



**27th Plenary meeting of the
Consultative Committee of Convention 108
Thorbjørn Jagland,
Secretary General of the Council of Europe
29 November 2011 at 11 am**

- Distinguished representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- 2011 marks the 30th anniversary of Convention 108. “Everything I know, I learned after I was thirty”, once said the famous French statesman, Georges Clemenceau. And we know a lot after 30 years of work with the protection of personal data.
- We know that free access to the Internet is an integral part of anyone’s right to freedom of expression. But we also know that the Internet constantly challenges our right to privacy.
- We know that web pages, search requests, on-line forms, picture sharing or travel bookings have an influence on our right to private life. And we know that key actors world wide are calling for global standards in the field of data protection – even the G8 summit of Deauville called for better co-operation in the field of data protection.
- Also recently, more than 700 participants from around the world representing data protection authorities as well as governments, the

private sector and the civil society met in Mexico City to tackle the 'global age' of privacy.

- I would like to seize this opportunity to thank Mrs Jacqueline Peschard, Head of Mexico's Federal Institute for Access to Information and Data Protection, and who is present here today, for the excellent organisation of this important event. It has provided a very important occasion to discuss the significance of Convention 108 on another continent.
- The Council of Europe Convention on Data Protection is the only convention with international appliance and which is open to all countries for accession. This must be our point of departure.
- Last week in Vienna at a conference on Internet and rights and freedoms, I said that our experiences and knowledge about the challenges have made it necessary to modernise the Data Protection Convention.
- It has been said that at twenty a man is a peacock, at thirty a lion, and at forty a camel. As I have worked to reform the Council of Europe to be relevant for the challenges of the 21st century, it will be a priority to keep the Convention 108 a lion.
- On Data Protection Day this year I said that, "Privacy is challenged more than ever before in the history of mankind". The Council of Europe and its Data protection convention is essential to cope with this.
- Let's work together to make a difference – for our right to freedom, and to privacy.
- Thank you.