

Transforming legal borders: international judicial cooperation and technology in private international law - Part II

*Written by Yasmín Aguada**^[1] - Laura Martina Jeifetz ***^[2]. Part I is available here*

Abstract: Part II aims to delve deeper into the aspects addressed in the previously published Part I. International Judicial Cooperation (IJC) and advanced technologies redefine Private International Law (PIL) in a globalized world. The convergences between legal collaboration among countries and technological innovations have revolutionized how cross-border legal issues are approached and resolved. These tools streamline international legal processes, overcoming old obstacles and generating new challenges. This paper explores how this intersection reshapes the global legal landscape, analyzing its advantages, challenges, and prospects.

Keywords: private international law, international judicial cooperation, new technologies, videoconferencing, direct judicial communications, Smart contracts, and Blockchain.

II.III. Videoconferences and virtual hearings

Videoconferencing and video-links are familiar today after the widespread use they acquired during the COVID-19 pandemic. These resources perform various functions in judicial processes, ranging from facilitating communications with the parties involved, experts and witnesses, to holding hearings and training activities. These are just examples that illustrate the wide range of uses they offer.^[3]

Despite its long presence both nationally and internationally, videoconferencing has seen a notable increase in its application, particularly in the context of

criminal cases, as can be seen in inmates' statements.^[4] However, its growing expansion into areas such as international abduction cases and civil and commercial matters is also evident.^[5]

Regarding the concept, Tirado Estrada states that videoconferencing constitutes *"an interactive communication system that simultaneously transmits and "in real time" the image, sound and data at a distance (in point-to-point connection), allowing relationships and interaction, visually, auditorily and verbally, to a group of people located in two or more different places as if the meeting and dialogue were held in the same place."*^[6] It allows communication between people in different places and simultaneously through equipment reproducing images and sound.

Among the advantages that should be highlighted is its notable contribution to the agility in the processing of legal processes, which affects the quality and effectiveness of judicial procedures. These technologies enable a direct link without intermediaries between those involved in the judicial process, the administration of justice, and the relevant authorities.

Likewise, it is pertinent to point out the significant reduction in costs associated with transportation to the judicial headquarters while facilitating the recording and, therefore, the exhaustive record of the events in the hearings. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that videoconferencing ensures security conditions by applying robust encryption protocols.

Ultimately, videoconferences guarantee the observance of essential principles within the framework of due process, such as the publicity of the acts, the practical possibility of contradiction of the parties involved, and the immediacy in the perception of evidence.^[7]

II.III.I. Regulatory instruments regarding the use of videoconferencing

In April 2020, The Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH) published a document within the March 18, 1970 Convention on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters^[8]. The publication of this work, called *Guide to Good Practice on the Use of Video-Link under the Evidence Convention*, was drafted by the Permanent Bureau, with a Group of Experts

contributing their insights and comments. Although the project started in 2015, its publication occurred during the pandemic. This soft law instrument provides a series of guidelines regarding platforms intended to enable the simultaneous interaction of two or more people through bidirectional audio and video transmission^[9].

It is worth mentioning the Ibero-American Convention on the Use of Videoconferencing in International Cooperation between Justice Systems (Ibero-American Convention) and its Additional Protocol^[10], signed in 2010. Both instances were approved by law 27.162, dated August 3, 2015.

This Ibero-American Convention conceives videoconferencing as a resource that enhances and expedites cooperation between the competent authorities of the signatory States. The treaty's scope covers the civil, commercial, and criminal matters. However, it is possible to extend its application to other fields in which the parties involved expressly agree (article 1).

The Convention recognizes the relevance of new technologies as fundamental tools for achieving swift, efficient, and effective justice. The primary objective is to promote the use of videoconferencing among the competent authorities of the States Parties, considering this medium as a concrete mechanism to strengthen and expedite cooperation in various areas of law, including civil, commercial, and criminal matters, as well as any other agreed upon by the parties. The Convention defines videoconferencing as an *"interactive communication system that allows the simultaneous and real-time transmission of image, sound, and data over a distance, with the aim of taking statements from one or more persons located in a place different from that of the competent authority, within the framework of a judicial process, and under the terms of the applicable law of the involved States."* (art. 2). This definition underscores the importance of immediacy and direct interaction, critical aspects ensuring the validity and effectiveness of the statements obtained through this medium.

Among the most relevant provisions of the Convention is the regulation of hearings via videoconference. The Convention establishes that if the competent authority of a State Party needs to examine a person within the framework of a judicial process, whether as a party, witness, or expert, or during preliminary investigative proceedings, and this person is in another State, their statement can

be requested via videoconference, provided that this tool is deemed appropriate for the case. Additionally, the Convention details the requirements that must be met for the request to use videoconferencing and the rules governing its conduct, thus ensuring a standardized and efficient procedure.

The Additional Protocol to the Convention adds significant value by regulating practical aspects that enhance the efficiency of the judicial process. In particular, it addresses issues related to videoconferencing costs, establishing clear criteria on who should bear the expenses. It also regulates the linguistic regime, determining the language or languages used during the videoconferences, which is crucial to ensuring all parties' understanding and effective participation. Moreover, the Protocol sets precise rules for transmitting videoconference requests, simplifying and streamlining the procedure, which contributes to incredible speed and effectiveness in international judicial cooperation.

The ASADIP Principles on Transnational Access to Justice (TRANSJUS), approved on November 12, 2016, are again relevant. In article 4.6, using video conferences or any other suitable means to hold joint hearings is included^[11]. Next, as already mentioned, it proposes that legal operators favour the use of new technologies, such as telephone and video conferencing, among other available means, as long as the security of communications is guaranteed.^[12]

Within the scope of cooperation in civil matters, it is relevant to point out the Convention in force in Argentina since 7-VII-1987, which addresses the Obtaining of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters^[13]. Regarding the integration of video conferences in this context, we underscore that in July 2024, a Special Commission was held to review the implementation of various Conventions, including the taking of evidence. During these deliberations, it was stressed that video links are in line with the provisions of the 1970 Convention.

The role of videoconferencing as an increasingly relevant means for taking evidence under Chapter I of the Convention was discussed. However, a marked division of opinion was identified among the Contracting States regarding the possibility of using videoconferencing to directly take evidence, highlighting a significant challenge for the Convention. Another issue addressed was the update of the Guide to Good Practices on the Use of Videoconferencing, published in 2020, which has been largely incorporated into the Evidence Handbook. This

reflects the growing importance of videoconferencing in international proceedings and the recognition that new technologies must be integrated into conventional practices.

Furthermore, regarding compatibility with the modern technological environment, the Commission noted that, although the 1970 Convention continues to function well in a paper-based environment, it faces challenges adapting to technological developments, such as videoconferencing. This issue raises doubts about the Convention's ability to remain relevant in the future without greater acceptance of the "functional equivalence" approach by the Contracting States. Finally, a proposal was discussed to develop an international system to facilitate the electronic transmission of requests or create a decentralized system of platforms for such transmission. This proposal aims to improve the efficiency and modernize obtaining international evidence^[14]. These discussions underscore the importance of updating and adapting the 1970 Convention to new technological realities to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

Moreover, it was established that Article 17^[15] of the said Convention does not constitute an obstacle for a judicial officer of the court requesting a party located in a State Party to conduct virtual interrogations of a person in another Contracting State. In this sense, the use of technologies such as videoconferencing is adequately adapted to the principles and provisions of the Convention mentioned above, facilitating international cooperation in judicial matters.

Article 17 of the 1970 Hague Convention regulates the possibility of a duly appointed commissioner obtaining evidence in the territory of a contracting State about a judicial proceeding initiated in another contracting State. This article establishes a mechanism for obtaining evidence that does not involve coercion and is subject to two essential requirements: authorization by a competent authority and compliance with established conditions. Additionally, the article allows for a contracting State to declare that obtaining evidence under this article can be carried out without prior authorization.

