

International Center for Promotion of Enterprises – honorable past, uncertain future

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ABSTRACT

This paper revises the role of International Center for Public Enterprises – ICPE, later renamed to International Center for Promotion of Enterprises as the first intergovernmental organization headquartered in Ljubljana. ICPE played important role in Slovene international affairs in the context of former Yugoslavia. At the time of Center's establishment in 1974 it was the precedent case, as all of the institutions were strictly centralized in Belgrade. Through initiative and hard work of the group of enthusiasts, the center managed to get its location in Ljubljana. ICPE was and partly still is a meeting point for numerous research and therefore valuable asset that could be put in a better use. In the best years, there were over eighty developing countries with their experts and organizations involved in different projects under the ICPE guidance. Those projects were mostly concentrating on improving efficiency of public sector companies, on restructuring programs and reforms of the public owned companies and public sector in general. Despite glorious past ICPE is nowadays struggling in reinventing itself and redefining its present and future, no matter the importance that public sector still has in the world economy. Under the right vision, ICPE could still serve as a ground for setting cooperation between Slovenia and developing countries.

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POVZETEK

Mednarodni center za podjetja v javni lasti - International Center for Public Enterprises – ICPE, pozneje preimenovan v Mednarodni center za promocijo podjetij International Center for Promotion of Enterprises je bil prva medvladna organizacija s sedežem v Ljubljani in kot tak pomemben za slovenske mednarodne odnose v odnosu z nekdanjo Jugoslavijo. ICPE je bil v času ustanovitve, leta 1974, vzorčen primer, ker so bile vse institucije strogo centralizirane v Beogradu. Vendar je z iniciativo in vztrajnim delovanjem skupine slovenskih entuziastov centru uspelo dobiti lokacijo v Ljubljani. ICPE je bil in še vedno je stičišče številnih raziskav in kot tak pomembna ustanova ki bi jo Slovenija lahko še bolje uporabila. V času največjega razcveta centra je v raznih projektih sodelovalo več kot osemdeset držav v razvoju, njihovih organizacij in strokovnjakov. ICPE se je osredotočal predvsem na probleme izboljšanja učinkovitosti delovanja družb v javni lasti v državah v razvoju, na programe prestrukturiranja in reform the družb ter javnega sektorja v celoti. V zadnjem času se ICPE srečuje s težavami pri iskanju ponovnega zagona delovanja, navkljub nenehno prisotni pomembnosti tematike delovanja podjetij v javni lasti. Z jasno vizijo bi ICPE še vedno lahko služil kot vez med Republiko Slovenijo in državami v razvoju.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: ICPE, mednarodna organizacija, medvladna organizacija, javna podjetja, države v razvoju

INTRODUCTION

This article presents the case of International Center for Promotion of Enterprises (ICPE) international, intergovernmental organization devoted to research, training, education and consultancy in the field of public enterprises in developing countries from the point of its rich and fruitful history and contribution to Slovenian international affairs. According to some estimates, over a third of world's gross product is generated by the public

enterprises and over a half of the productive investments is made in them. Therefore, public enterprise is a substantial and crucial part of global economic activity (The Economist 2014). ICPE has over forty years of bringing the best experts and their work in the field of public enterprises together with the goal in inciting the growth of developing countries. Nevertheless, the future of ICPE is uncertain as it is constantly underestimated by the member states as well as the host country in recent years. This paper tries to underline the value of the institution that is lately unused and overlooked.

International organizations are important subjects of modern international affairs as they are not just the subjects of international law, but they also act as the subjects in the frames of national laws. There is over thirty thousand active international organizations in around three hundred countries around the world according to ‘The yearbook of International Organizations’ (Fischer, 2012). Having the intergovernmental organization located in Ljubljana for more than forty years could be the base grounds for development of some new dimensions of Slovene international contacts based on connections and the reputation ICPE had among many developing countries that Slovenia cooperates with. There could be connections preserved, contacts renewed on diplomatic and economic grounds for the benefits of Slovene international and economic affairs. Yet ICPE has no determined direction and goals as well as the true basis for cooperation with Republic of Slovenia as a host country. In fact, ICPE has very insecure future, as the Center’s potentials are not in full use. As countries can enact their interests, goals and foreign policy through their participation in intergovernmental organizations (Petrič, 2010), having an active international organization right at the doorstep could be quite an advantage.

ICPE International Center for Public Enterprises was the first and still is one of two international, intergovernmental organizations located in Ljubljana, Slovenia.² ICPE was founded by the Government of Yugoslavia, following the initiative of the United

² Other is significantly different Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators.

Nations (UN) and with strong support from the member states of Non-Aligned Movement. In new independent countries, which emerged from decolonized countries in 1950s and 1960s, public enterprises played important part in realizing developing plans. Countries of Non-Aligned Movement were striving in achieving growth and prosperity of the developed world. Those countries wanted the organization that was going to help them learn from each other's practices, that was going to bond them together and to offer the support to their administrations in solving the problems of new emerging economies. ICPE served as the hub for addressing these problems and placed Ljubljana on the world map for many of the officers from the countries involved. Numerous governmental officers from different countries came to Ljubljana in one point of time on different programs. Those contacts could be the real treasure that is on the disposal to be used by the interested parties.

ICPE is still registered as the United Nations agency, despite the problems it is facing for many years now. (UN, 2014) History and case study of ICPE can be used as the inspiration for the modern times. ICPE is still the organization which goal is transfer of knowledge and good practices within its member states, with the added value that Slovenia can offer being the part of European Union.

The methods of research used in the article were all qualitative and the base was the case study as the research focused on providing a detailed account of an institution researched.³ Historical research was used that allowed reflection of the past and present events in the context of the present condition, as well as comparative (observing past events in the light of the future possibilities, analysis (grouping together comments on similar themes and drawing conclusions) and synthesis (that allowed combining of the results in a review).

³ Based on author's master degree thesis: Case study of ICPE – first intergovernmental organization headquartered in Ljubljana, Graduate School of Government and European Studies, Brdo pri Kranju, 2014

THE BEGINNING OF ICPE

ICPE was founded on 24th April 1974 as the Yugoslav institution by the Law on establishing of international center for the support to public and state owned enterprises. (Uradni list SRS, 1974) The initiative came from developing countries in Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations. Secretary General to the United Nations U Thant first suggested the establishment of such Center on the United Nations conference on public sector enterprises in 1969 in Herceg Novi (Vratuša, 1977). It was suggested that the Center would have the location in Yugoslavia. United Nations representatives were considering the location to be in Belgrade or Zagreb, but Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the University of Ljubljana gave the strongest support to research and education spirit of the center.

United Nations supported the idea about the center that would accelerate cooperation among public sector companies in the group of seventy-seven developing countries from Non-Aligned Movement. In the new states that emerged from the processes of decolonization in the 1950s and the 1960s it was recognized that the public sector should play a strong role in the execution of the development programs in the new countries. The new international economic order was in the making and strong and efficient public enterprises were crucial to the good governance and building of the economies in the relatively fragile and weak circumstances.

In 1976, the ICPE held the international conference, following the expressed interest of many Non-Aligned Movement members and with the countries interested, nineteen of them signed the statute.

So the ICPE was transformed officially to an intergovernmental organization of its member states only two years after it was registered as a Yugoslav organization. There were thirty states and nine observers present at the founding conference in March of 1976 (Vratuša, 1977).

After the first fifteen ratifications, the Center and the Yugoslav government signed the agreement that ICPE will use the premises for the symbolic fee of one Yugoslav dinar per year. In addition, the center's staff, representatives of the member states and researchers will have the special statuses and the diplomatic immunity and about the yearly fee that Yugoslav government was about to pay for the development of the programs and for the administrative running of ICPE. At the beginning, ICPE has organized seminars on planning, education and training, financing in public enterprises, workers participation and self-management and the role of women in public enterprises in the developing countries. All materials from research were being published in special publications (Bejzat, 1976).

Main managing organ was general assembly. Operating tasks were done by the secretary. In the most active time, ICPE had staff of fifteen professionals besides eighteen administrative workers. It was financed by annual contributions from the member states. The contributions from the member states were spent for the operational costs of the ICPE, and the income from the international funds were spend for program activities of ICPE.

By the 1980, ICPE had initiated numerous successful programs, research, seminars and trainings in the field of public enterprises, some of which were carried out comparatively in several member states and were financially supported by the UN agencies and countries involved. In the year of 1980, the ICPE was registered as the agency in the system of United Nations and the center got the status of the international, intergovernmental organization. The center had forty member states and was the representative and leading organization for research and scientific contributions from professors and practitioners of developing countries. Most of the projects from the starting period were kept, expanded and developed. There was also the increase in the resources of funding of the projects. At the beginning stage, the programs were funded by the membership fees from the member states, by the Government of Yugoslavia and the Government of Slovenia and with the strong support from the funds of UN Development Program. At

the later stage, the funding to the Center was still coming from the United Nations Development Program funds as well as from UN Industrial Development Organization. The donations of developed countries, like the Netherlands, Sweden and Canada were given as those developed countries expressed the interest in observing the situations in the developing countries (Vratuša, 1984).

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF ICPE

The creation of highly trained and motivated employees at all levels of public enterprises represented the integral part of the efforts of developing countries to improve all the processes in their economies. Developing countries suffered from a critical shortage of competent and experienced managers. The qualified and motivated people were necessary to transform the development programs into reality. The ICPE approached that task with the premise that educational and training policies, as well as the models and methods were custom tailored to the special circumstances, stages and conditions of each individual country and they should not be automatically transplanted everywhere. On the other hand, some problems addressed were similar in many places and there was the wide range of possibilities for cooperation among developing countries and their public enterprises, as well as the great interest in an organized exchange of experience with regard to difficulties encountered and solutions adopted as the results obtained. Apart from seminars organized, there were many field trips held, as part of visits to enterprises and different institutions and the case studies commenced there. All participants were stimulated to most intensive involvement. This kind of approach was beneficial to the businesses, enterprises and institutions in developing activities in other developing countries (Vodušek, 1978), as well as to participants that assessed the feasibility of the practical application of what they have discussed theoretically.

Therefore, ICPE initiated the program of training activities in member countries or at the regional levels in cooperation with United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The role

of the public enterprise in developing countries was recognized as a priority in most of the member states, so ICPE had lots of interest in this area linking training seminars and research activities to the on the spot trainings and comparative approach. These activities provided the necessary background, comparative analysis and the documentation about the existing situation, needs and requirements as well as the pond of knowledge for participants of the seminars to use in their everyday practice. Developing the organized research, education, training and consultancy in the field of human resources in public enterprises was the necessary step in achieving the goals of efficient growth. No matter what priorities and strategies were chosen by a country for its economic and social development, the people able to understand and implement the vision were always needed (Vodušek, 1981). There were and still are a number of institutions involved in the functioning of a public enterprise on national and international levels, so widening the knowledge to public administrators was the right direction. The goal was to develop skills and efficiency, at the same time as sense of cooperation, interdependence, coordination and mutual responsibility.

At the beginning, the programs were concentrating on specific themes in improving human resources in developing countries, and in nineteen-eighties, they started with the project called OPTIMA, which ran in fourteen countries in Africa, Asia and South America. That decade was very productive for the center. ICPE started the cooperation with the agency from the World Bank and offered different seminars.

