

Public Release

Ananda Marga USA Appeal Process Concludes – Trial Judgment Affirmed

April 10, 2014-Denver, Colorado – We are humbled and honored by the wisdom and insightful words of the judges of the Colorado Court of Appeals.

Today, a three-judge panel of the Colorado Court of Appeals affirmed and upheld the May 16, 2011 ruling of the Honorable Michael A. Martinez in Denver District Court giving possession and control of Ananda Marga, Inc. to Acharya Vimalananda Avadhuta, Sectorial Secretary, and the board of directors reconstituted at the request of the General Secretary of Ananda Marga Pracaraka Samgha Central. The appeal court let the decision of Judge Martinez in the lower court remain.

Highlights of the court's findings: The appeal court agreed with the trial court's findings that the Plaintiffs agreed that there was only one Ananda Marga Central and that the General Secretary was Acarya Dhruvananda Avadhuta at the time of the purported amendments to the Ananda Marga, Inc. bylaws in February of 2006. It is important to note that the appeal court affirmed the findings of Judge Martinez- that were based solely upon the testimony of the Plaintiffs during the trial in his courtroom.

In the wake of today's ruling, Acharya Vimalananda Avadhuta declared, "There is one Ananda Marga, one path of bliss. The question is whether the travel is performed in unison. It is the duty of all on the path of bliss to see to everyone advances and no one lags behind. The ruling of the trial court and its affirmation by the Appeals Court maintains this spirit and honors the Carya'carya of the Ananda Marga Mission. The ruling is not a loss for any one, rather it is a gain for all Ananda Margiis. We will do our best to encourage all of the simple basics, that we can move together in the challenges in growing AM in the hearts and minds of everyone, everywhere, and to serve those many who are suffering. Our Beloved Ba'ba' gave us this guidance in the Ananda Vanii of January 1966: The marching together of all in unison is termed as the society. Instead of despising those who have lagged behind, help them to advance. This alone will be your social Dharma."

The General Secretary of Ananda Marga Pracaraka Samgha Central, Acarya Citsvarupananda Avadhuta, after learning of the ruling today stated, "Finances and emotions were exhausted on this legal challenge. Hundreds, if not thousands, of hours were burned. Such resources would have been better in service to a world growing restless. A mind can refocus on the Spiritual Goal (Is't'a) in an instant. We pray that this ruling and its recognition will inspire all Margiis, relieve them of years of suspense, give positive momentum, to work on solutions together to make our Lord pleased with new progress attained."

Now that the Colorado Court of Appeals has affirmed the ruling, we hope and pray that all Ananda Margiis of New York Sector will unite and work together under His Ananda Marga, the structure of Ba'ba'.

One highlight of this sad affair, outside of the hard-edge legal battle, was the mediation process. The litigation was put on hold. It was, in the end, a period of more than 16-months. The parties worked together to find a neutral, experienced and professional mediator (not a Margii). A

mutually acceptable mediator with a strong background in Alternative Dispute Resolution was selected, Ms. Dana Curtis of California. The convening process started. A safe and neutral location was found as part of the convening. The mediator set standards of confidentiality, and everyone involved directly and peripherally was required to deliver a signed agreement to the mediator. A three-day mediation took place with representatives from both sides. After much effort - listening and communications - a partial settlement agreement was concluded. A mutual statement was released, located at <http://ampsnys.org/node/203>, which is the only public record of this session.

Approximately six months later, a second mediation session was organized, same location, a few different representatives. The objective was to attempt to reach a conclusive settlement. That was not attained but in the process of discussion, a better understanding between the parties was realized. Most felt that the little extra time and resources invested allowed a civil discourse and mutual respect to begin. We are hopeful that the spirit of the mediation work will seed solutions over the long term. In the end, it was found that a final settlement was not possible. The Plaintiffs decided to continue the appeal process at the Colorado Court of Appeals. Even though there has been a great deal of criticism of the mediation efforts, we know of no participant who believes it was a waste. The defendants/intervenor statement related to the final mediation work is found at: <http://ampsnys.org/node/205>

Conflict is a part and parcel of all life. Our beloved Ba'ba' said, "Struggle is the essence of life." Finding solutions or resolving conflict when they are small and manageable is key to preventing complex and over-encompassing scenarios that can take decades and possibly generations to repair and renew, if at all. We encourage each and every one to deal with inter-personal and collective differences and difficulties with courage, with Godspeed and in the spirit of Love and Service from the outset. Don't let misunderstandings and issues fester. Conflict resolution can be learned and can be incorporated into the fabric of a healthy society and culture, inside Ananda Marga, and outside. This has been one of the major learnings of this particular conflict. Do not bully others, and do not let yourself be bullied. Work it out, talk it out. Seek neutral and skilled help when needed. Invest in seeking a sincere solution, as if it really matters. It does matter.

The appellate court's memorandum "Judgment Affirmed" is a public document. It has been made available for viewing at www.ampsnys.org/2010Denver. Other case-related documents are available at the same location. Additionally, a video transcript of the Appeal Court's April 2nd hearing can be found at: <http://goo.gl/pfoKW6>

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