This article is particularly relevant for international judicial cooperation in the region, as it facilitates evidence collection abroad without resorting to coercive

mechanisms. However, countries like Argentina have objected to the application of Article 17. The reasons are related to the protection of national sovereignty, as the appointment of foreign commissioners to act in a State's territory to obtain evidence may be seen as an intrusion into that State's sovereignty. Some countries in the region consider that allowing commissioners appointed by foreign courts to operate could compromise their jurisdictional autonomy.

On the other hand, concerning legal security and process control, the States that have objected to Article 17 value maintaining rigorous control over the procedures for obtaining evidence within their territory. Authorizing the actions of foreign commissioners without strict supervision could raise concerns about legal security and fairness in the process. Finally, differences between the legal systems of the countries in the region and those from which the appointed commissioners come could create difficulties in the uniform application of the article.

In summary, while Article 17 of the 1970 Hague Convention offers a valuable mechanism for obtaining evidence abroad, its implementation has generated tensions in the region due to concerns about sovereignty, process control, and differences in legal systems. These objections reflect the need to balance international cooperation and respect for each state's jurisdictional autonomy.

The regulation in Argentina

In Argentina, the Order of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (CSJN) 20/2013 is relevant. It establishes a set of Practical Guidelines for implementing video conferences in cases in process before the courts, oral tribunals, and appeals chambers, both national and federal, belonging to the Judicial Branch of the Nation.

This Order contemplates the possibility of resorting to videoconferencing when the accused, witnesses, or experts are outside the jurisdiction of the competent court. Consequently, it is essential to have adequate technical resources and a secure connection, which will be submitted to the evaluation of the General Directorate of Technology of the General Administration of the Judiciary. In this context, the regulations explicitly state that the application of these Guidelines must ensure full observance of the adversarial principles and effective defense.^[16]

On the other hand, it should be noted that in February 2014, the Federal Board of Cortes and Superior Courts of Justice of the Argentine Provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires (JUFEJUS) gave its approval to the Protocol for the Use of the Videoconferencing System. This initiative aims to promote the adoption of hearings through video media as a resource aimed at reinforcing reciprocal collaboration, optimizing the effectiveness of jurisdictional processes, and simplifying the conduct of training and coordination meetings, among other relevant purposes.^[17]

II.IV. Direct judicial communications.

Another of the IJC's essential tools is direct judicial communications (DJC), intended to facilitate communication between two judges involved in a specific case^[18]. In the autonomous source, DJC finds legal reception in Art. 2612 of the Civil and Commercial Code of the Nation.^[19]

Direct judicial communications *“are communications between two judicial authorities from different countries that are developed without the intervention of an administrative authority (intermediary authorities), as is the usual case of international warrants that are processed through Chanceries and/or Central Authorities designated by the country itself (generally administrative).”*^[20]

DJC can be implemented in all areas of the IJC. The HCCH has indicated that direct judicial communications can be used to obtain information about specific cases or to request information. Initially, DJC has shown notable success in two main fields: international return proceedings for children and adolescents and cross-border insolvency processes. Over time, it has been acknowledged that various international instruments, both regional and multilateral—such as the 1996 Child Protection Convention—benefit from the use of direct judicial communications. As of March 2023, the International Hague Network of Judges (IHNJ)'s scope has expanded to include the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention^[21].

Regarding international child abduction, since 2001, the Special Commission of the 1980 Hague Convention has explored the possibility and feasibility, as well as the limits, safeguards, and guarantees of direct judicial communications, initially linked to the development of the IHNJ to obtain the quick and safe return of the

child. Shortly after the IHNJ of Specialists in Family Matters was created in 2002, a Preliminary Report was presented, and the DJC was identified as an ideal mechanism to facilitate the IJC. In 2013, the Permanent Bureau, in collaboration with a Special Commission, published the Emerging Guidance Regarding the Development of the International Hague Network of Judges^[22].

