



far-reaching developments in our society generally and in the constitutional law that governs it, both domestically and at an international level.

In that context the many cases in which Susan Denham was involved have engaged with issues which have defined not only our relationship with government but also our relationship with each other. They have included issues of great significance for the Irish people which defined important aspects of our public discourse, expectations and understanding. The important and difficult questions addressed by the court of which she has been a member and of which for the last three years she has been President, have included issues relating to, abortion referenda; the rights to refuse medical care; immigration rights; the rights of a sperm donor, whether the frozen embryo constitutes an "*unborn*" under the Constitution; issues of sovereignty including Ireland's relationship with the EU; and to the right of terminally ill persons to end their lives.

leadership of the Working Group all this was achieved. Within a little over 12 months of her appointment, the Working Group, recommended the establishment of an

established in Ireland. She has advocated the necessity from such a body ever since, as a critical institution in a democratic state. Currently the Judicial Council Bill has priority status.

Susan Denham commenced her legal career in a male dominated profession and in a legal system that had changed very little for decades, if not centuries. She has displayed a deep understanding of the administration of justice and the role of the judiciary recognising at the same time that respect for, and devotion to, the law is not incompatible with change. She has used her special skills to play a vital role in the determination of the changes required to modernise the legal system and to make its operation more consonant with the needs of a modern society. Her legacy to the law is special. It reflects her great humanity, understanding and empathy. She has enhanced respect for the law and the Courts. She has ensured that the legal system has responded to the needs of a modern society without compromising its integrity. Her vision and her achievements have left an enduring legacy to society, a legacy of which both lawyers and non-lawyers can be proud. For these immense contributions we honour Susan Denham today.

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*Praehonorabilis Praeses, totaque Universitas,*

*Praesento vobis hanc meam filiam, quam scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem et idoneum esse qui admittatur, honoris causa, ad gradum Doctoratus utroque Jure, tam Civili quam Canonico; idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo, totique Academiae.*