



HCCH

Connecter Protéger Coopérer Depuis 1893
Connecting Protecting Cooperating Since 1893

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

Secretary General's Message

2022

2022 was characterised by renewed energy as the long-awaited return to in-person meetings and activities filled the year with optimism and motivation. The extraordinary events of the last two years have demanded constant adaptation and resilience; in this year we find that these demands have honed skills and traits that settle us into the "new normal". The shift to online and hybrid meetings, despite some challenges, brought us closer to universality and inclusiveness through broader participation. 2022 also saw the resumption of delayed activities and the launch of new initiatives. At the Permanent Bureau, work continued at maximum impetus to meet the needs of an expanding network of HCCH Members and other Connected Parties.



In 2022, the Permanent Bureau organised more than 40 meetings and public events, both online and in person in The Hague and elsewhere. As this Annual Report recounts in detail, the Permanent Bureau witnessed no less than 20 treaty actions - a significant increase in comparison to previous years. These treaty actions were the result of the many fruitful, in-person interactions that we had during the year, as well as of the tireless efforts that have continued from previous years. Among the many treaty actions, the European Union's accession and Ukraine's ratification of the 2019 Judgments Convention in August was a particular highlight, as these actions will trigger the entry into force of the Convention on 1 September 2023, just slightly over four years since its conclusion.

In March, our Council on General Affairs and Policy (CGAP) met online for the second time in its history. This year's CGAP meeting was particularly memorable, as it was the last to be chaired by Mr Andrew Walter (Australia), and it witnessed the election of Dr Marcelo De Nardi (Brazil) and Ms Yael Weiner (Israel) as its new Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. During CGAP, we also had the pleasure of welcoming El Salvador as the 91st Member of the HCCH.

In May, the Special Commission on the Practical Operation of the 2007 Child Support Convention and 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol met for the first time. More than 200 delegates representing HCCH Members, Contracting Parties and Observers from all regions of the world joined the meeting either in person at the Peace Palace, or remotely. Delegates discussed several matters falling within the scope of the Convention and Protocol and confirmed that these instruments remained fit for purpose.

Shortly after, at the beginning of July, the Special Commission on the Practical Operation of the 1993 Adoption Convention met for the fifth time. Held entirely online, the meeting was attended by nearly 400 participants - a record in terms of inclusion and engagement of HCCH Members, non-Member States, and Observers from the civil society and international organisations. Among other pressing agenda items, substantive progress was made concerning post-adoption matters and in advancing the work on the *Toolkit for Preventing and Addressing Illicit Practices in Intercountry Adoption*.

"[...] the PB witnessed no less than 20 treaty actions - a significant increase in comparison to previous years."

In September, the Permanent Bureau held the inaugural HCCH CODIFI Conference, addressing issues of private international law in the commercial, digital and financial sectors. The conference brought together 93 experts from all over the globe to share their ideas in a week-long online programme that addressed not only possible future normative work, but also discussed existing HCCH instruments and their continuing relevance in an increasingly digital world. The CODIFI Conference provided remarkable and innovative insight that inspires us to continue our commitment to providing effective private international law solutions to contemporary challenges and those of the future.

2022 also provided us with an exceptional opportunity to increase the presence of the HCCH in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The HCCH Asia Pacific Week 2022, hosted by the Philippines, took place in Manila in October. Building on that momentum, in December we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the HCCH Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), a dynamic hub for this vibrant region and an integral part of the Permanent Bureau. I wholeheartedly thank the government of the Philippines, for its outstanding efforts and support for HCCH Asia Pacific Week, and the government of the People's Republic of China, our long-standing partner in supporting the operation of ROAP.



In keeping with its efforts to promote universality and inclusiveness, the Permanent Bureau organised in December, together with Finland and South Africa, a kick-off meeting for the Regional Conference "The HCCH and the Relevance of its Work for Southern Africa". This Regional Conference will also involve the participation of Namibia, Tanzania and other SADC States. The conference is planned for February 2023 and will be hosted by the University of Pretoria.

In November, we concluded the third Special Commission meeting of the year. The Special Commission on the Practical Operation of the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention gathered for the first time, both online and in person in The Hague. The Special Commission confirmed, *inter alia*, the Convention's smooth operation, which is an important step towards attracting more Contracting Parties and to enhancing the protection of adults in cross-border situations.

The considerable number of Special Commission meetings in the same year was undoubtedly a challenge, one that was ably met and overcome with teamwork. Teamwork was also the crucial ingredient that allowed us to successfully conclude several meetings of Experts' Groups, Working Groups, and a variety of other post-Convention activities held throughout the year, as you will discover in this report.

This was a busy, fruitful year, of which I am very proud. It would not have been possible without the generosity and commitment of HCCH Members and partners from across the globe and the tireless work of colleagues at the Permanent Bureau. As I look ahead, I can only reaffirm how confident I am that our team will rise to the challenges coming our way in 2023, a year that looks promising from the outset.

"This year's CGAP meeting was particularly memorable, as it was the last to be chaired by Mr Andrew Walter (Australia), and it witnessed the election of Dr Marcelo De Nardi (Brazil) and Ms Yael Weiner (Israel) as its new Chair and Vice-Chair respectively."

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink on a blue background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr Christophe Bernasconi
Secretary General

Contents



[Milestones](#)

[Facts & Figures](#)

[New Members & Treaty Actions](#)

[International Family and Child Protection Law](#)

[Transnational Litigation and Apostille](#)

[International Commercial, Digital, and Financial Law](#)

[Governance & Cooperation](#)

[The Staff & Interns](#)

[Organisational Chart](#)



Milestones

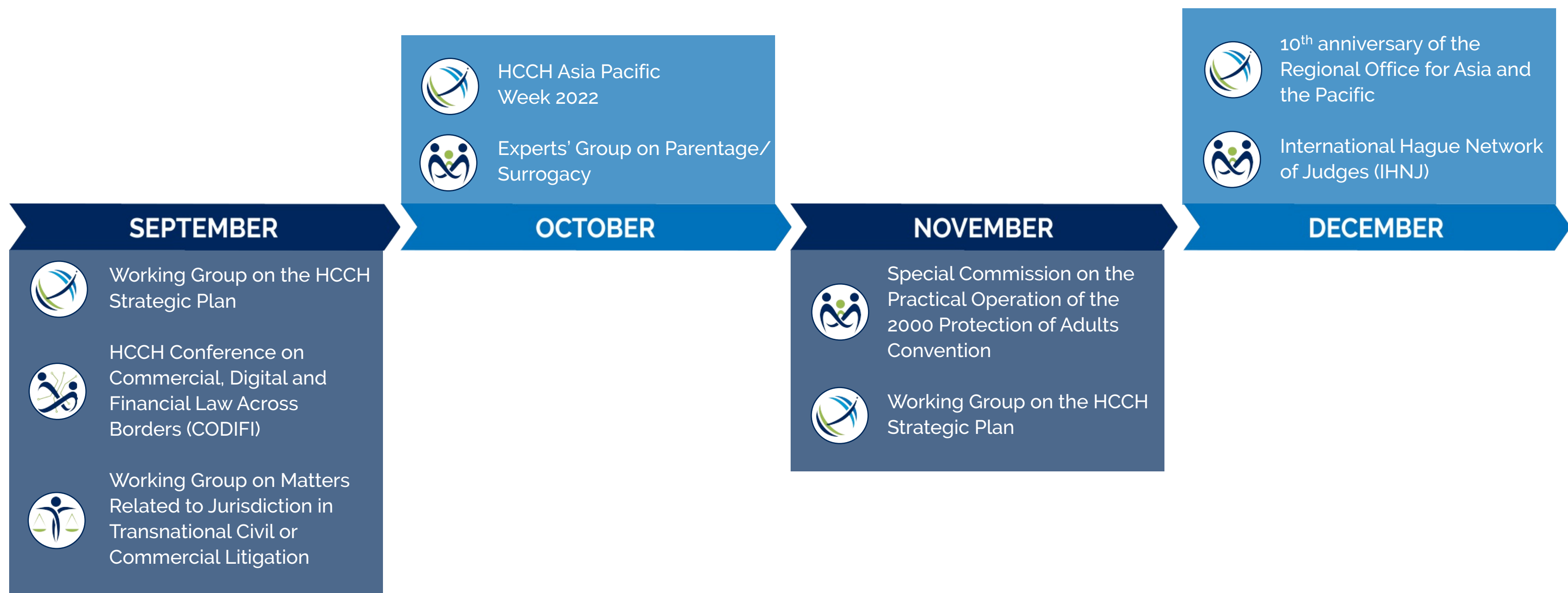


The Working Group on the Practical Handbook under the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention met regularly from April 2021 to December 2022 (online)

YEAR
2022



YEAR
2023



Facts & Figures



1
New Member
El Salvador

20

Signatures, Accessions & Ratifications

5 New Signatures

(2019 Judgments Convention, 2007 Child Support Convention, 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol, 2000 Protection of Adults Convention)

9 New Accessions

(2019 Judgments Convention, 2007 Child Support Convention, 1996 Child Protection Convention, 1993 Adoption Convention, 1980 Child Abduction Convention, 1961 Apostille Convention)

6 New Ratifications

(2019 Judgments Convention, 2007 Child Support Convention, 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol, 2000 Protection of Adults Convention)

40+

Meetings

- 2 Experts' Groups
- 3 Working Groups
- 3 Special Commissions
- 2 Governing Bodies

