

Press release

Brussels/Utrecht, 6 September 2006

Fortis Clearing Chicago and O'Connor & Company finalise merger into Fortis Clearing Americas LLC

Fortis, the global financial services provider, today announced that it has finalised the merger of Fortis Clearing Chicago and Chicago-based O'Connor & Company.

Fortis Clearing Chicago was legally merged into O'Connor & Company on 31 August 2006. The merged company will continue under the name Fortis Clearing Americas LLC. All accounts held by the two firms will be transferred to the new operating company.

This merger substantially increases Fortis's clearing activities on the US equity, futures and options markets. It also forms a key part of Fortis's international growth strategy to give its clients global reach with a local presence and expertise wherever it operates.

The agreement to acquire O'Connor & Company was announced on 9 November 2005 and has received the required approvals from all regulatory agencies, exchanges and clearing organisations.

Fortis Clearing Americas LLC is part of the Merchant Banking division of Fortis. It is one of the largest independent third-party clearers in Europe, Asia/Pacific and the US and offers clearing services for the derivatives, equities, bonds and commodities markets. In addition to Chicago, Fortis Clearing has offices in Amsterdam, Brussels, Frankfurt, Paris, London, Hong Kong, Singapore and Sydney, with more than 500 employees worldwide. It has General Clearing Memberships at 21 exchanges and access to other major exchanges through third-party relationships.

Fortis is an international financial services provider engaged in banking and insurance. We offer our personal, business and institutional customers a comprehensive package of products and services through our own channels, in collaboration with intermediaries and through other distribution partners. With a market capitalisation of EUR 39.5 billion (31/08/2006), Fortis ranks among the twenty largest financial institutions in Europe. Our sound solvency position, our presence in 50 countries and our dedicated, professional workforce of 58,000 enable us to combine global strength with local flexibility and provide our clients with optimum support. More information is available on www.fortis.com

Fortis Merchant Banking

Merchant Banking is the internationally operating wholesale bank of Fortis. It provides tailored financial services to corporate and institutional clients. Merchant Banking is active in several areas, including treasury, fixed income, energy, commodities and equities (including derivatives and structured products), corporate finance, capital markets, cash management, asset financing, project finance, private equity and structured credits. It is also specialised in fund administration, global custody, securities lending and clearing services. More information is available at www.merchantbanking.fortis.com.

Fortis

Rue Royale 20
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Archimedeslaan 6
3584 BA Utrecht
The Netherlands

www.fortis.com

Press Contacts:

Brussels: +32 (0)2 565 35 84 *Utrecht:* +31 (0)30 226 32 19

Investor Relations:

Brussels: +32 (0)2 565 53 78 *Utrecht:* +31 (0)30 226 32 20