

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

It is a great honour for me to be awarded the degree of doctor in business administration from London Metropolitan University.

In communicating with students over the years, I have spoken at length of the need for hard work in order to gain their degrees. It is therefore somewhat ironic that I am today to receive a degree without having done the hard work to deserve it! That said, it is nonetheless a very agreeable experience.

I have been fortunate enough to have both studied in many disciplines and to have graduated from prestigious French academic institutions. However, I have never studied with a view to gaining a doctorate, so this gap on my CV is now filled.

I am particularly pleased to be awarded a DBA as this degree was often the subject of conversations between Bob Morgan and me.

I am a fervent supporter of the DBA in France where the DBA is not recognized as a doctoral qualification in university circles which are so lacking in this kind of degree.

Holders of DBAs cannot pursue their careers in French universities, which is not only absurd but also reveals the narrow-mindedness of the French university ghetto system, which is already considered as too distant from the business environment and its wider context.

Indeed, French universities would do well to create degrees oriented towards research questions which preoccupy companies.

I am also pleased to receive this award from London Metropolitan University as a privileged partner of ESCEM School of business and management where I was director general for seven years.

During that time we developed our school as one of the most attractive French Grande Ecole with international recognition. We developed our network of around a hundred international partner universities around the continent and London Metropolitan holds a special place as a partner.

Together with Bob Morgan and his team, we have over the years developed a strong efficient and cordial partnership allowing an increasing number of students to obtain our degrees within the framework of our courses created together.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank my friend Bob Morgan most sincerely and Peter Forte, friend and professor in charge of our common programmes at ESCEM.

Our collaboration continues to develop towards new programmes and includes now research activities which are more and more important for the performance and reputation of business schools.

Our researcher lecturers are involved in common projects and I am delighted at this development as I know how difficult it is to create joint research projects.

London Metropolitan has become a strategic partner for ESCEM and our futures are in part linked. I am sure as in a good marriage that this partnership is for better.

It is no longer my role to be part of ESCEM's future and therefore the development of our collaboration. But I know that my successor, Tamym Abdessemd, will continue along the path that we started together and that he will in turn contribute to the evolution of our project.

It is said that international academic collaboration is often difficult, that collaboration between the French and the English is always complicated. I can only say that our excellent collaboration over the years proves that these ideas are unfounded. I am pleased to have played an active role in our partnership which I hope will continue to accomplish great things.

Thank you very much.