In 1989, ICPE established an International Postgraduate MBA Program in partnership with the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Economics (FELU). The courses offered by Slovenian and foreign faculty of the FELU provided core business management concepts and knowledge for managers that they were coping with the issues and challenges in the globalized world. Over six hundred and fifty participants from forty-five countries (Vratuša 2001) have participated and about five hundred seventy graduated since the beginning of the program.

THE BEGINNING OF SEMINAR ACTIVITIES

The very first short term seminar was organized by the ICPE in September and October of 1974 in Ljubljana and Split. Subject of the seminar was planning in public enterprises. There were forty-six participants from twenty-six developing countries, six observing countries and five specialized United Nations agencies present. Experts, scholars, academicians and practitioners from twenty-one developing countries were involved in the preparation of the program. The next seminar was on education in public enterprises and financing and managing in public enterprises in 1975. It was followed by a seminar on self-management and participation held in fourteen countries simultaneously and comparatively in 1976.

Founding conference of ICPE was held from 2nd March till 4th March 1976 in Ljubljana. There were sixty-one participants present from thirty developing countries. There were also observers from nine countries. Participants were representatives of Alger, Bangladesh, Cameron, Cuba, Cyprus, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Iraq, Jordan, Korea, Libya, Mali, Mauretania, Mexico, Morocco, Panama, Peru, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Sudan, Thailand, Tanzania, Tunis and Zaire. Observers were from Argentina, Bolivia, Columbia, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan and Venezuela. There were observers from United Nations from the Department for Administration and Finance, from the office of International Affairs, Information Department, International Labor Organization, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization and United Nations Development Program (Pavlin, 1980). The number of participants exceeded the expectations and proved the focus of ICPE to be in the right direction. The official languages of the center were voted to become English, French, Spanish and Arab. There were some arguing about the official language to be just English, but some participants were against it, so at the end the delegates agreed on keeping all four languages as official. It was decided that ICPE get the executive director and two assisting directors. Nine projects were defined for the future development (Lončar, 1978). The confer-

ence of the Non-Aligned Movement in Colombo was informed of the activities of ICPE.

United Nations Development Program representative suggested that Center developed the program for the coming period, so it could serve as part of agency's program. On the meeting of Non-alignment movement in Havana, the representatives from the ICPE presented the work and activities. Statute (ICPE, 1974) was presented on the meeting of foreign ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement in Lima and the progress that ICPE was making on the Non-Aligned Movement meeting in Alger (ICPE, 1988).

There was an international seminar on management and training in public enterprises later that year and international research project on workers self-management and participation in decision making as a factor of social change and economic progress in developing countries. The Center had a successful seminar on the role of the public sector in developing countries held in 1977. In the same year, there was the seminar on the role of women as the factors of development and the responsibility of public enterprises on these matters that was held simultaneously in twelve countries (Možina, 1979). In 1978, the Center organized the seminar on management of transfer and development of technology in public enterprises, the financing and planning in public enterprises. In the following year the seminars on control systems for public enterprises, the role of the public sector itself, joint ventures and public enterprises, development of methodologies for training internal consultants and structuring of contractual relations in transfer of technology transactions in public enterprises.

THE STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR THE PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

The Statute of the ICPE (ICPE, 1974) was accepted by the participants at the conference of representatives of governments of developing countries. Considering the growing role and importance of the public sector in the national economies of the developing countries, the fact that the number of public enterprises in

