

AUS POLITIK UND WISSENSCHAFT

Research Centre for Countries of the South at the University of Szczecin (Poland)

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The Research Centre for Countries of the South (RCCS) at the University of Szczecin (Stettin), founded on October 1, 1987, is the youngest Polish centre conducting multi- and interdisciplinary policy-oriented research in the field of World Economy and International Relations. North (West, East) - South relations are playing a growing role in the contemporary world. The problems of development in more than one hundred countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America have long attracted the attention of world opinion seeking general and practical information. Poland's interest in the "Third World" was not an exception. Szczecin's academic community has for a long time been concerned with that subject. The founding of the RCCS is a logical consequence of what has been taking place in the city over the past thirty years. Over that period some one hundred publications on Asian, African and Latin American countries have appeared in Szczecin. The activities of the RCCS mark the continuation of the work of a group of persons associated with the National Museum in Szczecin under the direction of Professor Wladyslaw Filipowiak. The activities of the Department of Spatial Planning for Developing Countries at the Technical University of Szczecin constitute a separate, important chapter in the city's academic community's research on the developing countries. Between 1966 and 1989, over four hundred students from more than forty developing nations took part in the Postgraduate Course of Urban and Regional Planning under the chairmanship of the Professor Piotr Zaremba, member of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Moreover, RCCS's activities constitute the continuation of the work of Szczecin's other scientific centres: the Faculty of Sea Fisheries and Food Technology at the Agricultural Academy, the Maritime Academy, the Faculty of Biology and Oceanography and the Faculty of Economy at the University of Szczecin.

In the initial period of its existence, the RCCS employs a relatively small number of full-time staff members, therefore it intends to invite researchers and lecturers from outside Szczecin to co-operate within its research programmes and educational activities. Of special importance is the fact that the RCCS has already elaborated its own original profile

of research and education to avoid the doubling of work carried out by other Polish research institutions (Warsaw, Cracow). The centre's main function and task is to carry out fundamental research at an international level with the hope of making it useful for Poland's foreign policies on the macroeconomic scale, as well as her foreign trade, marine policies and the activities of other possible sponsors. The RCCS provides a link between academic research (theoretical, methodological and empirical studies) and applied work. At present, the RCCS is especially active in four general areas, each of which involves a number of different subjects:

- economic development and international trade (export-oriented industrialization, services-oriented export diversification, trade in manufactures and services);
- international maritime shipping, harbours, sea fisheries and shipbuilding;
- regional planning (especially seaside areas and port cities);
- North (both East and West) - South economic co-operation: challenges, potentials, perspectives.

In 1989-1990 RCCS's research projects concern the following topics:

- Needs and conditions for development of selected countries of the South (including problems of law and politics);
- Trade in manufactures and in services between the NICs of South-East Asia and East European countries (especially Poland);
- Planning and management of export-processing free-zones (special economic zones) in China, Asian NICs and other countries;
- Basic aspects of agricultural development and food production in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Sea fisheries in the Atlantic region (Latin America and Africa).

The Centre's basic aim is to conduct policy-relevant analyses and reports for the government, and its agencies, foreign trade enterprises, companies and other business associations, international organizations. The RCCS co-operates in various forms with organizations of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Polish Institute of International Affairs, the Institute of Developing Countries of Warsaw University, institutes and faculties of other Polish universities. The centre co-operates also with foreign research, economic and social institutions. It is in close contact with academic centres in East European countries (the USSR, the GDR and Hungary), research centres in the West (West Berlin, West Germany, Holland, Finland, Sweden, Britain, Spain, the United States, Canada, Japan) and major research centres in the countries of the South (China, Republic of Korea and other Asian NICs, the Middle East and North Africa, Nigeria and other Sub-Saharan African countries and Latin American states).

A separate important field of the RCCS's activities will be the training (especially on a postgraduate level) of specialists from countries of the South. This will be conducted both in Poland and in the respective countries. As of the spring of 1991, the centre will offer

managers and other persons an eight-week Advanced Postgraduate Course in International Trade and Economic Co-operation (with special reference to developing countries). The centre will also hold one-year courses for the preparation of Polish experts for economic co-operation with the developing countries.

The RCCS is going to publish its own scientific journal: "Polish studies on Asian, African and Latin American Affairs" (its editors are Adam Gwiazda and Stanislaw Flejterski).

The Research Centre for Countries of the South is, of course, *in statu nascendi*. It welcomes all proposals of scientific co-operation and orders for reports on the afore-mentioned fields of research. The centre is also in position to meet special request from overseas countries and international organizations for training courses, consultancy and advisory services, as well as on some interdisciplinary field missions. The RCCS can offer training programmes, workshops and organize international conferences, seminars and symposia.