

Council of Europe
The Secretary General

Strasbourg, 29 April 2011

Dear Mr Davies,

Thank you for your letter of 31 March 2011 concerning the petition by an alliance of international NGOs and individuals on "the collection and storage of biometric data".

Biometric data and its processing were recently highlighted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Resolution 1797(2011) on the need for a global consideration of the human rights implications of biometrics. The Resolution stresses the need to take steps to ensure that relevant existing legal frameworks be enhanced and modernised, including the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data ('Convention 108').

In 2005, the Consultative Committee of Convention 108 prepared a "Progress report on the application of the principles of Convention 108 to the collection and processing of biometric data", which will be examined in the framework of the current review and modernisation of Convention 108.

Your specific request that Council of Europe member states' related national schemes be assessed falls under the responsibility of various Council of Europe bodies, such as the Parliamentary Assembly, the Commissioner for Human Rights and the Consultative Committee of Convention 108 (T-PD). I have forwarded your request to them, inviting them to seek your active contribution to the process in terms of expertise and documentary resources.

Thank you for taking an active stand on this important issue. I would ask you to kindly forward this letter to the signatories of the petition.

Yours sincerely,



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