6+

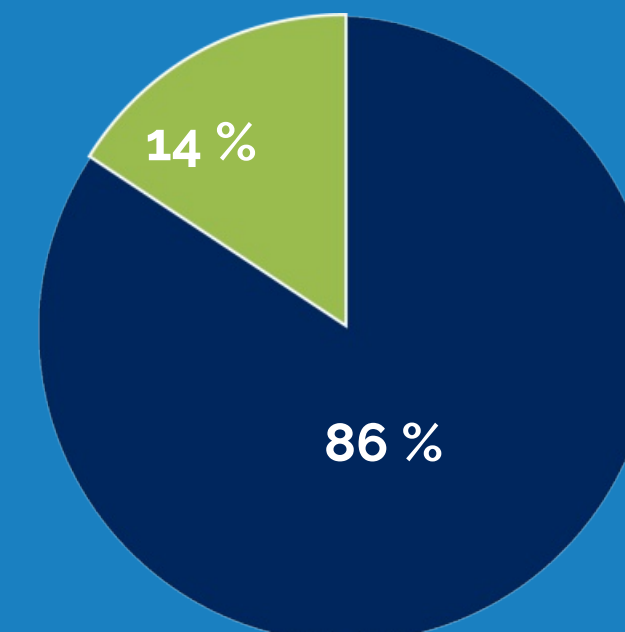
Public Events



34
Staff members
from **21** States
[25.8 FTEs on
Budget;
2 FTEs vacant]

7
Secondees
from **3** States

36
Interns
from **18** States



■ Budget
■ Voluntary
Contributions

€ 4,555,794

Budget for
Financial Year 2022-2023

€ 719,685

received in monetary
voluntary contributions
in 2022



2
States received tailored
post-Convention
assistance



6
New publications

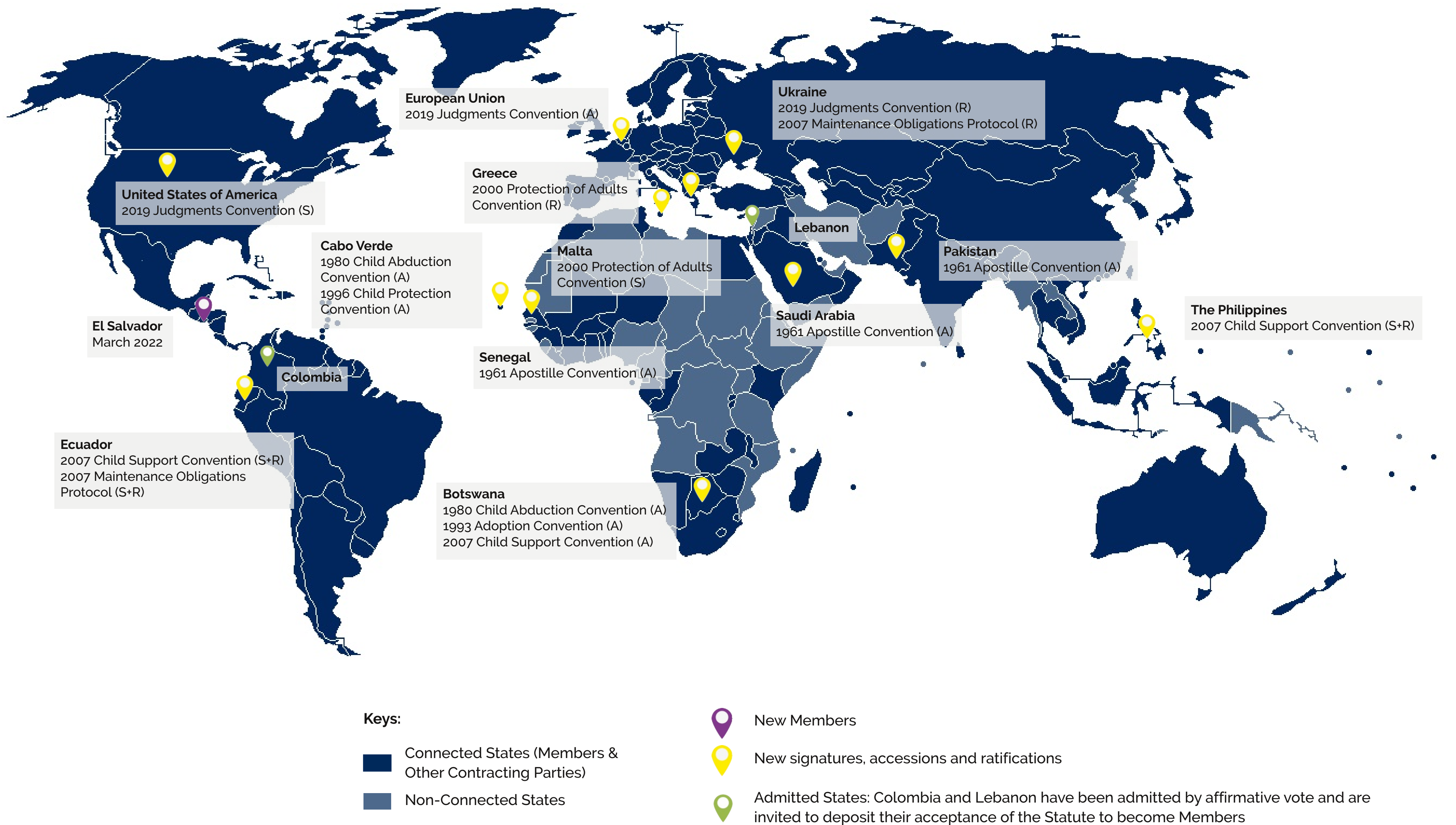
(per 31 December 2022)

New Members & Treaty Actions

The HCCH has 91 Members (90 Member States and the European Union) representing regions across the globe.

Members determine the Work Programme of the Organisation and play an active role in its normative, non-normative and governance work.

Contracting Parties to the HCCH Conventions benefit from an extensive legal cooperation network and uniform international standards. The Conventions are open to Members of the Organisation, but also to non-Members, of which many have either signed or become Contracting Parties to one or more HCCH Conventions. As a result, there are a total of over 150 States connected to the work of the Organisation worldwide.



International Family and Child Protection Law

1980 Child Abduction and 1996 Child Protection Conventions

New Contracting Parties and Acceptances of Accessions

In October, Cabo Verde acceded to the 1980 Child Abduction Convention, expected to enter into force in January 2023, and to the 1996 Child Protection Convention, expected to enter into force in August 2023. With the accession of Cabo Verde, the 1996 Child Protection Convention now has 54 Contracting Parties. One month later, in November, Botswana acceded to the 1980 Child Abduction Convention, expected to enter into force in January 2023. With the accession of Cabo Verde and Botswana, the 1980 Child Abduction Convention now has 103 Contracting Parties. The 1980 Child Abduction saw several acceptances of accessions of Contracting Parties that joined the Convention more recently.



Botswana accedes to the 1980 Child Abduction, 1993 Adoption and 2007 Child Support Conventions

Special Commission (SC) on the 1980 Child Abduction and 1996 Child Protection Conventions

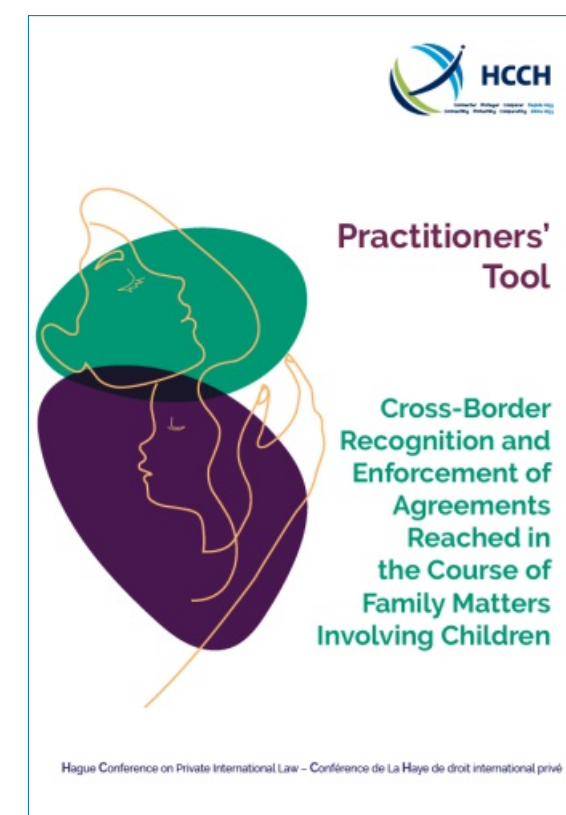
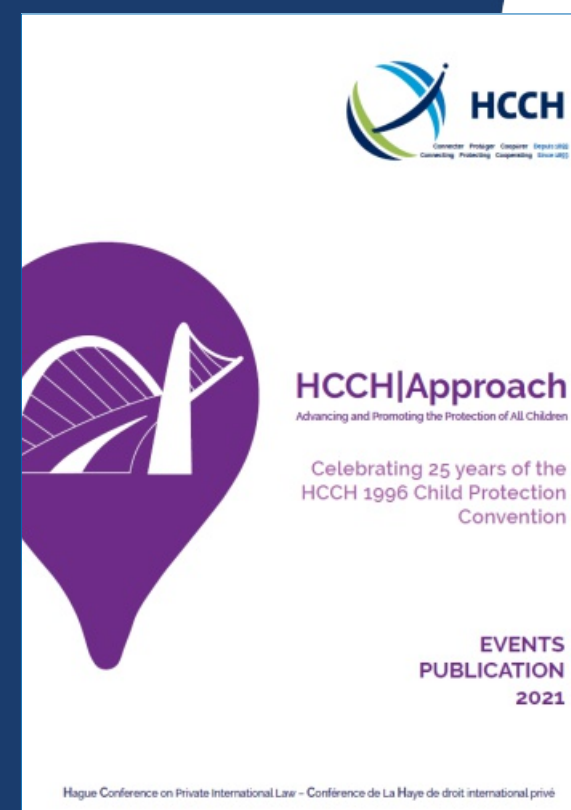
The Eighth Meeting of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 1980 Child Abduction and 1996 Child Protection Conventions will be held in October 2023. Throughout the year, the Permanent Bureau advanced preparations for the meeting, including by circulating a focused questionnaire on the practical operation of the 1996 Child Protection Convention, and preparing the questionnaire on the practical operation of the 1980 Child Abduction Convention for circulation in early 2023. A fifth in-depth statistical study of the operation of the 1980 Child Abduction Convention will be completed by Professor Nigel Lowe of Cardiff Law School and Ms Victoria Stephens, in consultation with the Permanent Bureau. Together, the results of the questionnaires on the practical operation and the Statistical study will serve to inform the discussions of the SC as it seeks to identify challenges and good practices with a view to making recommendations to the implementation and operation of the Conventions.

The 1980 Child Abduction Convention seeks to protect children from the harmful effects of wrongful removal and retention across international boundaries, by providing a procedure to bring about their prompt return and ensuring the protection of rights of access.

New Publications

In 2022 the Permanent Bureau released two new publications of relevance to the 1980 Child Abduction and 1996 Child Protection Conventions.

The **post-event publication of the HCCH|Approach Initiative** was launched in May. HCCH|Approach, "Advancing and Promoting the Protection of All Children", celebrated the 25th anniversary of the 1996 Child Protection Convention through a series of activities and events organised in the autumn of 2021. The post-event publication contains written reflections on the 1996 Child Protection Convention by 14 experts from a diversity of regions and legal systems, broadcast during the HCCH|Approach Global Event as a series of "expert videos", as well as the winning entries of the Essay Competition and the Media and Design Competition.



The ***Practitioners' Tool: Cross-Border Recognition and Enforcement of Agreements Reached in the Course of Family Matters Involving Children***, published in December, aims to explain how agreements made in the area of family law involving children can be made enforceable in one State and then recognised and enforced in other States through the operation of mechanisms under HCCH Conventions, including the 1980 Child Abduction Convention, 1996 Child Protection Convention, and 2007 Child Support Convention. The Practitioners' Tool is a useful resource for legal or professional advisers who deal with cross-border family law situations.

International Child Abduction Database (INCADAT)

The Permanent Bureau continues to support the operation of INCADAT, the only global, free legal database on international child abduction law. Available in English, French and Spanish, INCADAT is a comprehensive tool that facilitates the research of cases by providing case summaries and legal analyses within the scope of application of the 1980 Child Abduction

Convention. In 2022, INCADAT continued to grow both in terms of users and content, supported by the ongoing cooperation of the Permanent Bureau with INCADAT correspondents, universities, and Central Authorities across the world, which assist with the addition of new content and the translation of existing content.

