



## ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT FOUNDATION

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### **Solidarity Message on Naga's 74th Independence Day**

**Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening to all the distinguished guest, GNF and my dear Naga brothers and sisters,**

I on behalf of Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, congratulate the Naga Global Forum for bringing every one of us together in commemorating the 74<sup>th</sup> Naga Independence Day.

This is indeed a highly symbolic day for the Naga people across the globe because it represents a cry for justice, a deep yearning for peace, and a dream yet to be fulfilled.

A dream, for which thousands of lives have been laid down. A dream for which every Naga citizens have suffered and endured unimaginable pain. This speaks of the truth that this dream is worth beyond our lives and will surely dawn one day.

As an Indigenous person, I would like to share an Indigenous wisdom that is close to my heart.

If we do not know where we came from, we will not know where we are going; and if we do not sacrifice today for tomorrow, the future will gradually swallow us into chaos and we will be a lost people.

Our ancestors taught us that it is through the awareness of time: the unity of the past, present and future that the pursuit of meaning and goal in our lives become tenable.

To be united with the past, we must know why our ancestors and elders sacrificed so much; so that we know what it takes to shape our future.

To be successful and to reconcile, India and Nagas must emerge as a partner through the political negotiation. For this, the negotiating parties must carry with them the wisdom and the capacity to transcend power struggle and rely on trust building. It is indeed, one the of most important development taking place in South Asia for resolving conflict and to move towards a just-peace.

It is important that parties from both sides of the negotiating table realize the importance of an honorable political outcome that leads towards reducing violence and deepening of democracy in the region.

However, it is amply clear that without the participation of the people, peace will not be durable, and justice will be very thin. It is only by taking the people into account, and by their active participation and contribution that one can expect an honorable political outcome.

There is much to be said, but we all know what we feel deep inside. So, I would like to end by saying that Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact appeals to both the negotiating parties to exercise their wisdom and to rely on trust building, so that the political outcome is for generations to come!

Gam A. Shimray

Secretary General, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact