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ISKCON's New Justice Minister

By ISKCON News Staff | Aug 27, 2022



The Justice Ministry works to resolve disputes between ISKCON members and establish an integrated dispute resolution system. Future plans for the Ministry include developing additional processes for adjudication and dispute resolution, developing standards and training for investigators and judicial officers, and providing guidance on these and other justice-related issues to ISKCON leaders. All of the education and experience Champakalata devi brings to the post of Justice Minister can only enhance that office.

At the 2022 Annual General Meeting, the GBC appointed South African devotee, Champakalata devi dasi to the post of ISKCON's Justice Minister. Champakalata devi's appointment follows the resignation of the prior minister, Sesa das, on the grounds of ill health.

Champakalata devi, a disciple of HH Indradyumna Swami has been practicing bhakti yoga since 1978 when her parents joined ISKCON in Durban, South Africa. She has an impressive resume of ISKCON services as well as outstanding educational and professional qualifications.

Champakalata devi has served as the Communications Officer, Legal Advisor, and Chairperson of the ISKCON KwaZulu-Natal Management Board (South Africa). Champakalata devi also served as the Director of ISKCON's International Child Protection office from 2009 to 2016. She currently serves as the International Director for ISKCON's Prevention of Leadership Misconduct office, General Counsel for ISKCON South Africa, CPO review committee member, and Ethics Advisory Committee member.

Champakalata devi holds a Bachelor of Arts, Law, and teaching degree. She has her own law firm, lectures on a part-time basis for the Law Society of South Africa and when available, serves as an acting Magistrate in the South African judiciary and as a presiding officer for the Department of Labor in workmen's compensation matters. She is an admitted attorney with the right of appearance in the High Court of South Africa and is also a conveyancer, notary public, and trained mediator. In 2020, she was appointed by the South African Legal Practice Council to serve as an examiner for the attorneys' admission exams.

Champakalata devi is currently working on a number of projects, including a standardized course for the training of ISKCON members who act as judges or review panel members in ISKCON proceedings.

"My initial focus will be to explore the objectives of the Ministry of Justice, ensuring that devotees can have their issues addressed fairly and quickly. We will structure and capacitate the ministry to be fully operational. Where applicable, alternate dispute mechanisms and restorative justice should definitely be considered prior to engage in adjudicatory processes. I strongly advocate for fair and due processes so I intend to ensure that the rules of natural justice will underpin all investigative and adjudicatory processes."

Tag: Champakalata devi , Champakalata devi dasi , justice ministry