The 1996 Child Protection Convention provides a comprehensive framework to protect children in cross-border situations, with uniform private international law (PIL) rules that prevent conflicting decisions regarding civil measures of protection for children and their property.

Transnational Litigation and Apostille

1961 Apostille Convention

The 1961 Apostille Convention facilitates the use of public documents abroad, replacing the traditional legalisation process with the issuance of a single Apostille certificate.

New Contracting Parties

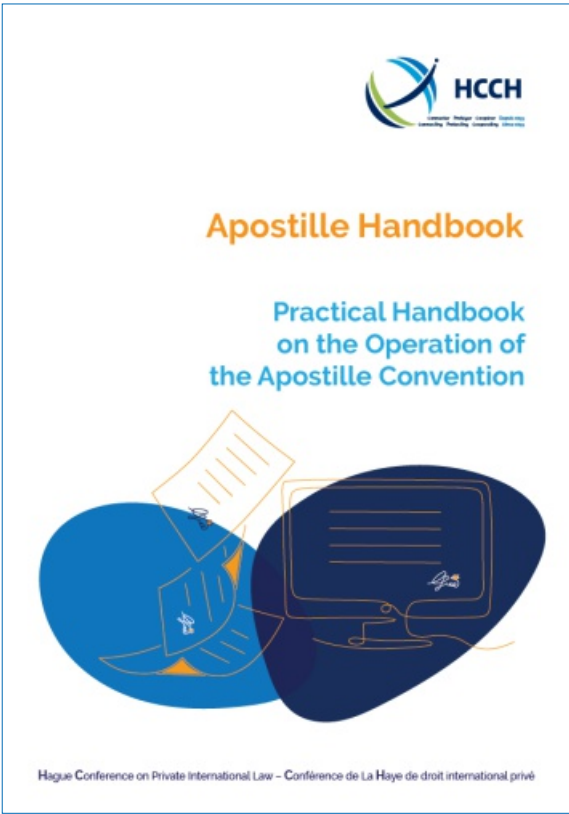
In 2022, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Senegal joined the 1961 Apostille Convention. The Convention entered into force for Saudi Arabia in December, and it is expected to enter into force for both Pakistan and Senegal in March 2023. The Convention now has a total of 124 Contracting Parties.



Saudi Arabia accedes to the 1961 Apostille Convention

New Publication - Second Edition of the Apostille Handbook

In March, CGAP endorsed the Conclusions & Recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 1961 Apostille Convention, held in October 2021. These provide the basis for the Permanent Bureau's future work programme and priorities in relation to this Convention, high amongst them being the finalisation of the second edition of the *Practical Handbook on the Operation of the Apostille Convention* (Apostille Handbook), on which the Permanent Bureau continued to work throughout the year in preparation for its publication in January 2023. The second edition of the Apostille Handbook, a primary source of guidance for Contracting Parties and their Competent Authorities in the practical operation of the Convention, is available in English, French and Spanish.



Electronic Apostille Programme (e-APP)

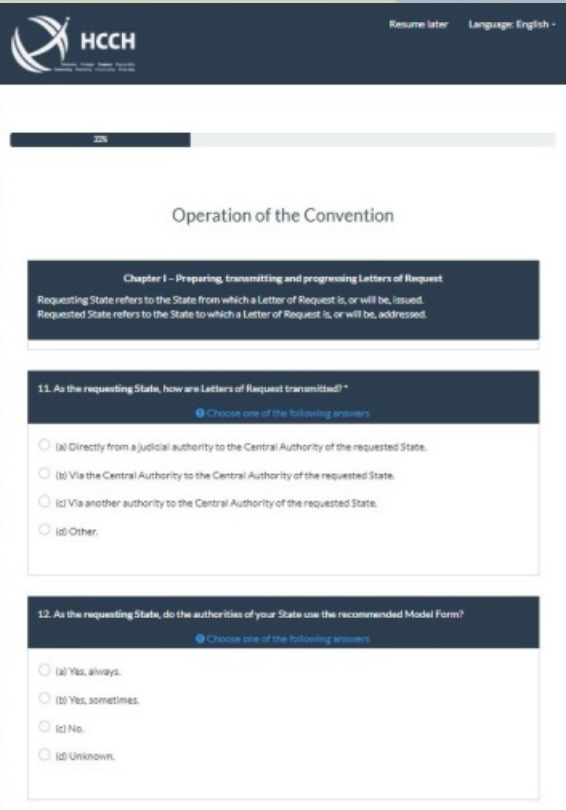
The e-APP, which comprises two components: the issuance of electronic Apostilles (e-Apostilles) and the operation of electronic Registers (e-Registers) to verify both paper Apostilles and e-Apostilles, has continued to attract interest.

In 2022, four Contracting Parties to the 1961 Apostille Convention implemented one or both e-APP components. El Salvador, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan implemented both components, and Indonesia implemented an e-Register. With these developments, 51 out of the 124 Contracting Parties to the Convention have now implemented one or both e-APP components.

1965 Service, 1970 Evidence, and 1980 Access to Justice Conventions

SC on the 1965 Service, 1970 Evidence, and 1980 Access to Justice Conventions

The next meeting of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 1965 Service, 1970 Evidence, and 1980 Access to Justice Conventions will be held in November 2023. During the year, the Permanent Bureau advanced preparations for the SC meeting, including through the development of three focused questionnaires (one per instrument) designed to collect data on the practical operation of the 1965 Service Convention, 1970 Evidence Convention and 1980 Access to Justice Convention. These questionnaires were circulated to HCCH Members and Contracting Parties to the Conventions in December. The questionnaires will also be sent to a limited number of non-Members in early 2023. The responses to these questionnaires will inform the agenda of the meeting of the SC and will provide updated statistical information on the use of the Conventions.



Questionnaire on the practical operation of the 1970 Evidence Convention

The 1965 Service Convention and the 1970 Evidence Convention establish a uniform framework of cross-border cooperation mechanisms to facilitate and streamline, respectively, the service of documents and the taking of evidence abroad.

International Commercial, Digital, and Financial Law

Ongoing Normative Work

Throughout the year, the HCCH has continued to monitor developments with respect to international commercial, digital, and financial law, and in particular the digital economy, including distributed ledger technology (DLT), with the aim of identifying PIL issues for potential future work. In relation to the PIL issues arising in the digital economy, the HCCH participated as observer in the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)'s Working Group on Digital Assets and Private Law, contributing to the PIL aspects of its work. The HCCH also continued to monitor developments with respect to the intersection of intellectual property and PIL, including through cooperation with the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and with respect to insolvency and PIL, including through cooperation with the Secretariat of the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). The Permanent Bureau will report to CGAP on these developments at its 2023 meeting.

The 2015 Principles, the first “soft-law” instrument of the HCCH, are designed to promote party autonomy in international commercial contracts.

HCCH Conference on Commercial, Digital and Financial Law Across Borders (CODIFI Conference)

CODIFI Conference

In September, the HCCH's CODIFI Conference examined PIL issues in the commercial, digital and financial sectors, highlighting developments in the digital economy and fintech industries as well as clarifying the roles of core HCCH instruments. The week-long online programme brought together 93 speakers representing all continents and had a total broadcast time of more than 32 hours of content, now available online for on-demand viewing.

The 1985 Trusts Convention specifies the law applicable to trusts and governs the recognition of trusts among Contracting Parties.

The 2006 Securities Convention determines the law applicable to the perfection, priority and other effects of securities held with an intermediary.



1 week,
6 tracks,
90+ speakers,
700+ registrations,
32+ hours of content

One Week, Six Tracks

Digital Economy Frameworks

On the PIL issues arising in the new decentralised economy that is based on technologies such as DLT.

Digital Economy Relationships

On the PIL issues arising from the use of DLT and other technologies as building blocks for governance of enterprises, transactions, financial services, dispute resolution, operations management and sustainable development.

Digital Economy Redefine

On the PIL implications of innovations in the fintech industry, including specific perspectives and approaches of national jurisdictions regarding digital commerce.

1985 Trusts Convention

On current and future developments in relation to the 1985 Trusts Convention, with a spotlight on the rise of institutions analogous to trusts.

2006 Securities Convention

On current and future developments in relation to the 2006 Securities Convention, with a spotlight on the impact of the advent of DLT.

2015 Principles on the Choice of Law in International Commercial Contracts

On current and future developments in relation to the 2015 Principles, with a spotlight on national and regional choice-of-law regimes, party autonomy, and the growth of the digital economy.

Governance & Cooperation

As an intergovernmental organisation, good governance is essential to the operation of the HCCH. Its unique global mandate also requires international cooperation with the public, private and non-profit sectors, as well as ongoing dialogue with the general public.

Council on General Affairs and Policy (CGAP)

The Council on General Affairs and Policy (CGAP) of the HCCH met online from 28 February to 4 March 2022 to review progress and set the work programme for the year ahead.

Chaired by Mr Andrew Walter (Australia), for the final time, the meeting had over 450 participants, representing the Members of the Organisation, as well as Observer States, intergovernmental organisations and international non-governmental organisations.

As in previous years, CGAP reviewed ongoing normative and non-normative work, providing guidance and direction as outlined in the preceding sections. Highlights included the approval of the publication of the *Practical Guide to Access to Justice for International Tourists and Visitors* and the *Practitioners' Tool: Cross-Border Recognition and Enforcement of Agreements Reached in the Course of Family Matters Involving Children*; the endorsement of further normative work in relation to jurisdiction in transnational civil or commercial litigation, parentage / surrogacy, and the digital economy; and the advancement of preparations for the upcoming meetings of several Special Commissions on the practical operation of HCCH Conventions and instruments.

In terms of governance matters, CGAP approved the extension of the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan for use until a new Strategic Plan is approved, and, to this end, mandated the establishment of a WG for the development of the new draft Strategic Plan. CGAP invited the WG to have regard, in its discussions, to the Principles developed by the Informal Group of Ambassadors following its discussions on the strategic development of the HCCH, held between November 2020 to October 2021. The WG on the Strategic Plan will also consider, as a matter of priority, possible models for regional groups used by the HCCH.



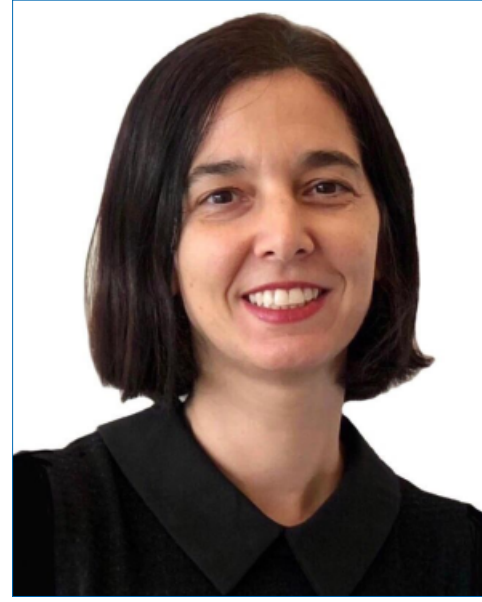
Mr Andrew Walter (Australia),
Chair of the Council on General
Affairs and Policy (2017-2022)



H.E. Ms Adia Sakiqi (Albania),
Chair of the WG on the HCCH
Strategic Plan



Dr Marcelo De Nardi (Brazil),
Chair of the Council on General
Affairs and Policy



Ms Yael Weiner (Israel), Vice-
Chair of the Council on General
Affairs and Policy

CGAP's 2022 meeting concluded with the election of Dr Marcelo De Nardi (Brazil) as its new Chair and of Ms Yael Weiner (Israel) as its Vice-Chair. Upon the conclusion of his tenure, HCCH Members and the Permanent Bureau thanked Mr Andrew Walter for his service and dedication to the HCCH as Chair of CGAP from 2017 to 2022.



