

**27th International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners  
Montreux  
16 September 2005**

**Resolution on the use of biometrics in passports, identity cards  
and travel documents**

*The Federal Data Protection Commissioner of Germany and the Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information of Berlin with the support of the National Direction for Personal Data Protection of Argentina, the Data Protection Commission of Austria and the Data Protection Commission of Italy proposes the adoption of the following Resolution:*

The 27<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners resolves:

*Noting* that governments and international organizations, in particular the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), are at present finalising rules and technical standards for the integration of biometric data (fingerprints, face recognition) in passports and travel documents for the purposes of fighting terrorism as well as speeding up border controls and check-in procedures;

*Aware of the fact* that the private sector is also increasingly processing biometric data mostly on a voluntary basis;

*Taking into account* that biometric data may be collected without the data subject noticing it since he or she may leave biometric traces unconsciously;

*Recalling* that biometrics will make the human body “machine-readable” and that biometric information could be used as a globally unique identifier;

*Stressing* that the widespread use of biometrics will have a far-reaching impact on the global society and should therefore be subject to an open worldwide debate

the Conference calls for

1. effective safeguards to be implemented at an early stage to limit the risks inherent to the nature of biometrics,
2. the strict distinction between biometric data collected and stored for public purposes (e.g. border control) on the basis of legal obligations and for contractual purposes on the basis of consent,
3. the technical restriction of the use of biometrics in passports and identity cards to verification purposes comparing the data in the document with the data provided by the holder when presenting the document.