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*Paulina Kuzior*

## **International Congress of Business Ethics and Sustainable Development**

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Polish, Austrian, German, Slovak and Ukrainian scientists, businessmen and representatives of local authorities met on 31 May 2016 in Academic Campus in Rybnik at the International Congress of Business Ethics and Sustainable Development. The initiators of the Congress were prof. *Aleksandra Kuzior*, president of the Silesian Centre for Business Ethics and Sustainable Development, acting at the Silesian University of Technology, and *Piotr Kuczera*, president of the City of Rybnik. The participants of the Congress met to share experiences, ideas and best practices in achieving the objectives of the concept of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The Honorary Patronage over the Congress was taken by the Ministry of Development of the Republic of Poland, and in the Scientific Committee there were outstanding representatives of Polish and foreign science, dealing with issues of sustainable development and business ethics (detailed information on the website >> <http://www.polsl.pl/organizacje/scebizr/Strony/witamy.aspx> <<).

Among the prominent representatives of Polish science and policy, his message to the participants of the Congress gave prof. *Jerzy Buzek*, MEP, Chairman of the European Parliament in 2009-2012 and the Polish Prime Minister in 1997-2001, who pointed out that sustainable development will depend on the enthusiasm, perseverance and integrating the activities of different actors: business people, scientists, leaders different organizations, but also of all employees and ordinary people. As a member and chairman of various committees of the European Union (Chairman of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and the Conference of Committee Chairs of the European Parliament), he drew attention to the importance and topicality of the issues undertaken during the Congress in Rybnik. Prof. *Bogusław Łazarz*, the Vice-Rector elect of Silesian University of Technology, stressed that there is no sustainable development without adequate basis for ethics and ethical values. Honorary Consul of the Republic of Croatia and President of the Chamber of Commerce and Trade of the Rybnik Industrial District also drew attention to the importance of ethical behavior in business, and Congress is an excellent forum where businessmen can discuss with scientists problems bothering them. Prof. *Jan Brzóska*, Vice-Dean for Science and International Relations, Department of Organization and Management, Silesian University of Technology, pointed out that the business ethics and sustainable development are scientific, economic and social challenges. Indeed, all actors must take action to realize the assumptions of sustainable development – scientists, businessmen and civil society.

At the invitation of the organizers of the Congress a plenary lecture was delivered by Prof. *Gerhard Banse*, president of the Leibniz Society Berlin and a representative of the Berliner Zentrum Technik und Kultur, a longtime researcher at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, dealing with issues of sustainable development, philosophy and ethics of technology and technology assessment. Prof. *Banse* in a lecture on "Sustainable Development and Technology" stressed the need for a comprehensive, holistic view of sustainable development, taking into consideration social, economic, environmental and cultural dimensions, as well as their numerous interdependencies, pointing at the same time to a global perspective, a long-term orientation, and set limits on economic growth, conditioned by limited resources. By global perspective he meant setting goals at the global level while taking into account the national, regional and local level for implementation and implications. An important indicator of sustainability is the development of modern technology, but to its proper serving for sustainable development, we need its assessment (technology assessment) to identify pos-

sible risks. Answering to the question what sustainable development really is, Prof. *Banse* cited the Report "Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development" which states, that it is such a development, which "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". He presented the triangle of sustainable development, showing the vertexes (aspects) of sustainable development: societal, economical and ecological. He stated that technology has a great importance for social change and for now to the future, there are three problems to solve: the problem of knowledge, the problem of evaluation and the problem of implementation. Within the last problem we shall consider the need for Technology Assessment.

Within the Congress there were held two panel discussions: 1. "How governments can support ethical business"; 2. "CSR – between theory and practice."

The first panel discussion was attended by prof. *Heinrich Badura* of the Austrian Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Wirtschaft, *Katarzyna Dzióba*, Vice-Mayor of Zabrze city, *Mieczysław Kieca*, Mayor of the city Wodzisław Śląski, and *Piotr Kuczera*, Mayor of Rybnik. The discussion was moderated by prof. *Aleksandra Kuzior*. Prof. *Badura* presented among others, how firmly the idea of CSR is rooted in the consciousness of the Austrian businessmen, and what actions are taken at the level of central and local government to create an ethical business. Mayor of the city Wodzisław Śląski presented the activities of his office within the assumptions of sustainable development. The city Wodzisław Śląski in year 2016 received the certificate of "Ecological Commune" for supporting modern and ecological solutions for heating in the city. The Office also supports environmental education of children, adolescents and adults. Mayor of the City of Rybnik drew attention to an important aspect of co-operation with the guilds and chambers of commerce, launch web portals with information for business (including environmental), and comprehensive support with setting companies and raising EU funds. The Vice-Mayor of Zabrze presented the activities of the Zabrze Centre for Enterprise Development and the support of the city for disadvantaged groups, as well as the creation of conditions for professional and social activation. The examples of good practices are inherent in the concept of sustainable development. Such measures should be taken by all the cities and communes in Poland.