El Salvador becomes the 91st Member of the HCCH

Council of Diplomatic Representatives (CDR)

The annual meeting of the Council of Diplomatic Representatives (CDR), the Organisation's primary financial and budgetary authority, was held in May, chaired by Mr Paul van den IJssel (the Netherlands).



Mr Paul van den IJssel
(the Netherlands), Chair of the
Council of Diplomatic
Representatives

Highlights of the meeting included the approval of the HCCH's budget for Financial Year 2022-2023, at a total of € 4,555,794; the appointment of Ms Marisar Ivy Cabatingan (the Philippines) as the new Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee of the CDR; and the appointment of a new auditor for a period of five years.



Mr Mostafa Daa Eldin
Mohamed (Egypt), Chair of the
Standing Committee of
the Council of Diplomatic
Representatives



Ms Marisar Ivy Cabatingan
(the Philippines), Vice-Chair
of the Standing Committee
of the Council of Diplomatic
Representatives

The Staff & Interns

(per 31 December 2022)

The Staff

Mr Christopher ANDERSON
Legal Officer (until January 2022)

Ms Maryze BERKHOUT
Head of Finance / Senior Human Resources Officer

Dr Christophe BERNASCONI
Secretary General

Ms Sandrine BRARD
Administrative Assistant

Ms Florencia CASTRO
Legal and Office Coordinator (ROLAC)

Mr Harry CHENG
Legal Officer

Ms Marie-Charlotte DARBAS
Information Manager

Ms Lydie DE LOOF
Graphic Designer / Publications Officer

Ms Melissa FORD
Secretary

Ms Eugenia GENTILE
Finance / Human Resources Coordinator

Dr Gérardine GOH ESCOLAR
Deputy Secretary General

Mr Ignacio GOICOECHEA
Representative (ROLAC)

Mr Stuart HAWKINS
Website / IT Officer

Ms Nietta KEANE
Assistant Legal Officer

Ms Anna KOELEWIJN
Head of Administration

Mr Philippe LORTIE
First Secretary

Mr Thomas MACHUELLE
Translator / Reviser

Ms Laura MARTÍNEZ-MORA
Secretary

Ms Laura MOLENAAR
Administrative Officer

Ms Alix NG
Office Manager (ROAP)

Ms Capucine PAGE
Legal Officer

Ms Sophie PINEAU
Personal Assistant to the Secretary General

Ms Mathilde PRÉNAS
Senior Administrative Assistant

Dr João RIBEIRO-BIDAOU
First Secretary (until May 2022)

Ms Raquel SALINAS PEIXOTO
Legal Officer

Ms Nicole SIMS
Legal Officer (until July 2022)

Ms Sabrina STUCKEN
Administrative Assistant

Ms Giulia VALENTINI
Project / Communications Assistant

Mr Willem VAN DER ENDT
General Services Officer

Mr Brody WARREN
Attaché to the Secretary General / Senior Legal Officer (until October 2022)

Ms Ana ZANETTIN
Translator / Reviser / Administrative Assistant

Dr Ning ZHAO
Principal Legal Officer

Prof Yun ZHAO
Representative (ROAP)

Consultants / Contractors to the HCCH

Consultants / Contractors supporting Non-Normative Work

Ms Eda AGUILAR SAMANAMUD
Intercountry Adoption Technical Assistance Programme

Ms Christina BAGLIETTO
Intercountry Adoption Technical Assistance Programme

Ms Cécile JEANNIN
Intercountry Adoption Technical Assistance Programme

Mr Nigel LOWE
Statistical Survey on 1980 Child Abduction Convention

Ms Victoria STEPHENS
INCADAT Project / Statistical Survey on 1980 Child Abduction Convention

Consultants / Contractors supporting Governance & Operations

Ms Madelief ALSERDA
Library Assistant

Ms Helene GUERIN
Publications

Mr Willem-Paul HERBER
Accountant

Secondments to the Permanent Bureau

Mr Song (Levi) GAO
Lawyer, seconded to the Permanent Bureau (ROAP) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

Ms Myriam de HEMPTINNE
Judge, seconded to the Permanent Bureau (The Hague) from the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Belgium

Ms Melissa KIANG
Assistant Principal Government Counsel, seconded to the Permanent Bureau (The Hague) from the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong SAR (People's Republic of China) (from November 2022 until November 2023)

Ms Haemin LEE
Judge, seconded to the Permanent Bureau (The Hague) from the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea (from September 2021 until August 2022)

Ms Seyoung PARK
Judge, seconded to the Permanent Bureau (The Hague) from the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea (from August 2022 until August 2023)

Ms Beryl WU
Associate, seconded to the Permanent Bureau (The Hague) from Addleshaw Gofdard LLP (from February 2022 until August 2022)

Mr Eric YUEN
Senior Government Counsel (Acting), seconded to the Permanent Bureau (The Hague) from the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong SAR (People's Republic of China) (from September 2021 until March 2022)

iSupport

Mr Jean-Marc PELLET
iSupport Coordinator

Interns

In 2022, the Permanent Bureau had the pleasure of welcoming 36 interns from over 18 different States at its headquarters in The Hague, at its Regional Offices, or online.

**Head Office
The Hague, The Netherlands**

- Ms Francesca ALBI (Italy)

Ms Zulaika ARAPBAEVA (Kyrgyzstan)

Ms Huyen (Joyce) DO (Viet Nam)

Mr Mohammed Mjed KABRY (Syria)

Mr Ilia LASIN (Bulgaria)

Ms Cara MAINES (United States of America)

Ms Prakriti MALLA (Nepal)

Mr Emmanuel OHWAGUONO (Nigeria)
- Ms Sara PESKO (Canada)

Ms Sibongile QOTO (Zimbabwe)

Ms Theodora RIZOU (Greece)

Ms Paola SALOMONE (Italy)

Ms Joanna SKRZYPEK (Poland)

Ms Rachel VAN DER VEEN (Australia)

Mr Jaime VÁZQUEZ GARCÍA (Spain)

Ms Deannie YAP (Singapore)

**Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC)
Buenos Aires, Argentina**

- Ms Iara BOREAN (Argentina)

Ms Sabrina BRUNO GALELLI (Argentina)

Ms Mijal CANNIZZARO AZUBEL (Argentina)

Ms Johanna Nazareth CARO (Argentina)

Ms María Victoria COLOMBO RODRÍGUEZ (Argentina)

Ms Sofía EMBON (Argentina)

Ms Marinela FORCELLATI (Argentina)
- Ms Valentina GARRAFFO (Argentina)

Mr Juan Martín LLORET (Ecuador)

Ms Laura MALOMO MENELLE (Argentina)

Mr Matías Ezequiel MARINI (Argentina)

Ms Valentina MARTÍNEZ CABRERO (Argentina)

Ms Julieta ROEL (Argentina)

Ms Brenda TIVIROLI (Argentina)

Ms Martina TRAVESO (Argentina)

**Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP)
Hong Kong SAR, People's Republic of China**

- Ms HUANG Peiqi (People's Republic of China)

Ms SUN Peirui (People's Republic of China)

Ms WANG Zifei (People's Republic of China)
- Ms YU Yue (People's Republic of China)

Ms ZHOU Yunjingyi (People's Republic of China)

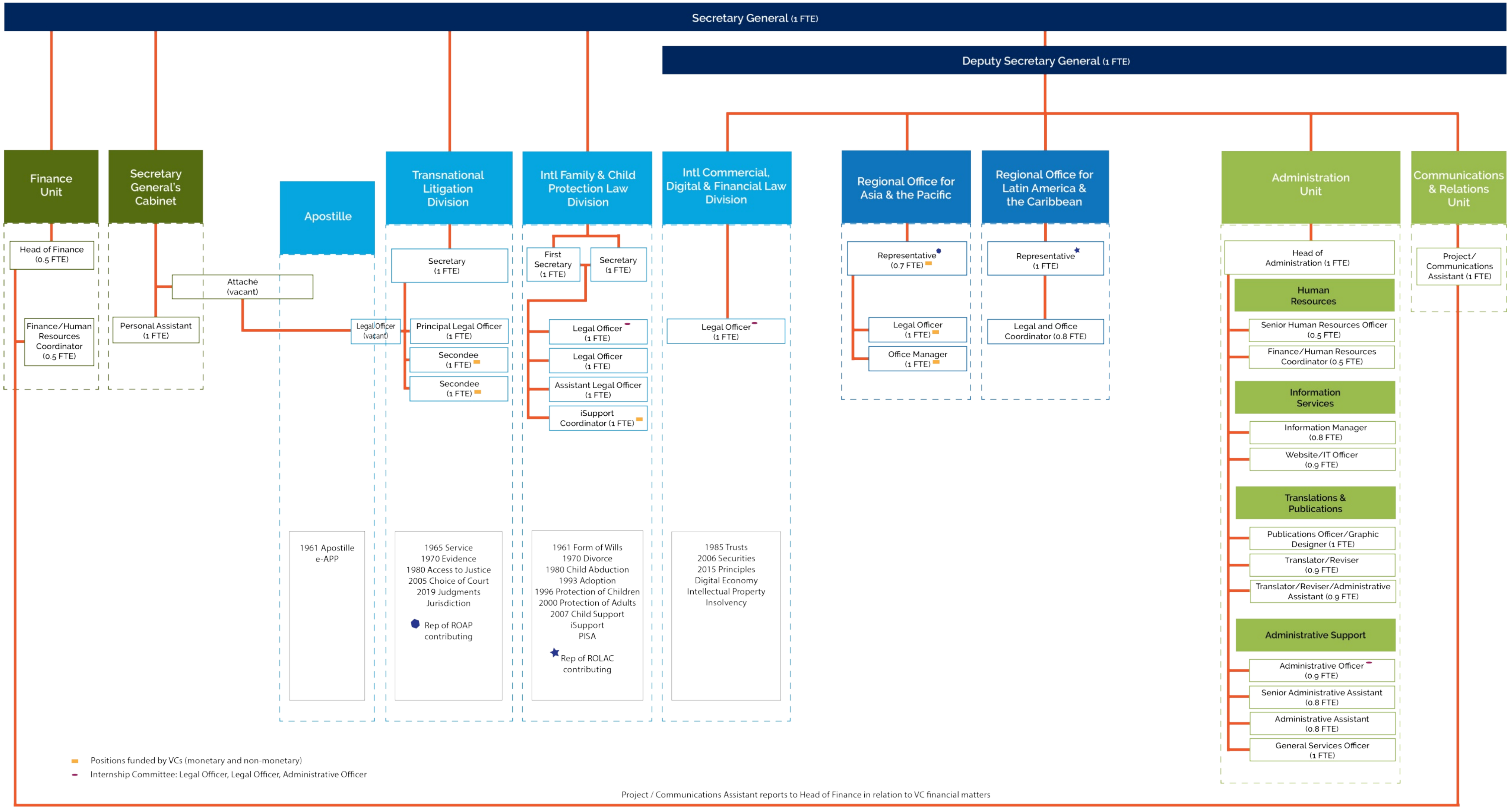


HCCH staff (July 2019)



HCCH interns (November 2022)

Organisational Chart



International Hague Network of Judges (IHNJ)

The IHNJ, specialising in the cross-border protection of children, has continued to expand over the year. At the time of writing, the IHNJ comprised 149 judges from 88 States across all regions of the world. The IHNJ convened virtually in both January and December, providing the opportunity for participating judges to exchange information on key developments within their respective jurisdiction in relation to the HCCH Children's Conventions. In 2023 the IHNJ will celebrate its 25th anniversary and gather in person for the first time in five years during the course of the Eighth Meeting of the SC on the 1980 Child Abduction and 1996 Child Protection Conventions.