In this context, direct judicial communications have evolved to incorporate updated safeguards and protocols. According to the “Emerging Guidance regarding the development of the International Hague Network of Judges,” all communications must respect the legal frameworks of the countries involved, and judges should maintain their independence when reaching decisions. The guidance also outlines procedural safeguards, such as notifying the parties before the communication, keeping a record of the communications, and ensuring that conclusions are documented in writing. These practices help ensure transparency and preserve the rights of the parties involved.

In this framework, the HCCH has identified at least two types of communications: those of a general nature not related to a specific case and consisting, for example, of sharing general information from the IHNJ or coming from the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference, with his colleagues, or in keeping the Hague Conference informed of national developments affecting the work of the Conference; and those that consist of direct judicial communications related to specific cases, the objective of these communications being very varied, but on many occasions aimed at mitigating the lack of information that the competent judge may have about the situation and legal implications in the State of habitual residence of the child. These types of direct judicial communications are complemented by the safeguards incorporated in the 2013 Guidance, ensuring that the parties’ rights are respected and transparency is maintained throughout the process.

Additionally, technological advancements are recognized as essential for improving direct judicial communications. The document highlights the importance of using the most appropriate technological facilities, such as telephone or videoconference, to ensure communications are carried out efficiently and securely. These technological tools are crucial in safeguarding the confidentiality of sensitive information, particularly in cases where confidential data is involved.

Direct judicial communications, which represent an essential advance in the field of the IJC, are widely influenced by the implementation of new information and communication technologies. Members of the International Hague Network of Judges emphasized the importance of the Hague Conference implementing, as soon as possible, secure internet-based communication, such as secure email and video conferencing systems, to facilitate networking and reduce costs derived from telephone communications.^[23] In 2018, on the 20th Anniversary of the IHNJ, the participants reiterated the need to develop a Secure Platform for the IHNJ^[24]. Currently, the secure platform for the IHNJ is available.

Since its initial implementation, a secure communications system has been established to facilitate efficient and protected exchanges between judges from different jurisdictions within the IHNJ. This system strengthens judicial cooperation in cross-border child protection, allowing judges to share relevant information directly under security standards that ensure confidentiality and procedural efficiency. During the 25th anniversary celebration of the IHNJ on October 14, 2023, representatives from over 30 jurisdictions gathered in The Hague, highlighting the value of this network and discussing its expansion, which -as was mentioned- now includes the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention in addition to the 1980 Child Abduction and 1996 Child Protection Conventions?^[25].

III. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES. SMART CONTRACTS AND BLOCKCHAIN?

In analyzing possible future evolution in the interaction between international judicial cooperation and new technologies, it is essential to consider how blockchain technology and its derivatives, such as smart contracts, could significantly impact this area.

Blockchain technology, known for its ability to create immutable and transparent records, has the potential to revolutionize international judicial cooperation by providing a secure and trusted platform for the exchange and management of legal information between jurisdictions. Records on the blockchain could be used to ensure the authenticity and integrity of court documents, which in turn would strengthen trust between the parties involved.^[26]

Smart contracts are autonomous and self-executing protocols that could simplify and speed up the execution of agreements between international judicial systems.

These contracts may be designed to execute automatically when certain predefined conditions are met, which could be helpful in legal cooperation involving the transfer of information or evidence between jurisdictions.

However, successfully implementing blockchain technologies in international judicial cooperation would require overcoming significant challenges. Critical considerations include the standardization of protocols and data formats, interoperability between judicial systems, and the question of the legal sovereignty of records on the blockchain.

Blockchain technology and smart contracts could offer innovative solutions for international judicial cooperation by improving reliability, transparency, and process automation. Although the challenges are significant, their proper adoption could transform how jurisdictions interact and collaborate globally on legal matters.

Concerning automated contracting, it is noteworthy that during its fifty-seventh session in 2024, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) finalized and adopted the Model Law on Automated Contracting (MLAC)^[27] and gave in principle approval to a draft guide for its enactment. In November, Working Group IV (Electronic Commerce) is expected to review this guide to enacting the UNCITRAL Model Law on Automated Contracting to finalize and publish it.

