



8th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF  
INFORMATION COMMISSIONERS (ICIC 2013)  
18th to 20th September 2013

Press release 2/2013

Berlin, 20th September 2013

### **Information Commissioners Require Strengthening of Transparency at National and International Level**

At the closure of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Information Commissioners in Berlin the Information Commissioners from all over the world adopted a resolution. The right of access to information must be strengthened, the obligation to transparency of governmental action has to be stepped up. In this respect the organisers of the conference declare:

Peter Schaar: „Our core message is: All public bodies on local, state and international level must act in a transparent way. Extensive rights to information are an indispensable precondition for citizens' participation in democratic decisions.”

Dr. Alexander Dix: „A blanket exclusion of intelligence services from transparency duties should not be possible. An effective control of intelligence services requires a minimum standard of transparency. This is the only possible way to limit excessive surveillance which takes place under excessive secrecy.”

In the “Berlin Declaration“ the Information Commissioners support the recognition of an international fundamental right to information and draw attention to Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 16<sup>th</sup> December 1966. In addition, it is recommended that all states accede to the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents of 18th June 2009 (Tromsø Convention). The Federal Republic of Germany is among the states which have not acceded to the Convention yet.

From 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2013 Information Commissioners from 35 countries met at the 8th International Conference of Information Commissioners in Berlin in order to discuss together with more than 150 representatives of policy, science, administration and non-governmental organisations current issues on transparency and openness of governmental action.

The Conference was organised by the Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information Dr. Alexander Dix and by the Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information Peter Schaar.