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Congress of Political Economists, International

Between 12th and 19th of July 2008 there takes place in New Dehli, India 19th annual Congress of Political Economists, International (COPE). Conferences organized by COPE arise great interest of Polish economists, therefore we should devote some attention to the COPE itself and its conferences.

COPE was established by Prof. T.S. Saini from Bloomsburg University, USA. The establishment of COPE was a pinnacle of his research. During the research he visited many countries, including Poland, in which he conducted hundreds of conversations with scientists, politicians, trade union leaders, etc. The organization was registered in 1988 in Pennsylvania, among its targets are: personal freedom, human equality and economic justice.

A year later Prof. Saini was elected the first President of the organization. He turned out to have an organizational flair, so under his leadership the organization achieved a high position and international prestige. This was proved by conferences he organized, attended by many hundreds of people, mainly from the USA. Saini also started publishing a scientific journal: „Journal of Economic Democracy”. He died in 1994, shortly after COPE conference in Australia.

Nowadays, according to COPE’s statute President is chosen by members for a 2-year term of office, before that he occupies the post of President-Elect for 2 years. Since 2007 Prof. Marc Massoud from Claremont McKenna College, USA serves as a President, and Prof. Juri Sepp from the University of Tartu, Estonia is President-Elect.

COPE’s mission is to activate and encourage economists worldwide to discuss economic theory, principles and problems, in particular political economy. Such discussion should facilitate reaching the goals mentioned above: personal freedom, human equality and economic justice.

COPE’s purposes are extensive and include above all building of a platform for economists throughout the world to look for solutions to essential problems of global economics. Another aim is to encourage cooperation among COPE members through exchange programs for students and academic workers, organization of seminars and scientific conferences, implementation of joint research programs, preparation of joint publications.

COPE achieves its goals through organization of annual conferences and preparation of reviewed publications. The conference in New Delhi will be the 19th COPE conference. The

conferences take place all over the world for instance in Boston, Paris, Sydney, Seoul, Pretoria, Barbados, Cairo, Santiago de Chile, Beijing and Berlin. Usually the conferences are hosted by local universities cooperating with COPE.

Each conference has a topic, the topics, however, are broad and relate to global problems, eg. socio-economic consequences of globalization, arising markets, socio-economic problems of transformation, issues of economic growth, economic stabilization and education, etc. This year's topic is 'The Economics of Education and Innovation for a Sustainable Growth'. Apart from the topic itself there are always specified topical areas, which are broad enough for each and every economist to prepare a presentation. Among the participants also lawyers and specialists from sociology and other studies are to be found.

Initially the author of this text was the only Pole who participated in COPE conferences. Gradually, however, more and more Polish economists took part in them. In 1997 such conference took place in Lodz, which contributed to popularization of COPE in Poland. In a relatively a short time Polish participants became a dominating group. To some extent, this was caused by the fact that between 2001 and 2003 I was a President Elect, and between 2003 and 2005 the President of COPE. During that time I organized conferences in Cairo and in Santiago de Chile. Before each of those conferences reviewed monographic works of many volumes were published. Such significant contribution of Polish participants to COPE conferences resulted in our strong representation in the authorities of this organization: Five COPE Directors are Polish.

Also this time a conference in New Delhi will be attended by a strong representation of Polish economists, including a delegation from the Polish Economic Society. More information about COPE can be found on the website www.copeintl.org.