1993 Adoption Convention

New Contracting Parties

In November, Botswana acceded to the 1993 Adoption Convention, expected to enter into force in March 2023. With the accession of Botswana, the Convention now has 105 Contracting Parties

The 1993 Adoption Convention provides safeguards to ensure that intercountry adoptions take place in the best interests of the child and with respect for their fundamental rights.

SC on the 1993 Adoption Convention

The Fifth Meeting of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 1993 Adoption Convention was held online in July 2022. The meeting resulted in the adoption of over 50 Conclusions & Recommendations, providing guidance to Contracting Parties on a wide range of issues relating to the implementation and practical operation of this Convention. Post-adoption matters featured prominently in the discussions, resulting in several recommendations to Contracting Parties aimed at developing specialised and quality post-adoption services, including in the search for origins. Intrafamily adoptions and alternatives to full adoption, such as simple and open adoptions, were also discussed. The SC also approved, in principle, draft Recommended Model Forms for use under the 1993 Adoption Convention and a draft *Toolkit for Preventing and Addressing Illicit Practices in Intercountry Adoption*, subject to certain amendments, to be submitted to CGAP in 2023 for final approval and publication.



Ms Carine Rosalia (United States of America), co-Chair of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 1993 Adoption Convention



Ms Karabo Ozah (South Africa), co-Chair of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 1993 Adoption Convention

Intercountry Adoption Technical Assistance Programme (ICATAP)

As in previous years, the Permanent Bureau continued to receive requests from Contracting Parties for the provision of tailored post-Convention assistance, with the generous support of the Norwegian Government. Notably, the Permanent Bureau, with the assistance of consultants, provided further technical assistance to Paraguay, resulting in the provision of comments on the newly adopted legislation, the development of an operational guide on the administrative procedure for adoption, and advice aimed at improving the operation of its Central Authority.

2000 Protection of Adults Convention

New Contracting Parties

In July, Greece ratified the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention, which then entered into force in November. With this ratification, the Convention now has 14 Contracting Parties. Later in the year, in November, participants of the SC meeting witnessed Malta's signature of the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention, which will enter into force for Malta following the deposit of its instrument of ratification.

New Tools to Assist with the Implementation of the Convention

The 2000 Protection of Adults Convention applies to the protection of adults in international situations who, by reason of an impairment or insufficiency of their personal faculties, are not in a position to protect their interests.

The Working Group (WG) established in March 2021 to finalise the development of a draft *Practical Handbook on the Operation of the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention* met extensively throughout 2021 and 2022. The draft Practical Handbook was circulated for consultation among HCCH Members and Contracting Parties to the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention twice; once in February

and again in July. Once published, the Practical Handbook will provide guidance on the scope of the Convention and factors to be considered in the process of its implementation, including rules of jurisdiction, the law applicable to measures of protection and powers of representation, recognition, and enforcement as well as judicial and administrative cooperation.

In parallel to the Practical Handbook, the WG developed a draft *Implementation Checklist under the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention*, a tool highlighting implementation issues which may need to be considered by current and prospective Contracting Parties, as well as a draft Country Profile under the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention, a tool for Contracting Parties to provide information regarding their domestic laws in the area and their implementation of the Convention.

Draft versions of the Practical Handbook, Implementation Checklist, and Country Profile were discussed by the SC on the Practical Operation of the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention.



Mr Geraldo Rocha Ribeiro (Portugal), Chair of the WG on the Practical Handbook under the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention

SC on the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention

The First Meeting of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention was held in hybrid format in November.

The meeting resulted in the adoption of over 70 Conclusions & Recommendations, providing guidance to (prospective) Contracting Parties on a wide range of issues relating to the implementation and practical operation of this Convention. The topics discussed included habitual residence, *ex lege* representation, instructions given and wishes made by an adult in anticipation of a future impairment, issues of recognition and enforcement, Central Authority cooperation, the use of existing recommended Model Forms, direct judicial communications, and possible amendments to the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention.

The draft Practical Handbook, Implementation Checklist, and Country Profile were approved, in principle, by the SC, subject to certain amendments in consultation with the WG and a further circulation to HCCH Members, to be submitted to CGAP for final approval and publication.

The SC confirmed that, in general, the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention is operating smoothly and is fit for purpose, while stressing the importance of seeing more States become Parties to the Convention.



Ms Tania Jewczuk (France),
Chair of the SC on the Practical
Operation of the
2000 Protection of Adults
Convention



First Meeting of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention

2007 Child Support Convention and
2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol

New Contracting Parties

The 2007 Child Support Convention and 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol seek to establish a modern, efficient, and accessible international system for the cross-border recovery of child support and other forms of family maintenance.

The 2007 Child Support Convention and 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol attracted interest from new Contracting Parties throughout the year. The Philippines signed the Convention in February, ratified it in June, and witnessed its entry into force in October. In March, Ecuador signed and then ratified both the Convention and the Protocol, with their entry into force occurring in July. In August, Ukraine ratified the Protocol, which entered into force in December. Finally, in

November, Botswana acceded to the Convention, expected to enter into force in November 2023. With these accessions and ratifications, the 2007 Child Support Convention now has 46 Contracting Parties, while the 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol now has 32 Contracting Parties.

Experts' Group (EG) on the International Transfer of Maintenance Funds

The EG on the International Transfer of Maintenance Funds was established in March 2019 in light of persisting challenges to the smooth cross-border transfer of child support payments, such as high transfer costs and other difficulties of an organisational nature. The EG held its third meeting in February, completing the development of its final report in which it recommended, among other good practices and possible future improvements, the elimination of the use of cheques in the international transfer of maintenance funds, the use of automation to expedite and reduce the costs of bundled and single payments, the promotion of transparency of currency conversion costs, and the systematic monitoring of payments by Central Authorities or other entities.



Dr Sarah Gerling-Stock
(Germany), co-Chair of the EG
on the International Transfer of
Maintenance Funds



Mr Arnaldo José Alves Silveira
(Brazil), co-Chair of the EG on
the International Transfer of
Maintenance Funds

SC on the 2007 Child Support Convention and 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol

The First Meeting of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 2007 Child Support Convention and 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol was held in hybrid format in May.

The meeting resulted in the adoption of over 80 Conclusions & Recommendations, providing guidance to (prospective) Contracting Parties on a wide range of issues relating to the implementation and practical operation of these instruments. Delegates confirmed that these instruments are fit for purpose and discussed, among other things, effective access to procedures, the child's right to child support taking precedence over the debtor's right to privacy in financial matters, the establishment of child support without necessarily establishing parentage, recognition and enforcement issues, and exchanged experiences on the installation and use of iSupport.

The SC adopted the final report of the EG on the International Transfer of Maintenance Funds, highlighting that its contents are to be construed as examples of good practices. It also reviewed progress made by various WGs in previous years, adopting the "standard report" and "voluntary / optional report" for the collection of statistics developed by the Administrative Cooperation WG on the 2007 Child Support Convention; the Request for Specific Measures and Response forms developed by the Forms WG; and the report of the Applicable Law WG on the 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol.



Ms Floor de Jongh Bekkali (Norway), Chair of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 2007 Child Support Convention and 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol

iSupport

Throughout the year, the Permanent Bureau continued to work on the maintenance and improvement of iSupport, the electronic case management and secure communication system for the cross-border recovery of maintenance obligations under the EU 2009 Maintenance Regulation and the 2007 Child Support Convention, as well as other international and bilateral instruments. New versions of the software were released in March, featuring an updated interface, and in November, providing for the generation of the statistical report under the 2007 Child Support Convention and an updated EU Regulation report. A new EU-funded project, iSupport ITMF, started in September, with the aim of implementing links between iSupport and bank accounts held by Central Authorities to facilitate the international transfer of maintenance funds.



Mr Paulo Jorge Gomes Gonçalves (Portugal), Chair of the iSupport Governing Body

Parentage / Surrogacy Project



Ms Joelle Schickel-Küng (Switzerland), Chair of the EG on Parentage / Surrogacy

Established in 2015, the EG on Parentage / Surrogacy has lately been focusing on determining the feasibility of the core aspects of possible options for two separate binding legal instruments on legal parentage: one on legal parentage in general (a Convention), and another on legal parentage established as a result of an international surrogacy arrangement (ISA) specifically (a Protocol). The EG worked with the understanding that the aim of any new instrument would be to provide greater predictability, certainty and continuity of legal parentage in international situations for all persons concerned, taking into account their human rights, including, for children, those enshrined in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and in particular their right that their best interests be a primary consideration in all actions taken concerning them.

The EG met twice this year, in April and October, completing its final report. While the EG concluded on the general feasibility of developing a Convention dealing with the recognition by operation of law of foreign judicial decisions on the establishment and contestation of legal parentage and of rules on recognition by operation of law of legal parentage as a result of an ISA established by judicial decision in a Protocol, the EG also identified key feasibility challenges, including scope issues as well as the way to address safeguards / standards in a Protocol. Its final report has been submitted for consideration by CGAP at its 2023 meeting, where CGAP will make a decision as to possible future work on the Parentage / Surrogacy Project.



First Meeting of the SC on the Practical Operation of the 2007 Child Support Convention and 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol



Meeting of the EG on Parentage / Surrogacy (October)

Other Post-Convention Work: Seminars, Conferences, and Trainings

In its continued cooperation with the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), the Permanent Bureau hosted a group of European judges, prosecutors and court officials for a study visit at its premises on 29 and 30 September. At that opportunity, the Permanent Bureau offered training on various HCCH children's and family law Conventions, including the 1980 Child Abduction, 1993 Adoption, 1996 Child Protection and 2000 Protection of Adults Conventions.

