This sort of precedent proves particularly impactful for newly established offices, such as those here in the Greater Caribbean.

“There is much more that we, and our privacy laws, have in common than what separates us. The ability to share resources, work together, and speak with one voice makes our message resonate even more loudly and clearly.”

Privacy Commissioner Alexander White, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, Bermuda.

“The 42nd Conference of the GPA was, in spite of the technical challenges of working under rather unique circumstances, in our view a success. The shared results of the working groups were interesting and illustrated the great practical progress on the GPA’s strategic plan and strategy!

“On the third day, the members of the Assembly adopted the Resolution on the Role of Personal Data Protection in International Development Aid, International Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management. With the thankful support of 15 co-sponsors, we are now happy to launch a working group that will respond to the request for cooperation from relevant parties in this field and will allow the GPA to play an important role at a time when privacy is high on public agendas.

“With the resolution the basis for the next steps is in place and I am glad, that we are able to contribute significantly in this important issue!”

Swiss Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner,
Adrian Lobsiger.

“It was a privilege for BEUC to be able to attend this year’s Conference as an observer for the first time.

“In our digitalised world the protection of personal data is of utmost importance for consumers – and consumer rights advocates. We highly appreciate the work done by the GPA, in particular the Digital Citizen and Consumer Working Group (DCCWG), where authorities identify, discuss and share views on the interaction between consumer protection, competition and privacy. These are areas which are increasingly linked, and we appreciate the efforts of the Conference participants to bring them closer together.

“Building a solid synergy in these areas is essential to solve the current and future problems of the digital society.”

Deputy Director General, Ms. **Ursula Pachi**, The European
Consumer Organisation (BEUC).

“Many important things were discussed and approved at the GPA Conference. I highlight the resolution on Accountability and Artificial Intelligence. “An AI project without data is like a river without water”. Therefore, there is a great appetite for collecting and using personal data. However, it is key to demand that lawfulness, ethics, security, privacy and accountability are implemented from the design and by default. If this is done right from the start, data processing will be less risky for the protection of people’s rights.

“It is necessary to continue working on preventive and proactive approaches to guarantee people’s rights and build trust in AI projects.

“In Colombia we have just started a regulatory sandbox on Privacy by Design in Artificial Intelligence projects. We believe that this experience can be positive for future initiatives on the subject.”

Deputy Superintendent for the Protection of Personal Data,
Nelson Remolina Angarita, Superintendence of Industry and
Commerce, Republic of Colombia.

The GPA Secretariat — Your central contact point

If you are interested in getting more involved in the GPA’s work, by joining one of the Working Groups, or volunteering to be a future Assembly host, please get in touch with the Secretariat at secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org

For more information on the GPA, visit our website at globalprivacyassembly.org



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