developing countries was increasing and considering their determination to achieve full sovereignty over their natural resources as well as the fact of the destabilizing influence of transnational corporations. There was an interest and growing perspective for the establishment of multinational enterprises by developing countries. The principles and decisions on mutual cooperation between non-aligned and other developing countries was inscribed in the Economic Declaration and Program of Action that was adopted at the Conference of Heads of State of Government of Non-Aligned Countries held in Algiers on 5th to 9th September 1973 and it had acquired concrete form in the Establishment of the New International Economic Order, the adoption of the Charter of the Economic Rights and Duties of States, the Declaration of Dakar from February of 1975 (Vratuša, 1977). It was taken into consideration that the ICPE was already established by the Government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and by the Assembly of Social Republic of Slovenia in response to the wishes of representatives of developing countries for Center to become a joint institution of developing countries from Non-Aligned Movement and representing the vital need of intensifying and promoting mutual cooperation and exchange of information and in particular the cooperation between institutions concerned with the advancement of public enterprises, for the purpose of facilitating the task of governments in developing their national economies and stimulating economic growth. It was also important to consider the diversity of forms characterizing the development and cooperation of enterprises, which were not privately owned in developing countries – like social enterprises, self-managed enterprises, cooperative enterprises (ICPE, 1974) – all diverted forms that could fit under the name of public enterprises.

First countries to ratify the Statute were Algeria, Bangladesh, India Yugoslavia, Morocco, Peru, Sudan and Tunisia. Yugoslav government ratified the Statute on 22 July 1976. The countries to follow with ratifying of the Statute were Bolivia, Cuba, Ethiopia, Kenya; Kuwait, Malta, Mexico and Sri Lanka.

THE ACTIVITIES OF ICPE IN THE 1980s

In 1980 ICPE started the Public Enterprise, quarterly journal which published the articles from the researchers working on the ICPE seminars and projects in all four official languages. ICPE organized international round table on trends in development of workers participation and self management, expert group meeting on concepts, clarification and definition of public enterprises, regional workshops on development of training methodologies for internal consultants in African public enterprises and management of transfer of technology, preparations and negotiations of technology transfers, investment criteria and investment decision making processes, planning, education and training in public enterprises. Next to come were system of information, performance evaluation and control, relationships between parliaments and public enterprises and role of public enterprises in employment generation (ICPE, 1980) in developing countries.

In the following year besides the existing seminars the project OPTIMA commenced in 14 countries in Africa, Asia and South America. The project's objective was to improve the functioning of public enterprises in developing countries. It was the most important project of the ICPE in the 1980s. It was the research, educational and development project that was taking place in Grenada and Tanzania in 1983, on Malta, Mexico and in Ethiopia in 1985 and on Malta and in Slovenia in 1986. There were scientific and educational foundations, governmental agencies and public enterprises (ICPE, 1988) involved in these projects.

Recognizing the significance of the emergence of a trend towards public enterprise joint ventures among developing countries, the ICPE in developing countries took the initiative and in collaboration with United Nations Conference for Trade and Development, convened an Expert group meeting on the Role of public enterprise joint ventures among developing countries and factors conducive to the improvement of their performance, which was held at ICPE headquarters in October 1983. At that time, the developing countries were becoming increasingly aware of the importance of economic cooperation among themselves

and of collective self-reliance for promotion of their development as well as for the restructuring of their role and position in the world economy.

In the late 1980s, there were series of seminars organized in the collaboration with the World Bank.

There were 1726 units recorded in Bibliography of ICPE until the year of 1989. It was by far the richest source of information on public enterprises issues in developing countries and growing.

In September of 1989 started by ICPE Assembly of thirty eight member countries, the first intensive twelve month MBA program for public enterprise managers and policy makers with participants from Guyana, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Yugoslavia. The program was supported by United Nations Development Program, the Government of Netherlands, International Labor Organization, Commonwealth Secretariat and ICPE member countries. The teaching philosophy of the program was to have a commonality of approach in managerial functions, whether the organization was in public or private ownership, with specific needs for public sector managers met. The program was intended for managers in public enterprises, civil servants and political executives with at least three years of experience in public sector. With rare exceptions, at the time there were no specially oriented long duration management courses for public enterprise managers and policy makers. A large number of public enterprise managers felt that some of what was taught in regular management schools was not applicable for public enterprises as they were unique environments. So the ICPE MBA program developed critical understanding of organizational and environmental processes in the management of the public enterprise, appropriate values, attitudes analytical and problem solving skills and understanding of the role of a public enterprise in the larger business, socio-political and economic environment, by classic in classroom lectures, review sessions, class discussions, case studies and field trips (ICPE, 1990).