In addition, members of the Permanent Bureau participated actively as speakers in various other international events discussing the operation of these Conventions, including in the continuation of the series of training seminars on the 1980 Child Abduction Convention organised by the German Foundation for International Legal Cooperation (IRZ) and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the workshops organised by the Brazilian National Council of Justice (CNJ) to Brazilian Federal Judges. The Permanent Bureau has also participated in and co-organised events with academics, such as the International Seminar on the 1996 Child Protection Convention with the Istanbul Bilgi University in Türkiye, and workshops with students from Kyushu University in Japan on the HCCH Children's Conventions.

In the case of the 1993 Adoption Convention, members of the Permanent Bureau participated in conferences organised by the French and Italian Central Authorities, by EurAdopt, and by Child Identity Protection (CHIP). The 2000 Protection of Adults Convention was promoted by the Permanent Bureau on the occasion of webinars organised by the European Law Institute, the 32nd Conference of European Civil-Law Notaries, a Colloquium organised by the French Presidency of the European Union on "Professionals facing the issues of European and international protection of vulnerable adults", and a Workshop on the Cross-border Protection of Vulnerable Adults hosted by the Czech Republic Presidency of the European Union.

Finally, regarding the Parentage / Surrogacy Project, the Permanent Bureau participated in events organised by the European Parliament and the International Commission on Civil Status.

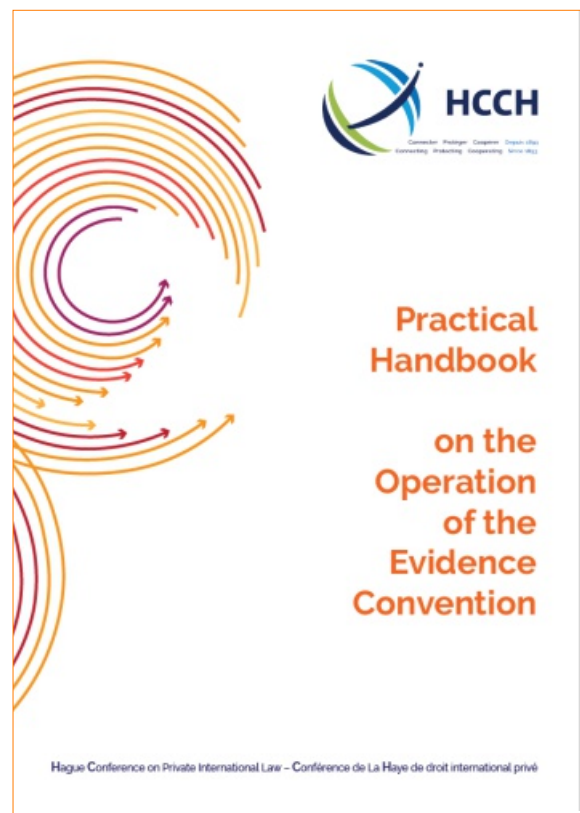


Ms Raquel Salinas Peixoto, HCCH Legal Officer, at a workshop organised by the Brazilian National Council of Justice



Dr Christophe Bernasconi, HCCH Secretary General, at a training seminar organised by the IRZ and the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan

Fifth Editions of the Service and Evidence Handbooks



The Permanent Bureau has commenced updating the *Practical Handbook on the Operation of the Service Convention* and the *Practical Handbook on the Operation of the Evidence Convention* with a view to releasing their fifth editions. The updated Evidence Handbook will incorporate the text of the *Guide to Good Practice on the Use of Video-Link*, which was published in 2020, so that practical information for the 1970 Evidence Convention is contained in a single Handbook.

The 1980 Access to Justice Convention ensures that nationals or habitual residents of a Contracting Party to the Convention have access to justice within all the Contracting Parties to the Convention on a non-discriminatory basis.

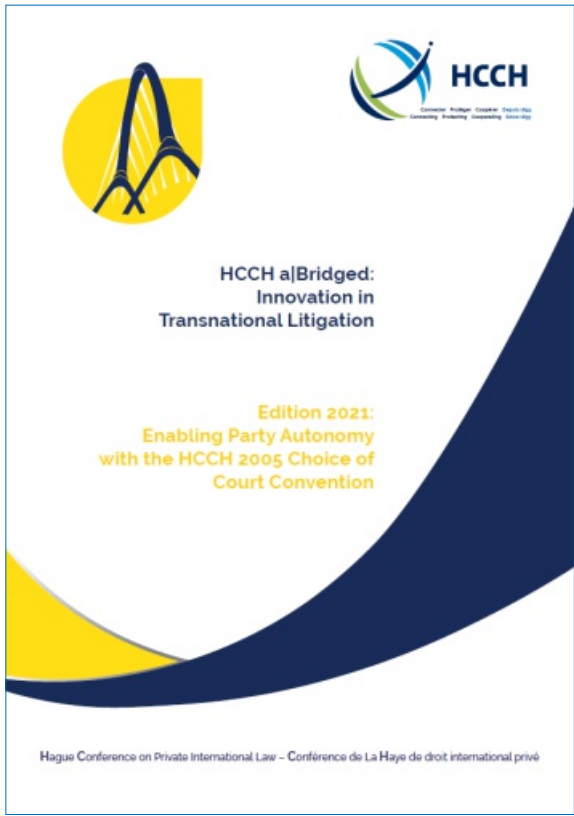
2005 Choice of Court Convention

The 2005 Choice of Court Convention aims at ensuring the effectiveness of choice of court agreements, or "forum selection clauses", between parties to international commercial transactions.

HCCH a|Bridged – Edition 2021: Post-Event Publication

In March, the Permanent Bureau published the post-event publication of HCCH a|Bridged – Edition 2021, an online event dedicated to contemporary issues relating to the application of the 2005 Choice of Court Convention, including the promotion of party autonomy.

The post-event publication contains written contributions from the event's speakers and summarises the outcomes of the event's sessions. These sessions included a keynote speech by Professor Trevor Hartley, one of the co-authors of the *Explanatory Report on the 2005 Choice of Court Convention*, as well as two panel discussions. The first panel, composed of judges from both civil and common law jurisdictions, focused on policy discussions on the benefits of joining the Convention for States, and the second panel, composed of lawyers and academics from Latin America and the Caribbean, discussed the benefits of the Convention to business and, by extension, practitioners.



The 2019 Judgments Convention facilitates the effective global circulation of judgments in civil or commercial matters.

2019 Judgments Convention

New Contracting Parties and Upcoming Entry into Force on 1 September 2023

In August, the European Union deposited its instrument of accession to the 2019 Judgments Convention, becoming its first Contracting Party. With this accession, all EU Member States (except Denmark) will be bound by the Convention. On the same day, Ukraine deposited its instrument of ratification, becoming the second Contracting Party to the Convention.

As a result of these accessions, and in accordance with Article 28(1) of the Convention, the 2019 Judgments Convention will enter into force on 1 September 2023 – just slightly over four years after its adoption on 2 July 2019.



The EU and Ukraine become Contracting Parties to the 2019 Judgments Convention

Increasing Awareness of the Convention

In preparation for its imminent entry into force, in 2022 the Permanent Bureau continued to promote the 2019 Judgments Convention and ensure its effective implementation and operation through a variety of different activities. An example of these efforts are the activities organised within the framework of the Permanent Bureau's ongoing partnership with the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), which is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and by the Center for International Legal Cooperation (CILC), which in turn is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This partnership, which aims to assist States in South East Europe (SEE) in the promotion of the 2019 Judgments Convention, has resulted in the organisation of six online seminars on the cross-border enforcement of foreign judgments in SEE, the publication of the book "Cross-border Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judicial Decisions in SEE and Perspectives of HCCH 2019 Judgments Convention", and the translation of the *Explanatory Report on the 2019 Judgments Convention* into Albanian, Macedonian and Bosnian-Serbian-Montenegrin.

The text of the 2019 Judgments Convention has also been translated into several languages, and is now also available in Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian-Serbian-Montenegrin, all EU languages, Macedonian, Russian and Ukrainian.

Jurisdiction Project



Prof Keisuke Takeshita (Japan),
Chair of the WG on Matters
Related to Jurisdiction in
Transnational Civil or
Commercial Litigation

The Jurisdiction Project forms part of the original Judgments Project, which has been an important focus of the HCCH's normative work aimed at addressing two key aspects of PIL in transnational civil or commercial litigation: the international jurisdiction of courts and the recognition and enforcement of foreign judgments. Under the auspices of the Judgments Project, the HCCH successfully negotiated and concluded the 2005 Choice of Court Convention and the 2019 Judgments Convention.

The HCCH now continues to explore matters related to the jurisdiction of courts in transnational civil or commercial litigation, including how harmonised rules in transnational litigation can reduce the risk of parallel litigation in multiple States.

The WG on Matters Relating to Jurisdiction in Transnational Civil or Commercial Litigation, established in 2021 and chaired by Professor Keisuke Takeshita (Japan), met twice this year, in February and

September. Pursuant to its mandate, the WG made progress on the development of draft provisions on parallel litigation in civil or commercial matters, which may occur when separate proceedings are instituted before the courts of different States. The draft provisions and other material produced and discussed by the WG will inform future considerations and decisions in relation to the type and scope of a possible new instrument regulating these matters. The WG will meet again in February 2023 and report to CGAP at its March 2023 meeting.

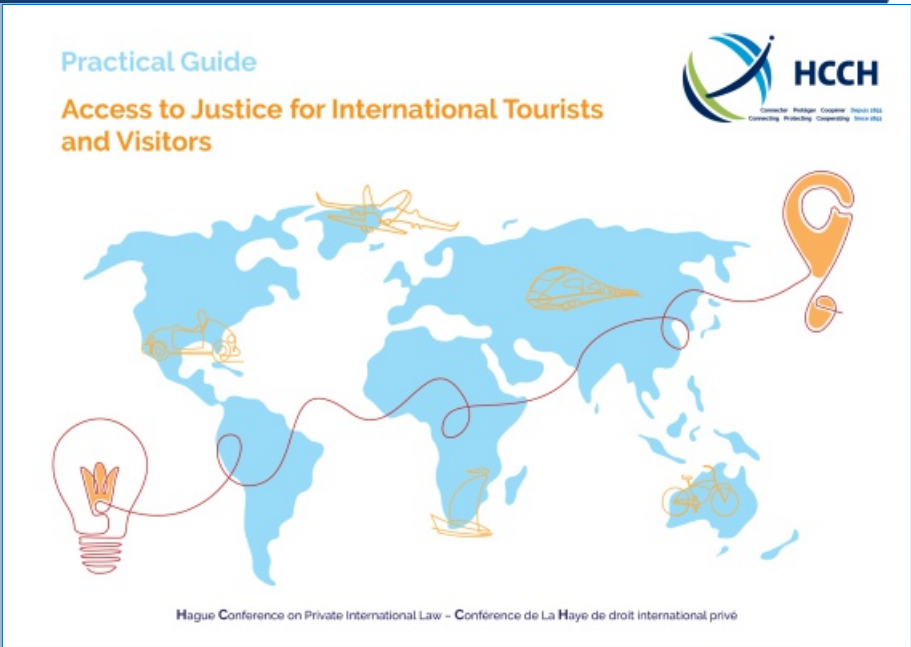


Meeting of the WG on Jurisdiction (September)

Tourists and Visitors (ODR) Project

The Tourists and Visitors (ODR) Project sought to explore whether PIL can contribute to ensure the protection and adequate access to justice for international tourists and visitors. To this end, the EG on the Tourists and Visitors (ODR) Project met three times between 2018 and 2020, coming to a conclusion in 2021 with the presentation of its final report to CGAP, which recommended the development of a guide aimed at international tourists and visitors.

