

## **SPEECH BEATRIZ DE ANCHORENA – GIOVANI BUTTARELLI AWARDS 17.09.25**

Dear Secretariat, Executive Committee, members and observers of the Global Privacy Assembly, dear colleagues and friends.

Thank you. It is a great honor to receive the Giovanni Buttarelli Award.

First, I would like to thank the Global Privacy Assembly and PIPC Korea for this great conference. Also I want to thank my team at the Argentine Agency, whose dedication makes every step forward possible, and the many colleagues around the world who have supported and encouraged our work.

This award carries a deep meaning. Giovanni Buttarelli's legacy reminds us that privacy is not only about compliance, but about the very essence of democracy, strong institutions and human dignity.

In today's changing world, where exponential technological advances are reshaping our societies and redefining the balance of power, this vision (Buttarelli's vision) is more necessary than ever.

Today, data protection is more than a legal or technical issue, it is a strategic agenda for our societies. Ensuring the privacy and security of personal data is essential not only for trade and economic growth, but also for social and human development.

Guaranteeing safe data flows is crucial for economies, science, trade, and daily life, and it is increasingly a cross-cutting agenda in the public value chain of emerging technologies as artificial intelligence.

In Argentina, we early recognized that this was the path we needed to take.

Our institutional journey has deep roots: it begins with the reform of our National Constitution in 1994, which recognizes the right to data protection through habeas data, and continued with the first data protection law in Latin America, adopted in 2000.

Since I took office at the Agency in 2022, we understood that a central challenge was to modernize our regulatory framework to address emerging issues in line with international standards, and to institutionalize this agenda.

This is why we designed a five-year strategic plan with concrete objectives, outcomes, actions, and targets. We drafted a bill to update data protection through a participatory process involving a broad range of stakeholders: companies, public institutions, universities, civil society, and international organizations, including a public consultation and 11 dialogue roundtables.

In 2023, Argentina ratified Convention 108+, and I had the honor of personally depositing the instrument of ratification. In January 2024, Argentina renewed its adequacy decision with the European Commission (current science 2003). And in November 2024, I had the honor of being elected chair of the Committee of Convention 108 of the Council of Europe.

Every step we took, was made possible through international cooperation and the invaluable support of this community.

My first GPA was in 2022, in Istanbul, where we took the leadership of the Strategic Direction Subcommittee, developing the GPA Strategic Plan 2023-2025. But in a personal way, that assembly opened the door to learn and engage with colleagues from all regions, and to experience the GPA as a living space, a forum where we can hold open conversations, debate in working groups and -in a nutshell- build trust.

It is precisely through these human relationships and institutional agreements that we, as regulators, can turn diversity into shared solutions. Data protection networks play a central role in this. What we often call the “network effect” becomes visible in concrete ways.

In the Ibero-American Network, we are updating standards to reflect our realities and specific needs, and, Argentina, is leading the creation of an Ibero-American observatory.

Now, Convention 108 includes 55 countries and Convention 108+ is very close to entering into force, with only five ratifications remaining. I invite you to empower Convention 108+, as the only legally binding instrument in our field, open to all regions, and able to offer legal certainty and political legitimacy in a changing world.

This award is not only a recognition of what has been achieved, but also a reminder of the challenges ahead.

It reminds us that protecting privacy, strengthening democracy, and safeguarding freedom of expression are not separate goals: they are interdependent pillars of the society we want to build.

To achieve this, we must collectively work toward updating our social contract, a contract with the citizens that guide our shared responsibilities and commitments. This requires shaping institutional and multi-stakeholder agreements. Every actor has a role, and together we can ensure that rights, responsible innovation, and trust advance hand in hand.

From a Global South view, this also means working to ensure that digital inequalities do not deepen existing divides. One big challenge is to close technological and institutional gaps, so that every country and every citizen can benefit from the digital age.

Building inclusive information societies, where everyone, regardless of origin, socio-economic status, or geographic location, can fully enjoy access to better lives based on fundamental rights, it is what will turn digital transformation into a driving force for equality and dignity.

In practice, this means thinking globally and acting locally, keeping humans at the center and building bridges of cooperation across borders. It is through these human connections, the networks we build, and the commitments we honor, that we will find the strength to turn challenges into concrete progress for our people.

Again, a big thank you to all of you, to my team & colleagues from Convention 108.