The second panel discussion was devoted to Corporate Social Responsibility. CSR is one of the aspects of "sustainable enterprise", guided in its operations by "the principle of responsibility, precaution, prevention, prevention and optimization in three dimensions: social, environmental and economic".<sup>1</sup> The discussion was participated by prof. *Michael Aßländer* (Technische Universität Dresden, Internationales Hochschulinstitut Zittau, member of the Executive Committee of EBEN, Germany), *Paulina Bednarz* (director for EU projects and communication of the Institute for Research on Democracy and Private Enterprise, The Foundation of the National Chamber of Commerce, Poland), Dr. Eng. *Janusz Karwot* (President of the Water and Sewage Company LLC in Rybnik, Poland) and prof. *Alla Lobanova* (Krivoy Rog National University, Ukraine). The discussion was moderated by prof. *Radosław Wolniak* (Silesian University of Technology). Panelists drew attention to, inter alia, the creation of a CSR strategy, commitment to solving the problems of local communities, investing in eco-

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Kuzior, A.: Zrównoważone przedsiębiorstwo [Sustainable enterprise]. In: Kuzior, A. (ed.): Globalne konteksty poszanowania praw i wolności człowieka. Idee i rzeczywistość [Global contexts of respect for human rights and freedoms. Ideas and reality]. Zabrze 2013, p. 15 (in Polish); cf. also Kopfmüller, J.; Kiepas, A.: Zrównoważony rozwój a technologie produkcyjne [Sustainable development and production technologies]. In: Banse, G.; Kiepas, A. (eds.): Zrównoważony rozwój. Od naukowego badania do politycznej strategii [Sustainable development. From scientific research to political strategy]. Berlin 2005, p. 184 (in Polish).

innovation. The examples showed significant differences in the approach to CSR in Poland, Germany and Ukraine.

During the Congress there were also delivered thirty seven papers on Corporate Social Responsibility and the various aspects of sustainable development, given in in parallel four thematic sections. The eco-innovation, environmental ethics and good "go green" practice examples could be heard in the papers of prof. *Daniela Fobelova* (UMB in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia), prof. *Aleksandra Kuzior* (Silesian University of Technology, Poland), mgr *Edyta Bracik* (DB Cargo Poland SA). The issue of gender equality, bullying and discrimination was discussed in papers of prof. *Agata Chudzicka-Czupata* (University of Silesia), prof. *Alexander Kholod* (National University of Culture and Arts, Kyiv), Dr. *Izabela Rajska-Kulik* (University of Silesia) and mgr *Joanna Piec-Gajewska* (ADAM Global Health Association).

Issues of mutual influence of the humanities and technology are discussed in the papers of Dr. *Bartłomiej Knosala* (Silesian University of Technology), Dr. *Zbigniew Orbik* (Silesian University of Technology), prof. *Mariusz Wojewoda* (University of Silesia). A large number of papers was devoted to business ethics and social responsibility and their impact on sustainable development – these issues were discussed i.a. in the lectures of prof. *Michael Aßländer* (TU Dresden Internationales Hochschulinstitut Zittau), prof. *Pavel Fobel* (UMB in Banska Bystrica), prof. *Andrzej Kiepas* (University of Silesia), Dr. *Krzysztof Michalski* (Rzeszów University of Technology), Dr. *Andrea Klimková*, Dr. *Marián Bednár* (UPJŠ Košice), prof. *Ferdinand Kubik* (St. Elizabeth College of Health and Social Work in Bratislav). The dramatic question "Whether sustainable development is possible?" appeared in the paper of mgr. *Magdalena Stekla* (Marrodent), who worked as a volunteer in one of the orphanages in Uganda.

During the Congress the papers were delivered also by doctoral students of Polish and Slovak universities: *Monika Fobelova* (UMB in Banska Bystrica), *Justyna Kapłańska* (University of Silesia), *Paulina Kuzior* (Silesian University of Technology), *Remigiusz Kozubek* (Silesian University of Technology), *Katarzyna Łyp* (Silesian University of Technology), *Mária Tlacháčová* (St. Elizabeth College of Health and Social Work in Bratislav), *Karolina Wantulok* (University of Silesia).

Congress concentrated scientific, business, managerial and government environment from different countries. The Congress was also attended by students of secondary schools in Rybnik, who also joined the discussions. Education of young people in topics proposed during the Congress is an important aspect of education for sustainable development. Shaping their consciousness in this area gives hope to build a better future.

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