



## PRESS STATEMENT:

We wish to clarify our position on the Naga Flag, which has been subject to misinterpretation and misquotation. The Naga American Council recognizes the Naga Flag as a symbol of the unique history and cultural identity of the Naga people. We understand that the Flag holds different meanings and depths to different individuals, and we respect this diversity.

However, Dame Grace Collins, Honorary President of Nagalim wants to clarify she never said in any press statement that she considered the Naga Flag to be solely cultural. She also maintains she is not affiliated with any one faction but represents all Nagas residing in India and Burma. Apparently these assertions were brought up in yesterdays peace talks by Mr. AK Mishra, the Government of India (GOI) representative to NSCN.

H.E. Dame Collins has purposely stayed neutral on the issue but understands the Naga Flag embodies 75 years of aspirations towards the achievement of the Nagas' own sovereignty and self-determination.

Therefore Naga-American Council's official position will be as summarized by H.E. Dr. Thomas A. Cellucci, Honorary Prime Minister of Nagalim, "We believe in the respect of a people's right to their identity and allegiance for their own flag, as well as the mutual tolerance and dignity of others' right to do the same."

We observed the deep emotional significance that the Naga Flag holds for the Naga people, who have made great sacrifices for their identity and freedom from oppression by the Indian government before the ceasefire agreement. We commend both parties for maintaining peace in Nagalim territories for the last 26 years.

We call upon the Indian government to approach the Naga Flag issue with delicate compassion and recognize its importance as a personal issue to the soul of the Naga people. We believe that such recognition can promote mutual respect and dignity between two genetically and culturally different people.

We also realize no one can force a nation to recognize another's flag. Forcing the Indian flag on the Nagas is as offensive as the Nagas forcing India to recognize their flag. At the very least, both parties should tolerate each other's stance.

At best, as India claims to be the world's largest democracy, it should recognize the Naga Flag as we do here in the United States. This is in light of verifying Nagalim's unique political history of never joining the Indian Union by "conquest or concession."

Very respectfully,

Naga-American Council  
April 14, 2023