# From Insurgency to Negotiated Settlement: A Comparative Study of the Kurdish and Naga Self-Determination Movements

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**Abstract:**

This paper compares two prominent stateless-nation self-determination movements: the Kurdish movement, spread across Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria, and the Naga movement in Northeast India. Both invoke Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and have pursued that claim mainly through armed insurgency. Using a structured qualitative comparative case study based on secondary sources, the paper examines five dimensions: the historical and legal basis of each claim, the method of pursuit, the constitutional posture of the states involved, the international dimension, and outcomes to date. It argues that fragmentation is the central variable. The Kurdish case comprises four disputes under four constitutional orders, whereas the Naga case confronts a single state. Both movements have moved from insurgency toward de-escalation, through the NSCN-IM ceasefire of 1997 and the PKK's dissolution in May 2025, yet neither has reached a final settlement, and in both cases the movement contends that the state has not matched its concessions with political delivery. The most far-reaching accommodations, Iraq's federal Kurdistan Region and Nagaland's Article 371A, have proved durable for autonomy but closed to secession, as the 2017 Kurdistan referendum and the loss of Kirkuk showed. The paper concludes that the number and character of the states involved, and their willingness to follow through, shape outcomes more than insurgents' willingness to lay down arms. It recommends independently monitored, binding, time-bound implementation mechanisms in any settlement.

**Keywords:**

Kurdish movement, Naga movement, peace processes, self-determination.