

Naga Conciliation Group – QPSW

Role specification for group members. June 2014.

Overall aim: to support and enable key groups and individuals involved in the conflicts relating to the Naga people to deal with them in the region without recourse to violence, and to create a lasting basis for reconciliation.

Composition of the group:

The Naga Conciliation Group consists of 8 - 10 members and up to 4 corresponding members. The members can serve for up to two terms of three years, and exceptionally a third term. Normalising a third term is currently under consideration by CC. Corresponding members are appointed annually by NCG. The NCG reports to the QPSW Central Committee.

The committee appoint a Clerking team from among their number. The Group is serviced by a member of the QPSW staff team.

Gender balance is important and currently not less than half of the NCG needs to be male in order to meet the expectations of a traditional society and the all male leadership of armed groups. (This creates an acceptance which then allows the issues of women's rights and abilities to be raised and demonstrated.)

Mode of Work:

The NCG's peacebuilding work is undertaken directly by the members, who also take responsibility for the programme direction and the setting of priorities. NCG is not involved in any proselytising activity.

Since May 2001 the Group has been assisting the Naga people to work towards a peaceful and non-violent settlement of their conflicts. The method of work includes:

- a. regular and sensitive Email communication with other NCG members and a wide range of actors in Nagaland and India*, and elsewhere*.
- b. sensitive dialogue with Naga individuals and groups and others through face to face meetings and by telephone
- c. establishing and maintaining relationships of trust in India*, Nagaland* and elsewhere* with those involved: the different armed political groups, mainstream politicians, civil society; using this capacity to assist in trust building, negotiation and reconciliation amongst these groups.
- d. supporting those groups working for peace, in particular the Forum for Naga Reconciliation and the Naga Baptist Church.
- e. most but not all members of the Group take an active part in visits to Nagaland*, and Delhi, and to other international destinations required by the work: frequently, in recent years, to Chiang Mai, in Thailand.

The visits almost always entail meetings with the leaders of armed political factions who are those most fearful of their confidences and true intentions being betrayed. Suspicions about loyalty are very prevalent and closely associated with tribe and national identity. Consequently, it is very difficult for the NCG readily to include committee members of Indian origin in such encounters. It places a necessary but regrettable limitation on the NCG's own nomination process affecting who can be sent where.

** N.B. Our travel to Nagaland and Delhi is recently prevented by an exclusion order and our main contacts therefore have been through email correspondence, telephone calls and meetings in Thailand.*

Commitment:

This work takes a lot of time. Most of the members of NCG are highly to moderately engaged in this work. For the most engaged, it is a voluntary service amounting to two working days per week on average. There is the daily time needed to keep up to date with what is happening and respond appropriately, and the longer intense periods visiting Delhi and Nagaland, e.g. 12 days; or taking part in peace meetings in a third country, Thailand e.g. 7 days.

The Group normally meets between four and six times year, at a time and in a manner and place to suit group members, but normally midweek in Friends House or Woodbrooke. One of these meetings is usually a weekend residential. Given the time needed to understand the complexity of the work, to build good working relationships within the Quaker group, and to develop continuity of relationships with Naga and Indian people, at least two terms of service of three years are likely to be more advantageous to the work.

Experience and Qualities Sought:

Essential

- Being in membership and an engaged, experienced Friend.
- Having a deep sense of the spiritual-political connectedness which lies at the heart of this peacebuilding/peacemaking work.
- Being interested in politics and having some knowledge of peace work/conflict transformation.
- Maturity, stability, flexibility and ability to cope with changing circumstances and stressful situations.
- Skill in listening and dialogue; knowing when – and when not – to suggest or challenge.
- Respectfulness to all persons and empathy for people with very different lives and values.
- Patience with difficult conversations and calm resourcefulness in the face of conflict.
- Experience in and aptitude for working as part of a team.
- Stamina for long flights followed by intensive work.
- Cultural sensitivity and experience in building cross cultural relationships.
- Being competent in and connected for basic I.T.

Desirable:

Although ideally all team members might be able to cover the full range of work in practice all have particular strengths and weaknesses, but the team as a whole needs a good supply of all the following capacities.

- Group work /facilitation skills, such as shaping and holding a process, eliciting, summarising, questioning and clarifying, using workshop exercises if and when appropriate
- Mediation skills / experience with conflict resolution
- Experience in public speaking
- Negotiation and advocacy skills
- Administrative skills particularly in relation to gaining visas, maintaining databases etc.
- Knowledge of India (of Nagas in particular would be unusual but of course a plus).
- Broad political and cultural awareness; capacity to apply this to the South Asia region.
- Ability to research and understand a situation prior to NCG action.
- Time and ability to identify and select and circulate relevant press cuttings for the group
- Ability in reporting, mainly in writing, to BYM structures and groups.