THE ACTIVITIES OF ICPE IN THE 1990s TO RECENT

The activities of International Center for Public Enterprises in the years to follow the Slovene declaration of independence came to a bare minimum. Slovenia recognized the membership in ICPE in 1992 with the legal note stating that the new independent country took over the membership and responsibilities in the organization from former Yugoslavia. At the same time, the hard times for ICPE commenced. Public sector was not in headlines any more. In October of 1992 there was the Assembly meeting with the least member states represented. Only five representatives from members and five observers came to the meeting. Those were representatives from Cyprus, India, Pakistan, Slovenia and Sri Lanka. The observers were from Austria, Central African Republic, China and Thailand. Those were rough times for the International Center for Public Enterprises and they continued until present days. The processes in the changing world took their toll. Public enterprises were out shadowed by new, modern privatization processes. The ICPE realized that it needed to reinvent itself.

In last few years, ICPE struggles to find the right direction and the right topics that would attract the member countries again and to regain some of the former glory. ICPE still provides training programs for government officers and different public sector institutions administrative staff, as well as other interested institutions from its member states and beyond. With its vast experience in the field of training and strong connections with different academic, research and business institutions ICPE is able to provide quality programs on the most diverse topics (Šalej, 2010).

Short-term programs that are being actual are on the topics of climate change management, wastewater management, sustainable spatial planning management, e-Governance, training program on EU funds, energy efficiency, governance, transport, energy and environment, lean management for public enterprises, public administration: budgeting, accounting and financial management (ICPE, 2014).

It is the time, therefore, to reconsider ICPE's role and recognize its potentials. Today, ICPE tries to rebuild the once so close ties with other international organizations, the United Nations agencies, most notably the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, as well as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, Fund for International Development (Šalej 2010). ICPE restarted the International Postgraduate MBA Program in partnership with the Faculty of Economics of the University of Ljubljana, which previously already provided education to hundreds of students and high-level representatives of approximately forty-five countries. ICPE has organized some conferences and seminars in the fields of energy efficiency and economic diplomacy and internationalization. It successfully organized two conferences called Africa Days.

We can conclude that the picture of ICPE today is much different. ICPE now focuses on the promotion of International cooperation in the fields of entrepreneurship, infrastructural sectors, transfers of technology, privatization strategies, and promotion of the society of knowledge, education, consulting and information technology (Podobnik, 2012). In present, ICPE has eighteen member states from Europe, Asia and Africa and uncertain future.

UNCERTAIN FUTURE

However, for a more certain future of the ICPE there could be recommended some policy activities like keeping on trying to get more support in Slovene Government as ICPE is the oldest inter-governmental, international organization in Slovenia which had the great reputation in the past. ICPE still has the only truly functioning project with the perspectives of cooperation between Slovenia and India, one of the most developing political, economic, scientific and cultural powers. This is of extreme importance for the Slovenian foreign policy, in the sense of future positioning and recognition. It is the point that needs to be addressed when deciding on support that Slovenia is to give to the future functioning of ICPE (Pšeničny, 2015). It would be very positive for countries' economic and diplomatic position in today's world if it

had such a strong long lasting project with any other world power. That should be a base for the policy consideration, decision and committed subsequently proceeding of Slovenian part in ICPE. The Slovene – Indian partnership in such project is already well echoed and should be upgraded.

The center needs to enlarge the number of members (Šalej, 2010) and to activate existing ones. Some steps had been taken in this direction by visiting the embassies of former members in Vienna and Rome: More could be done with constant activity and search for the activities that the members countries have interest in.

It is important that ICPE would find the projects that could be competitive, unique and could have the advantages for the interested potential member countries.