IV. BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES.

The convergence between international judicial cooperation and new technologies presents several substantial benefits that can profoundly transform how jurisdictions worldwide collaborate on legal matters. Certain advantages can be identified by explicitly analyzing electronic requests, direct judicial communications, videoconferences, and future projections related to blockchain technology and smart contracts. Between them:

Efficiency: New technologies allow for streamlining judicial cooperation processes, eliminating unnecessary delays. Electronic requests and direct judicial communications reduce document processing and sending times, significantly reducing shipping times by traditional mail.

Cost savings: Technologies reduce the need for physical resources, such as paper,

transportation, and additional personnel for administrative procedures. Video conferencing also reduces travel costs for witnesses, experts, and attorneys as they can participate from their respective locations.

Transparency and authenticity: Document digitization and electronic system implementation ensure a transparent and reliable record of communications. Additionally, electronic signature and authentication technologies guarantee the integrity and legitimacy of shared documents.

Greater access to justice: Technologies can democratize access to justice, allowing involved parties, especially those in remote locations or with limited resources, to participate in judicial proceedings and collaborate more effectively. These promises to avoid the long delays that traditional processing channels suffer, ultimately undermining the basic principles of access to justice and making adequate judicial protection difficult.

New technologies are transforming international judicial cooperation by eliminating time, distance, and resource barriers while improving the efficiency and effectiveness of transnational judicial processes. These technologies could raise the quality and speed of justice globally.

V. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this journey, we have explored how the intersection between international judicial cooperation and new technologies is transforming the legal landscape internationally. We have observed the growing impact of these new technologies in the IJC field and in the collaborative efforts between States to seek legal and administrative solutions to improve access to justice in cross-border proceedings. In this context, we have analyzed several technological tools, such as electronic requests and videoconference. At the same time, we have observed how facilitating instruments such as Apostilles and direct judicial communications have also incorporated, or are incorporating, technological components to improve their results.

Contemplating the possible future directions of this complex network of connections between the IJC and new technologies immerses us in searching for answers and alternatives and deep reflection on the numerous challenges that arise. Indeed, the rapid integration of new technologies is fundamentally changing various aspects of the legal field, which requires careful contemplation.

In conclusion, it is appropriate to emphasize the benefits that the implementation of new technologies can bring to the field of the IJC: reduction of costs and delays that lead to greater efficiency and agility while guaranteeing the fundamental rights of due process, defense, and security, always guided by the basic principle of ensuring access to justice.

In essence, this contribution highlights the crucial role that the symbiotic relationship between international judicial cooperation and evolving technologies will play in shaping the future of global legal practices.

^{[1]**} Lawyer and Notary, Faculty of Law, National University of Córdoba, Master in International Business Law, Complutense University of Madrid. Assistant professor in Private International Law and Public International Law at the Faculty of Law, National University of Córdoba. Email: yasmin.aguada@mi.unc.edu.ar

^{[2] ***} Lawyer, Faculty of Law, National University of Córdoba. PhD student, University of Cádiz. Master in International Business Law, Complutense University of Madrid. Assistant professor in Private International Law at Law School, National University of Córdoba. Email: martina.jeifetz@unc.edu.ar

^[3] HARRINGTON, CAROLINA. “Justicia, aislamiento y videoconferencia la experiencia del derecho internacional privado en desandar barreras: guía de buenas prácticas de la conferencia de la haya 2019”, in Guillermo Barrera Buteler (Dir.), *El derecho argentino frente a la pandemia y post-pandemia covid-19*. Córdoba, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 2020.

^[4]In the field of criminal cooperation, various legal instruments recognize the viability of the technological use of videoconferencing. These include the Statute of the International Criminal Court, ratified at the Rome Conference on July 17, 1998; the European Convention on Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, approved on May 29, 2000 by the Council of Ministers of Justice and Foreign Affairs of the European Union; the Second Additional Protocol of 2001 (Strasbourg, November 8, 2001) to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed in Strasbourg on April 20, 1959 by the

member states of the Council of Europe. Additionally, noteworthy are the influential 2000 Palermo Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the 2003 Mérida United Nations Convention against Corruption, among other notable instruments. These treaties highlight the usefulness and effectiveness of videoconferencing as a technological resource in criminal cooperation at the international level.

