

FOREWORD

In January of 1995, David Pells made a proposal to the PMI Board of Directors for a new Global Project Management Forum, to be held at PMI'95 in New Orleans and to which all of the world's project management associations would be invited. Like other PMI Board members at the time, I thought it sounded like a good idea but I was also very skeptical. I was not certain that very many countries would actually be represented at such a meeting, or that the results would be worthwhile.

I participated in that first global forum in New Orleans, as well as the second one in Paris in June of 1996, the third one at PMI'97 in Boston and the fourth global forum last year in Chicago. As PMI's president in 1996 and Chair in 1997, I had the opportunity to participate in project management conferences in Moscow, New Delhi and Paris. I have participated in many meetings with international delegations and representatives from around the world that have attended PMI seminar/symposia over the last five years.

Now I believe that the Global Project Management Forum is the single most important gathering of project management leaders in the world, providing a real opportunity to discuss subjects of interest to everyone like standards and certifications. More importantly, however, it is an opportunity to meet our colleagues and to gauge our own professional status in the context of global trends and experiences. It is also an opportunity to listen to representatives from parts of the world that we otherwise might never hear. This "opening up" of professional discussions to representatives from the Asia Pacific, Latin America and other regions of the world led to an enthusiastic success at the first Global Forum in New Orleans that I will never forget. I have seen it continue in subsequent forums, as new organizations and nations begin to participate.

As an American raised in Wisconsin, I had few opportunities in my life to travel outside of North America or to learn very much about other countries or cultures. As the leader of the world's largest project management association, however, I was able to travel around the world, participate in many meetings with colleagues in other countries, and broaden my horizons, both personally and professionally. Globalization of the project management profession is an important and worthwhile objective, and it is well underway. As we move forward in this process, and towards the uncertainties of the next millenium, however, I believe it is just as important to recognize our differences as well as our common goals. Our multitude of different cultural, professional and national experiences and perspectives are global resources that can lead to more and better project management. They give us collective strength.

Let us continue these global forums. Let us continue to share our experiences, working together to advance the project management profession worldwide.

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