

**Introduzione**  
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This Conference on the “Corporate Integrity, Ethical Leadership, Global Business Standards” consolidates the name of Politeia as one of the independent research institute more interested and better equipped in developing new theoretical insights and empirical research in business ethics and corporate social responsibility, as well as in fostering a fruitful and inspiring dialogue among some of the most brilliant scholars and in the field and concerned business leaders.

The title of this conference was carefully chosen.

The third concept of global corporate citizenship is of great relevance. Globalization increases the power and influence of such actors of big transnational corporations. Such power and influence cannot be unrestrained, they should be tamed by law and by self-regulation. The idea of global corporate citizenship, simply put, is that they should assume the duties and not only the rights of a global player and that it is in their own interest to behave in such a way. As Donna Wood argued in her speech at the Second Politeia Forum (2005), sustainable capitalism requires stable background institutions, respect for human dignity, and protection of the natural environment. In the absence of strong government forces at the global level, business citizenship and self-regulation responding to stakeholder and competitive pressures must serve these goals. I agree but, as I argue in my recent book on Global democracy, global governance cannot be provided by a single actor; it can only result from the interactions of a plurality of world players- which act according to the principles of exchange, authority and solidarity and give rise to various forms of markets, governments and communities. Transnational corporations act as global business citizens not in the sense that they transcend national frontiers and bypass national regulations, but insofar as they responsibly exercise their rights and implement their duties to individuals, stakeholders and societies within and across national and cultural borders.

In this way they can contribute to democratic global governance, but they need an international lex mercatoria, supranational institutions and international stakeholders capable of providing both the incentives for good practices and the sanctions for bad practices.