In March, CGAP approved the *Practical Guide to Access to Justice for International Tourists and Visitors*, subject to editorial amendments, for publication on the HCCH website. Developed by the EG, the Practical Guide is intended to assist international tourists and visitors to foreign countries seeking access to justice for disputes arising from their tourism experience. The Practical Guide provides information on online dispute resolution mechanisms that may be available and HCCH instruments that may be relevant in some cases. It will be published on the HCCH website in early 2023.



Other Post-Convention Work: Seminars, Conferences, and Trainings

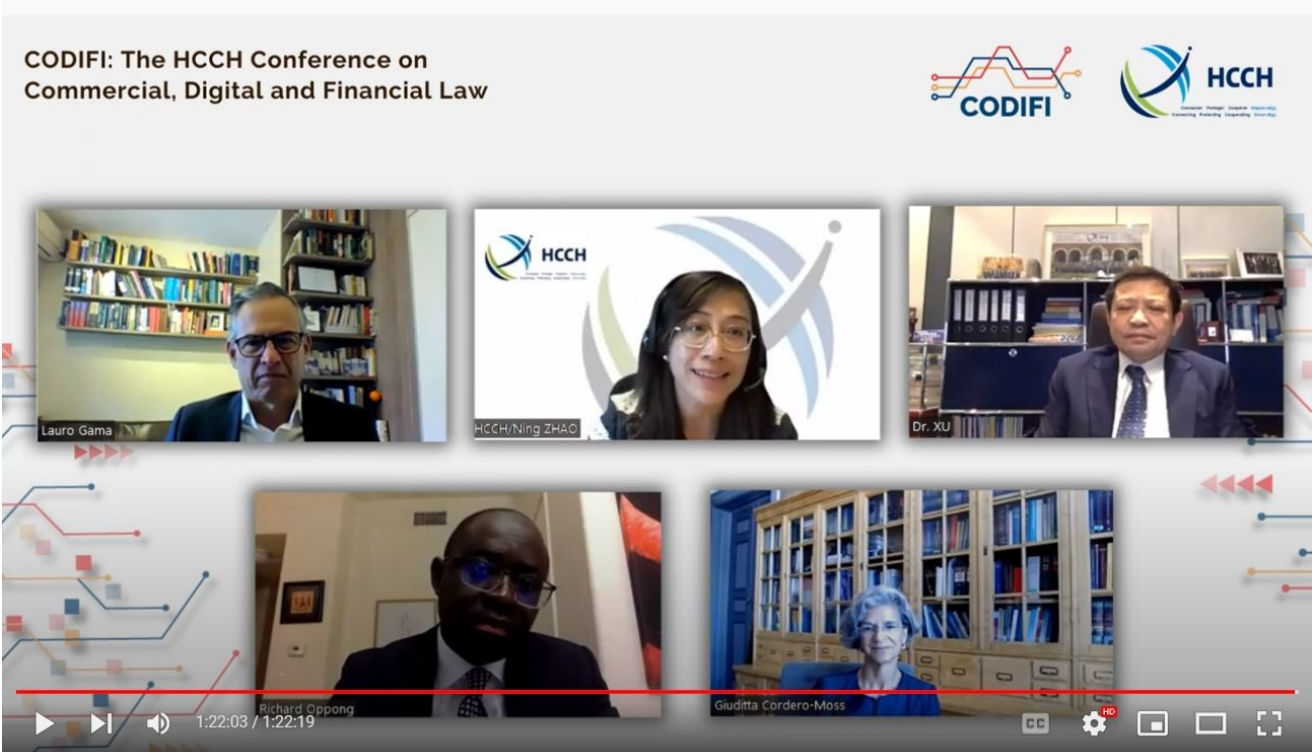
The Permanent Bureau endeavours to provide post-Convention work for the Transnational Litigation and 1961 Apostille Conventions as a package and, depending on the needs of the stakeholders involved, they are also promoted jointly or individually. For example, in 2022 the Permanent Bureau and the Asian Business Law Institute (ABLI) co-organised an online webinar on the topic "Cross-border Commercial Dispute Resolution – HCCH 2005 Choice of Court and 2019 Judgments Conventions", building upon the success of the joint HCCH-ABLI webinar organised in 2021 on the 1970 Evidence Convention. The Permanent Bureau also supported and participated in the "Conference on Conflicts of Jurisdiction" co-organised by the Journal of Private International Law and the Singapore Management University. Together with GIZ and CILC, with the support of the International Union of Judicial Officers (UIHJ), a high-level Regional Forum "HCCH 2019 Judgments Convention: Prospects for the Western Balkans" was organised in Skopje, North Macedonia. The Forum was attended by representatives of Ministries of Justice, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, judicial training institutions, chambers of enforcement agents, as well as by legal experts, from jurisdictions across the Western Balkan region. A promotional video of the Forum was produced and has been circulated via a number of social media channels.



Dr Christophe Bernasconi, HCCH Secretary General, at the
Regional Forum "HCCH 2019 Judgments Convention: Prospects
for the Western Balkans"

Observations from the CODIFI Conference

- The digital economy gives rise to a number of PIL questions which may benefit from potential future work, including on issues of jurisdiction, applicable law, choice of forum, party autonomy, recognition and enforcement, and international cooperation mechanisms.
- The concept of *situs* currently poses challenges for a PIL framework concerning digital assets, because it can be technically and legally difficult to identify a location where assets are located. In addition, the pseudonymity of users and the immaterial nature of digital assets increase the difficulty of identifying useful connecting factors.



Panel on the Role of the HCCH Principles in International Commercial Dispute Resolution (HCCH CODIFI Conference)

- From a PIL perspective, the current use and approach to digital assets have unique design characteristics that strain the application of traditional connecting factors. It is possible, however, that further developments will require reconsideration of this assumption. Examples include digital assets linked to securities, social, community and reputation tokens, and other linked assets, where there may be some degree of identification of the parties to the transactions so that the issuer may identify the shareholders of the asset.
- In addition to the core challenge of identifying an applicable law and jurisdiction concerning DLT assets, systems, and transactions, insolvency of DLT platforms and asset holders raise other challenges with cross-border dimensions - for example, third-party effects of insolvency of digital asset service providers and the characterisation of digital assets as property for purposes of an insolvency proceeding.



Tripartite Opening Session: Heads of HCCH, UNCITRAL, and UNIDROIT (HCCH CODIFI Conference)



Digital Economy: Concurrent Design Facility (HCCH CODIFI Conference)

- Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) and Decentralised Autonomous Organisations (DAOs) give rise to additional PIL questions, including, for CBDCs, the recognition and enforcement of judgments in CBDC systems, jurisdiction in relation to intermediaries, and interoperability with existing financial systems, and for DAOs, whether regulated DAOs can be recognised in other States, whether maverick DAOs have a legal existence in State jurisdictions, and what law could be applicable to a maverick DAO.
- The 2015 Principles could be relevant to the growth of the digital economy. Clarity on choice of law would be crucial in the digital context, as the parties' choice would be an important consideration when circumstances could make it difficult to localise contracts in one State.
- The 2006 Securities Convention has benefits for both States and financial institutions, including greater certainty in bankruptcy or insolvency of a counterparty and enabled usage of diverse financial strategies and collateral arrangements. It may have a role to play within the world of DLT, blockchain, and tokenisation, and may be relevant to solving applicable law and jurisdictional questions with the holding and exchange of CBDCs.
- The 1985 Trusts Convention remains especially relevant for jurisdictions without a framework for the institution of trusts. Since its conclusion, institutions analogous to trusts have increasingly developed in civil law jurisdictions, and more recently, in Islamic legal traditions, and in the form of DAOs.

Outreach & Institutional Cooperation

Cooperation with the **European Union** on iSupport, the electronic case management and secure communication system for the cross-border recovery of maintenance obligations under the EU 2009 Maintenance Regulation and the 2007 Child Support Convention; on the development or modernisation of e-Country Profiles for several HCCH Conventions; as well as on the translation of key HCCH publications into EU languages.



Long-term cooperation with the **International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)** and the **UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)**, sister organisations of the HCCH, on a wide range of cross-cutting issues.

Cooperation with the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** on the intersection between private international law and intellectual property law.



Cooperation with the **Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO)**, including on the organisation of a joint webinar on the topic "The HCCH & the Apostille Convention: Exploring the Benefits for AALCO Members".

Cooperation with the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, including through participation in the ASEAN Law Forum 2022.



Cooperation with the **Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs, Supreme Court** and **Judicial Academy**, as well as with the **College of Law of the University of the Philippines**, in the organisation of HCCH Asia Pacific Week 2022.

Cooperation with the **Asian Business Law Institute (ABLI)**, including on the organisation of a joint webinar on the topic "Cross-border Commercial Dispute Resolution – HCCH 2005 Choice of Court and 2019 Judgments Conventions".



Cooperation with the **Journal of Private International Law** and the **Singapore Management University** in the organisation of the Conference on Conflicts of Jurisdiction.



Participation in the **Just Peace Month**, organised by the Municipality of The Hague and the Hague Humanity Hub, including through the organisation of the HCCH Open Day as well as participation in the Just Peace Month's Career and Talent Event and Walking Tour, all open to the general public.

Cooperation with the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)** in the organisation of the "Regional Forum - HCCH 2019 Judgments Convention: Prospects for the Western Balkans".



Cooperation with the **International Union of Judicial Officers (UIHJ)** on the promotion of the 1965 Service Convention, and participation in the celebration of its 70th anniversary.

Cooperation with the **Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)** towards strengthening the use of the French language at the HCCH.



Cooperation with the **Asociación Americana de Derecho Internacional Privado (ASADIP)**, including through participation in ASADIP's Annual Conference and Meeting of International Forums on Private International Law.

Cooperation with the **Organization of American States (OAS)'s Department of International Law** in the organisation of a Joint Meeting with Legal Advisors on PIL from OAS Member States to present for discussion and feedback ongoing work in this field by the Inter-American Juridical Committee (CJI) and the HCCH.



Cooperation with the **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**, among other, through participation in the Legal Affairs Committee presenting the four HCCH Children's Conventions to Attorney Generals of CARICOM Members.

Cooperation with **UNICEF** on family law and child protection matters falling within the scope of the 1996 Child Protection Convention.



Cooperation with the **Central American Integration System (SICA)** in the areas of international legal cooperation and integration, resulting, among others, in the conclusion of a Cooperation Agreement between the two organisations.

Cooperation with the **International Development Law Organization (IDLO)**, resulting, among others, in the conclusion of a Cooperation Agreement between the two organisations and preparations for joint promotional activities in 2023.



Regional Outreach

As an intergovernmental organisation of universal nature, the HCCH seeks to include all regions of the world in its normative and non-normative work. Its Regional Offices – the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) and the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) – have proven essential in this regard, strengthening dialogue with their respective regions and providing post-Convention services tailored to regional needs. This section features a selection of ROAP and ROLAC's many highlights of 2022.

10th Anniversary of ROAP

ROAP celebrated its 10th anniversary on 13 December 2022, an important milestone for the youngest of the two HCCH Regional Offices.

ROAP officially opened its doors in the Hong Kong SAR on 13 December 2012. On this date, the HCCH signed its Host Country Agreement with the Government of the People's Republic of China, which since then has generously supported ROAP's operations through multiple voluntary contributions.

Shortly after the opening, in April 2013, Professor Anselmo Reyes assumed the role of Representative for Asia and the Pacific, taking over the mantle from the Honourable Justice Michael J. Hartmann. Professor Reyes was succeeded in this position by Mr Frank Poon, who served as Representative from August 2017 to July 2020. Since then, ROAP has been headed by Professor Yun Zhao, Representative for Asia and the Pacific, currently supported by Mr Levi Gao, seconded Legal Officer, and by Ms Alix Ng, Office Manager.

In celebration of its 10th anniversary, in November ROAP hosted the workshop "HCCH Conventions Supporting Transnational Litigation in Civil or Commercial Matters", held during Hong Kong Legal Week 2022 in partnership with the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong SAR.

Briefly after the workshop, the Government of the People's Republic of China expressed its intention to renew its financial support for ROAP's operations for a further three years, until 2026.

With this renewed support, ROAP will continue to play a vital role in strengthening the HCCH's inclusiveness and increasing the HCCH's visibility, capability, and relevance within the region for years to come.



Left to right: Mr Levi Gao, ROAP Legal Officer (on secondment), Prof Yun Zhao, ROAP Representative, Dr Christophe Bernasconi, HCCH Secretary General, and Ms Alix Ng, ROAP Office Manager



ROAP workshop "HCCH Conventions Supporting Transnational Litigation in Civil or Commercial Matters"



HCCH Asia Pacific Week

This year featured the long-awaited return of HCCH Asia Pacific Week, hosted by the Government of the Philippines from 18 to 20 October in Manila. Its previous edition, hosted by the Republic of Korea, had been held five years prior, in 2017.

HCCH Asia Pacific Week 2022 explored a wide variety of contemporary experiences and perspectives from across Asia and the Pacific on some of the most prominent HCCH Conventions and instruments, as well as on the HCCH's ongoing normative projects and possible future work. The conference was attended by over 450 participants, in person and online, representing government and judicial authorities, academic institutions, civil society and the private sector.

Following the opening ceremony, the first day of the conference featured an introductory session titled "The HCCH: Benefits of Membership & Key Conventions". The second day focused, in the morning, on the 1961 Apostille Convention and some of the HCCH's key transnational litigation instruments, and, in the afternoon, on key instruments in the area of international family and child protection law. Finally, the third day featured discussions on the 2015 Choice of Law Principles, the Jurisdiction Project, and the Digital Economy Project. There were 10 sessions in total, with speakers from Australia, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, the People's Republic of China, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, the United States of America, Viet Nam, and the HCCH.

In its Concluding Statement, the conference's participants encouraged all States, including throughout Asia and the Pacific, to join the HCCH as Members and to consider becoming Party to HCCH Conventions and Instruments, noting that robust legal frameworks contribute to fostering economic and social development, encouraging trade and investment, facilitating economic integration, and improving access to justice.



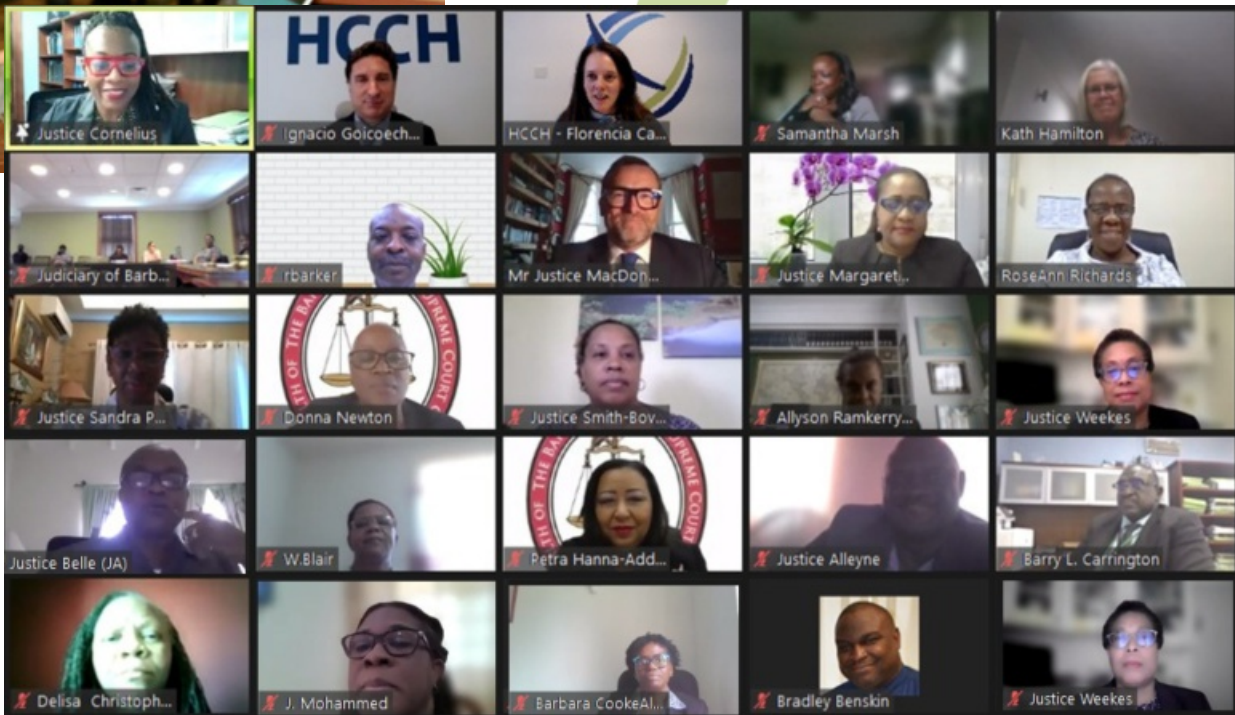
Judicial Trainings in Latin America and the Caribbean

To ensure that as many people as possible can enjoy the benefits of the HCCH Conventions and instruments, ROLAC dedicates significant time and resources towards promoting their correct, uniform interpretation and application across all Contracting Parties, as well as towards strengthening the systems for cross-border legal cooperation they establish. An important piece of this puzzle is its engagement with judiciaries across Latin America and the Caribbean, including through the provision of judicial trainings.

Seven judicial trainings were co-organised by ROLAC in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2022 at the request of Contracting Parties and with their close collaboration, covering, among others, the 1980 Child Abduction, 1996 Child Protection, and 2007 Child Support Conventions. The trainings were held, respectively, in Bolivia (June), Trinidad and Tobago (September), Honduras (October), Paraguay (October) and Ecuador (December), as well as online, in July (co-hosted by Jamaica) and September (co-hosted by Barbados), with the collective participation of over 800 judges and other civil servants from the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Bolivia, Curaçao, Ecuador, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Paraguay, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.



Judicial training on the 1980 Child Abduction Convention in Trinidad and Tobago



Judicial training on the 1980 Child Abduction and 1996 Protection of Children Conventions in Barbados

The participation of representatives from the IHNJ and from Central Authorities from across the world as moderators and/or presenters for each of the trainings further enriched the discussions, by providing insights on their practical experience with the operation of the HCCH Conventions and on the respective roles of the judiciary and Central Authorities. Participants agreed on the importance of working in close coordination with other jurisdictions in the region, including through their respective Central Authorities under these Conventions.

ROLAC's Engagement with the Academic Sector

ROLAC's ongoing engagement with academics from across Latin America and the Caribbean continues to be a mutually beneficial source of knowledge and inspiration.



Mr Ignacio Goicoechea, ROLAC Representative, and Ms Florencia Castro, ROLAC Legal and Office Coordinator

An excellent example is the Regional Office's collaboration with a team of PIL professors, young lawyers, and law students, coordinated by Professor Nieve Rubaja (University of Buenos Aires), on the expansion of INCADAT. In 2022, Professor Rubaja's team continued to prepare summaries of child abduction decisions from across the region, convening monthly meetings to discuss case law and specific topics of interpretation and application of the 1980 Child Abduction Convention. Their contributions have proven essential to ROLAC as it endeavours to ensure that INCADAT continues to provide users with extensive, up-to-date information, in multiple languages, on the application of the Convention across Latin America and the Caribbean. In this regard, the Permanent Bureau remains most grateful for the contributions of Professor Nieve Rubaja, Professor Emilia Gortari, and their team:

Sofia Aldana Ansalone, Mariano Miranda da Cruz, Romina Martín, Josefina Ordenavia, Natalia Belen Petz, Antonela Rojas, Martina Traverso, Daniela Agustina Vuchich, Valentina Romina Esperanza, and Catalina Comte.

Another important output of ROLAC's engagement with the academic sector has been the greater inclusion of Spanish speakers worldwide in the work of the HCCH, specifically through the translation into Spanish of HCCH publications, documents and other materials. Throughout the year, ROLAC worked closely with translation students from Belgrano University and the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina to ensure that key documents produced by the HCCH in English and French are also available in the Spanish language, including the Questionnaires for the SC on the 1965 Service, 1970 Evidence and 1980 Access to Justice Conventions, the Conclusions and Recommendations of the SC on the 2007 Child Support Convention, the HCCH Strategic Framework for Post-Convention Assistance, and over 140 INCADAT summaries. To further strengthen its translation internship programme, in 2022 ROLAC signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina.

Finally, in May and June ROLAC had the pleasure of organising two meetings of academic associations from the region involved in PIL, with the aim of ensuring greater coordination of their respective programmes of activities, as well as of partnering with the Torcuato Di Tella University in the organisation of a hybrid event aimed at raising awareness of the 2019 Judgments Convention in Latin America and the Caribbean.



Lecture at the Diplomatic Institute Doctor José Gustavo Herrero in El Salvador



HCCH - Permanent Bureau

6b, Churchillplein
2517 JW The Hague
The Netherlands

Tel.: +31 70 363 3303
Fax: +31 70 360 4867
e-mail: secretariat@hcch.net
Website: www.hcch.net

Author: HCCH

Copyright © 2023 HCCH

All rights reserved

Photo credits:

- Hester Dijkstra
- Adobe Stock
- Sicco van Grieken

ISBN 978-90-83248-17-2