

SPEAKERS TRUST MEDIA INFORMATION

Digby Jones to be President of the Speakers Trust



Lord Jones of Birmingham – still generally known as Digby Jones – has agreed to become President of the Speakers Trust.

This charity, the parent body of SpeakersBank, is dedicated to helping all members of the community acquire the confidence and skills to get their voice heard.

Announcing the appointment, Peter Curtis-Allen – Chairman of the Speaker Trust – said: “We are delighted that Lord Jones has agreed to become President of the Speakers Trust. Not only is he a model to every aspiring speaker, but this appointment is a clear recognition of the great importance of the Speakers Trust’s work in helping everyone acquire the confidence and skills to have their voice heard”.

Digby Jones himself stated: “Effective communication is vital everywhere – in education, in the workplace, in all parts of the community. Yet report after report shows how often this fails to exist. It is vital that we improve and that is why I am pleased to become President of the Speakers Trust, whose mission is to help everyone in the country, young or old, to build up their speaking skill and confidence”

Digby Jones first became a household name when he was Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry, the British ‘Voice of Business’, from 2000 through 2006. In that role he regularly visited businesses in the United Kingdom and worldwide, conveying the message of British business to numerous audiences and key figures in 70 different countries.

In June **2007**, Lord Jones entered the Government as **Minister of State** for UK Trade and Investment at the newly created **Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform**, as well as at the **Foreign Office**.

He has been created a life peer as Baron Jones of Birmingham, of Alvechurch and of Bromsgrove in the County of Worcestershire. He styles himself Digby, Lord Jones of Birmingham, and now sits on the cross benches in the House of Lords.

Digby Jones is the current '**Speaker of the Year**' of the Association of Speakers Clubs, having succeeded the Archbishop of York in that position.

He is also recognised as a powerful public speaker with definite – often controversial – opinions. He has long been in the forefront of emphasising the importance of skills development in all sections of the community. Amongst his current roles, he is a Corporate Ambassador for Cancer Research UK, a Fellow of UNICEF, and is a Diamond Ambassador for Mencap's WorkRight initiative, designed to spread the message of equality for disabled people.

Notes for Editors

- 1 The Speakers Trust exists to help everybody in the community – young, old, disabled or disadvantaged, regardless of their ethnicity or religious affiliations – acquire the confidence and skills needed to have their voice heard so that they can participate in and enrich our community.
- 2 The Speakers Trust is the parent of Speakers Bank Limited which has trained upwards of 40,000 secondary school children in London, through the 'Speak Out Challenge', in the skills of public speaking and is currently extending its activities to further cities throughout the United Kingdom.
- 3 Further details may be obtained:
 - from the Trust's website, which is www.speakerstrust.org.uk

- from Gwyn Redgers, Trustee of the Speakers Trust, on 07740 859579 or on 020 8785 6910
 - from Jez Sweetland, Chief Executive of SpeakersBank, or Christine de Cruz on 0845 862 0444.
 - Also from either of www.speakersbank.co.uk or www.speakoutchallenge.com
4. Lorraine Ellison, Business and PR Manager to Lord Jones can be contacted on lorraine@digbylordjones.com or 07971 069465
 - 5 Lord Jones receives the Speaker of the Year award at a Gala Dinner in his honour on 22nd November in London. Further details from Richard Johnson on 07703 166 688.