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Sommario/riassunto The 8th Global Conference on Business & Economics was held at the

Faculty of Economics of the University of Florence in the month of October 2008. This international conference was sponsored by the «International Journal of Business & Economics and the Oxford Journal». Business academics and economists from universities and business schools in fifty different countries around the world (representing every continent) presented their most recent research findings, most of which unpublished. The papers had been selected on the basis of a double blind peer review process carried out by the scientific committee of the conference. They dealt with various areas of business and economics (strategic management, finance, marketing, accounting, business ethics, business law and others), and focused on a range of industrial sectors and services (from the banking sector to the oil industry, from textile production to automobile manufacturing). This monograph consists of a selection of the papers presented at the conference. Francesco Ciampi is an Associate Professor of Management at the Business Science Department of the University of Florence. His current research and consulting interests focus on management consulting (with an emphasis on client-consultant relationships and consulting

knowledge-creation dynamics), financial management (particularly bank-firm relationships and small and medium-sized enterprises), and high-tech firms.