[5] GOICOECHEA, IGNACIO. “Nuevos desarrollos en la cooperación jurídica internacional en materia civil y comercial”, in *Revista de la Secretaría del Tribunal Permanente de Revisión (STPR)*, 7, year 4, 2016.

[6] TIRADO ESTRADA, JESÚS JOSÉ. “Videoconferencia, cooperación judicial internacional y debido proceso.”, in *Revista de la Secretaria del Tribunal Permanente de Revisión*, year 5, no. 10, 2017, p. 154. Available in: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=6182260>. Consultation date: 10/11/2024.

[7] GONZALEZ DE LA VEGA, CRISTINA, SEONE DE CHIODI, MARÍA Y TAGLE DE FERREYRA, GRACIELA. “Bases para el acceso a la justicia en la restitución internacional de NNA”. Paper presented at the Argentine Congress of International Law, Córdoba, September 2019.

[8] Such Convention has been in force in Argentina since 07/07/1987. For more details: <https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/status-table/?cid=82>. Consultation date: 10/11/2024.

[9] Video-link refers to the technology which allows two or more locations to interact simultaneously by two-way video and audio transmission, facilitating communication. - HCCH Guide to Good Practice on the Use of Video-Link under the Evidence Convention.

[10] For the Convention, videoconference is understood as an interactive communication system that reproduces, simultaneously and in real time, images, sound and data of people who are located in geographical locations other than that of the competent authority. This system allows the taking of statements in accordance with the applicable law of the intervening States. Available in: <https://www.comjib.org/wp-content/uploads/imgDrupal/Convenio-Videoconferenci>

a-ES-publicaciones_1.pdf

Consultation date: 06/13/2024.

In the following link you can check the status of signatures and ratifications of the treaties and agreements of the conference of ministers of justice of the Ibero-American countries. Available in:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EzscrkCSThRo7gtjZJlt9LZphoMBtA0q>.

Consultation date: 04/09/2024.

^[11] *“They are characterized by being framed in two (or more) processes for closely linked cases, heard before courts in different countries. The hearing is developed to “serve” more than one main process. Frequently, in family cases involving children, one can observe the existence of lawsuits initiated in different countries with various objects (restitution, parental responsibility, custody, communication regime, maintenance), which can benefit from the simultaneity implied in the joint celebration of the audience”.* HARRINGTON, CAROLINA. “Audiencias Multijurisdiccionales. Configuraciones y perspectivas para facilitar el acceso a justicia en litigios internacionales”. Paper presented at the Argentine Congress of International Law, Córdoba, September 2019.

^[12] ASADIP PRINCIPLES ON TRANSNATIONAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE (TRANSJUS). Available at:

<http://www.asadip.org/v2/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ASADIP-TRANSJUS-EN-FINAL18.pdf>. Consultation date: 10/11/2024.

^[13] This Agreement, approved by Law No. 23,480, links us with 64 countries. HCCH. Convention of 18 March 1970 on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters. Available in:

<https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/status-table/?cid=82> .

Consultation date: 10/11/2024.

^[14] Consult Celis, Mayela, July 3, 2024 “This week at The Hague: A few thoughts on the Special Commission on the HCCH Service, Evidence and Access to Justice Conventions” Available in:

<https://conflictoflaws.net/2024/this-week-at-the-hague-a-few-thoughts-on-the-special-commission-on-the-hcch-service-evidence-and-access-to-justice-conventions/>.

Consultation date: /10/11/2024.

^[15] *Article 17. In civil or commercial matters any person duly designated as a commissioner may, in the territory of a Contracting State, proceed, without compulsion, to obtain evidence relating to a proceeding instituted before a Court of another Contracting State. : a) if a competent authority designated by the State where the evidence is to be obtained has given its authorization, in general, or for each particular case; and b) if said person meets the conditions that the competent authority has established in the authorization. Any Contracting State may declare that the collection of evidence in the manner provided for in this article may be carried out without prior authorization.* Available in: <https://www.hcch.net/es/instruments/conventions/full-text/?cid=82> . Consultation date: 05/20/2024.

