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### Alma Mater confers Denis O'Brien with honorary Doctor of Laws

For his exceptional achievements as one of Ireland's leading businessmen and entrepreneurs, Denis O'Brien, an active and loyal UCD alumnus, was conferred with an honorary Doctor of Laws degree by his Alma Mater, University College Dublin at an award ceremony at Newman House, Dublin on 14 Nov 2006.



Dr Maurice Manning, one of O'Brien's former UCD lecturers, delivered the citation at the formal conferring ceremony. In

his citation Dr Manning referred to Denis O'Brien's leadership qualities, his strong personality and his distinct capacity to attract people around him.

Denis graduated from UCD in Politics, History and Logic in 1977. He completed his MBA in Boston College in 1982. He founded the Communicorp Group in 1989. Today the group operates 29 radio stations in 6 countries: 4 in Ireland (98F, Newstalk, Spin and East Coast Radio) and 25 in Central Europe. The Group also operates a number of Internet and Media sales companies.

In 1991, he founded Esat Telecom Group to compete against the former state-owned Eircom plc. In October 1997, Esat, of which Mr. O'Brien was Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, listed on the NASDAQ in New York and subsequently on the Irish Stock Exchange. Over a five year period, the company raised \$1billion in equity and debt in a number of successful US and European public offerings. The company established itself as the Number two telecommunications company across the full spectrum of telecom services – fixed line, GSM mobile, data and Internet services. Following a hostile takeover attempt by Telenor, Esat was sold in April 2000 to British Telecom plc for \$2.4 billion.



In 2001 Denis O'Brien established Digicel, which has extended its GSM network to twenty countries in the Caribbean region and plans are advanced to increase this to 22 countries by the end of 2006. Digicel is one of the fastest growing cellular companies in the world. An affiliate, Digicel Pacific Ltd., has recently been awarded licences in Samoa, Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

In addition to these telecoms endeavours, O'Brien purchased, in 2001, Quinta do Lago, the flagship golf resort and property development company of PGA European Tour Courses. Located in the Algarve, Portugal it is one of the most renowned golf courses in Europe.

Denis O'Brien was voted Ireland's Entrepreneur of the Year in 1998 in the inaugural running of the worldwide competition organized and sponsored by Ernst & Young. Denis O'Brien has also been a strong supporter of Amnesty International. He was appointed Chairman of the Organising Committee for the Special Olympics 2003 and in a three year period Denis spearheaded fundraising in the sum of €73 million to finance Ireland's hosting of this event. He is a director of Concern worldwide, and chairman and co-founder of Frontline, the international Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders.