

**Programme on Artificial Intelligence and the Law**  
**The University of Hong Kong**  
**“Enhancing Personal Data Protection in the Age of**  
**Artificial Intelligence”**

**Welcome Remarks by Ms Ada Chung**  
**The Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, Hong Kong,**  
**China**

Date: 10 January 2024 (Wednesday)

- 
1. Professor Shen (Professor Max Shen – Vice President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), HKU), Professor Fu (Professor Hualing Fu – Dean, Faculty of Law, HKU), Professor Sun (Professor Haochen Sun – Professor of Law, HKU), distinguished speakers, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.
  2. It gives me great pleasure to address you at this Conference on “Enhancing Personal Data Protection in the Age of Artificial Intelligence”.

3. First, I would like to thank the Programme on Artificial Intelligence and the Law of the Faculty of Law for organising this Conference. As we usher in the new year, the need to examine the complexity of AI from a data protection standpoint has become more important than ever, and it is gratifying to see an impressive line-up of esteemed speakers from academia, businesses, AI developers, AI users, and regulators gathering together to discuss and deliberate on personal data protection amid the unprecedented development of AI.

### **Development of AI and Privacy Risks**

4. 2023 has unfolded as a testament to the groundbreaking development of AI. Terms like “AI”,<sup>1</sup> “ChatGPT”<sup>2</sup>, “hallucinate”<sup>3</sup> were chosen as the words of the year.

5. Indeed, the past year has demonstrated AI’s rapid evolution and extensive reach. For example, ChatGPT reached 100

---

<sup>1</sup> Collins (2023), THE COLLINS WORD OF THE YEAR 2023 IS...: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/woty>

<sup>2</sup> The Economist (2023), Our word of the year for 2023: <https://www.economist.com/culture/2023/12/07/our-word-of-the-year-for-2023>

<sup>3</sup> Dictionary.com (2023), The Dictionary.com Word of the Year is hallucinate: <https://content.dictionary.com/word-of-the-year-2023/>; Cambridge Dictionary (2023), The Cambridge Dictionary Word of the Year 2023 is...: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/editorial/woty>

million monthly active users just two months after its launch in November 2022.<sup>4</sup> On its first anniversary, over 2 million developers had used the platform, including more than 92% of Fortune 500 companies.<sup>5</sup> Undoubtedly, AI has accelerated its entry into our lives, from chatbots to sophisticated data analytics, and from personalised advertising to credit analyses.

6. Yet, challenges abound. Over-collection of data, non-consensual use, and accidental exposure of sensitive information are just a few examples of the kind of privacy risks which AI poses. In a global survey, 88% of the respondents said that they would be concerned if their data were shared with others in generative AI applications.<sup>6</sup> You may recall that, in March last year, thousands of AI experts, academics and business leaders called for a pause in AI

---

<sup>4</sup> Reuters (2023), ChatGPT sets record for fastest-growing user base - analyst note: <https://www.reuters.com/technology/chatgpt-sets-record-fastest-growing-user-base-analyst-note-2023-02-01/>

<sup>5</sup> CNBC (2023), Microsoft-backed OpenAI announces GPT-4 Turbo, its most powerful AI yet : <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/11/06/openai-announces-more-powerful-gpt-4-turbo-and-cuts-prices.html>

<sup>6</sup> Cisco (2023), Generation Privacy: Young Consumers Leading the Way: [https://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en\\_us/about/doing\\_business/trust-center/docs/cisco-consumer-privacy-report-2023.pdf?CCID=cc000160&DTID=odiedc000016&OID=otrsc031725](https://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en_us/about/doing_business/trust-center/docs/cisco-consumer-privacy-report-2023.pdf?CCID=cc000160&DTID=odiedc000016&OID=otrsc031725)

development for at least 6 months, out of concerns about the risks involved.<sup>7</sup>

7. As the use of AI goes beyond borders, the risks inherent in such use has become a global issue which calls for a global solution. In this context, the Bletchley Declaration<sup>8</sup>, the G7 Leaders' Statement on the Hiroshima AI Process<sup>9</sup> and the Global AI Governance Initiative proposed by the Mainland,<sup>10</sup> are good starting points.

## **This Conference**

8. This Conference was held in the same spirit, during which experts from different parts of the world will engage in intensive discussions on the current state of play and the way forward.

---

<sup>7</sup> Reuters (2023), Elon Musk and others urge AI pause, citing 'risks to society': <https://shorturl.at/gzSZ1>

<sup>8</sup> Reuters (2023), Britain publishes 'Bletchley Declaration' on AI safety;

UK Government (2023), The Bletchley Declaration by Countries Attending the AI Safety Summit, 1-2 November 2023: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-safety-summit-2023-the-bletchley-declaration/the-bletchley-declaration-by-countries-attending-the-ai-safety-summit-1-2-november-2023>

<sup>9</sup> European Commission (2023), G7 Leaders' Statement on the Hiroshima AI Process: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/g7-leaders-statement-hiroshima-ai-process>

<sup>10</sup> Global Times(2023), China-proposed Global AI Governance Initiative receives positive feedback: <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202311/1302594.shtml>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023), Global AI Governance Initiative:

[https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjdt\\_665385/2649\\_665393/202310/t20231020\\_11164834.html](https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/202310/t20231020_11164834.html)

9. The Conference will feature a broad spectrum of discussions today and tomorrow. The discussions will span across different jurisdictions, from Asia to Europe and to America. Speakers will delve into the intersection of AI and data protection from the perspectives of various industries including healthcare, finance and gaming. The topics covered will also be extensive, ranging from the steps that technology companies have taken in building responsible AI, to the ethics and security considerations concerning AI.
10. I am honoured, and look forward, to joining a panel discussion this morning which will address the risks of AI from the regulatory perspective, featuring privacy commissioners, senior officers and privacy professionals from different jurisdictions.

## **Conclusion**

11. Last but not least, with great advancements come great responsibilities. While we all enjoy the numerous benefits of AI, I firmly believe that the responsibility to manage its risk lies with each and everyone of us, including regulators,

developers, industry players and even individual end-users. It is more important than ever for all of us to join hands to collectively address the challenges brought by AI so that we can create a win-win situation where the potential of AI can be maximised while safeguarding the interests of individuals and society as a whole.

12. To this end, we need to foster an open dialogue to advance data protection in the era of AI. I encourage you all to join our discussions and I wish you all a fruitful and inspiring Conference. Thank you.