^[16] SUPREME COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE NATION. Agreed on 20/2013. Available at: <https://www.csjn.gov.ar/documentos/descargar/?ID=77906> . Consultation date: 10/11/2024.

^[17] JU.FE.JU. “Protocol for the use of the Videoconferencing System”, 2014. Art. 3 defines: “*Videoconferencing shall be understood as an interactive communication system that simultaneously and in real time transmits image, sound and data at a distance between one or more sites.*” Available in: <https://www.jufejus.org.ar/protocolo-de-videoconferencias/>. Consultation date: 10/11/2024.

^[18] For more information see: HARRINGTON, CAROLINA. “Comunicaciones judiciales directas. Un arma versátil para enfrentar desafíos procesales en el derecho internacional privado de familia” in *LLC2018* (October), 3, 2017. Online Citation: AR/DOC/3303/2017.

^[19] Art. 2612.- International procedural assistance. Without prejudice to the obligations assumed by international conventions, communications addressed to foreign authorities must be made by means of a letter. When the situation requires it, Argentine judges are empowered to establish direct communications with foreign judges who accept the practice, as long as the guarantees of due process are respected (...) .”

[20] GOICOECHEA, IGNACIO. Nuevos desarrollos en la cooperación jurídica internacional en materia civil y comercial. *Revista de la Secretaria del Tribunal Permanente de Revisión (STPR)*, year 4, No 7 (pp. 127-151), 2016, p. 136.

[21] HCCH. Details. 25th Anniversary of the International Hague Network of Judges. Available in: <https://www.hcch.net/en/news-archive/details/?varevent=944>. Consultation date: 22/10/2024.

[22] Direct Judicial Communications. Emerging Guidance regarding the development of the International Hague Network of Judges and General Principles for Judicial Communications, including commonly accepted safeguards for Direct Judicial Communications in specific cases, within the context of the International Hague Network of Judges. Available in: <https://assets.hcch.net/docs/62d073ca-eda0-494e-af66-2ddd368b7379.pdf>. Consultation date: 22/10/2024.

[23] Conclusions 7 and 41, Inter-American Meeting of Judges and Central Authorities of the Hague International Network on International Child Abduction, Mexico, February 23-25, 2011. Available in: <https://www.hcch.net/es/%20news-archive/details/?varevent=217>. Consultation date: 10/11/2024.

[24] Conference Of Hague Convention Network Judges Celebrating the 20th. Anniversary of The International Hague Network Of Judges. Conclusions And Recommendations. Available in: <https://assets.hcch.net/docs/69f03498-8a72-4ffe-aa44-30fc70493859.pdf>. Consultation date: 24/10/2024.

[25] <https://www.hcch.net/en/news-archive/details/?varevent=944> Consultation date: 27/10/2024.

[26] AGUADA, YASMÍN and JEIFETZ, LAURA MARTINA. Nuevas oportunidades de la cooperación judicial internacional: exhorto electrónico y blockchain. *Anuario XIX CIJS*, 2019.

[27] The UNCITRAL Model Law on Automated Contracting introduces essential

principles to legitimize contracts formed and executed by automated systems, even in the absence of human intervention. First, its focus on technological neutrality and legal recognition ensures that contracts are valid regardless of whether a person has directly reviewed them. This aspect is particularly valuable for smart contracts and blockchain applications, as it aligns with the requirements of coded and dynamic agreements, which may use information that updates periodically. Additionally, action attribution is clarified to hold users accountable for automated system actions, even in cases of unforeseen outcomes. These provisions are poised to enhance cross-border legal coherence and foster trust in automation within global legal frameworks. The document is available here: https://uncitral.un.org/sites/uncitral.un.org/files/mlac_en.pdf. Consultation date: 25/10/2024.