The activities towards the renovation of the memberships taken by ICPE directors general on the embassies in Vienna and Rome brought some interest that needs to be addressed in the future. It is important that the discussion have logical follow up.

Activities taken had some result also in the interest from United Nations Industry Development Organization presented in signature of the agreement on organizing the educational programs in the fields of industrial development, transfers of technology and especially in sustainable sources and the latest were realized in organizing common programs on the professional development program on sustainable energy solutions that were held in 2013 and 2014.

ICPE also renewed the cooperation with United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 2012. There was a round table on production programs and social and economic advantages for the national markets organized in Ljubljana since. In 2013, ICPE joined the Virtual Institute on trade and development, and in 2014, there was a joint workshop on non- tariff measures in the world trade. Cooperation was renewed with the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries with the Fund for Interna-

tional Development on the seminar on wastewater management and solar energy (ICPE, 2016), carried out by ICPE in 2014.

In addition, ICPE organized four conferences on energy efficiency, environment and public-private partnerships, two in Slovenia, one in India and one in Nigeria. There were three Annual Africa Days held in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Club of Former Slovenian Ambassadors and the African Forum. Successful were also Economic Diplomacy and Internationalization conferences.

Activities done prove that ICPE can still serve as a hub, which would bring together the diversity of knowledge from many parts of the world and at the same time serve as an open network, which could provide a meaningful support to the internationalization of national economies. It should shift its activities to provide services that member countries need, so the logical step would be a thorough research of desires that members and potential member states as well as partner organizations have. It could be organized through the sets of questionnaires that ICPE should carry out. ICPE should base all the future activities based on the results. The desired next step would be to strictly follow-up actions already taken, by all the members of diplomatic representatives of Slovenia and ICPE members.

CONCLUSION

For the ICPE to function well it is crucial to re-establish the partnerships with as many international organization and national institutions in member states and wider. It is especially important to redefine the cooperation with the host country. Some steps were taken in this direction by signature of the Memorandum on cooperation (UL RS MP 1/2010) with the Government of Republic of Slovenia and with forming of Inter-ministerial working group for cooperation with ICPE. The cooperation with the government of India was renewed and resulted in short term training programs for the government of India officials in budg-

eting, accounting and financial management, as well as e-governance.

The issues of public enterprises, as previous key focus of ICPE, and their role in economic development and enhancement of countries welfare have been subjects of intensive debates worldwide. The role of public enterprises fluctuated rapidly with swinging of economic policy from the wave of privatization in the end of twentieth century towards state interventions in recent crisis. Public enterprises are again recognized as important producers of goods and services and important factor in accumulating nation's growth. Public enterprises are taken into focus by the world established organizations and ICPE could try to regain its share of research and training in that area. Possible areas are human resource development, planning, financing, technology transfers, control and evaluation of their activity and other specific issues concerning public enterprises. Other themes could be the role of public enterprises in the countries development, dialog of public and private sectors and possible partnerships and good public sector management practices. The strengthening of public enterprises of member states should be ICPE foremost ambition. Experience and accumulated international knowledge should facilitate discussions on relevant topics and help member states expand performance of their public enterprises and help them achieve desired results on domestic and the global market.

Moreover, further existence of ICPE will depend upon the ability to recognize and understand the different needs of member and potential member countries, to follow up any given suggestions from the host country and other parties interested. ICPE would have to deliver programs that could take it to the next level of operation. Clear orientation could bring support of developing countries and international organizations, which have followed activities of the center in the past. Therefore, monitoring international development and responding to the needs of member countries and international organizations would be of primary tasks.

ICPE fellows and alumni – national and international should be organized as the specific most valuable asset to the center.

To reinvent itself the ICPE would need a clear vision, strong support in more active member states than just India and Slovenia, whose support enabled the center to still exist. ICPE would also need determined guidance and qualified, competent and motivated international staff – the important substances of success in any form of enterprise – the content about which ICPE taught the participants on its seminars and programs some time ago.

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