

**2023 REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON INFORMATION FOR RECOGNITION  
CONFERENCE OF GRAND MASTERS OF NORTH AMERICA**

Most Worshipful Brother Chairman, Most Worshipful Brethren, and Right Worshipful Brethren:

I am Jorge Aladro, Past Grand Master of Florida and the Chairman of the Commission.

At this time, I am pleased to present the other members of the Commission, all of whom are styled Most Worshipful:

Richard Brown, Vice-chairman, Saskatchewan, Canada

Cameron Bailey, Washington (Western)

Anthony Craaco, Illinois (Midwest)

Adam Hathaway, New Mexico (old Southwest)

John Liley, Utah (Rocky Mountain)

Glen A. Cook, Utah, Secretary

Bradley Phillips, Arkansas (Southeast)-nominee

Richard Maggio, Massachusetts (Northeast)-nominee

For your information, the next region to nominate a Commissioner will be Canada.

Since the delegates to this Conference change each year, I will reiterate the standards for Recognition adopted for our guidance. These are the guidelines used to evaluate the regularity of a grand lodge, and to thereby determine whether it is worthy of consideration for recognition by our member Grand Lodges. The Commission provides this data for use by our Grand Lodges and does not attempt to influence or recommend what action should be taken. The Commission serves you in an investigative and advisory capacity only.

The standards for recognition are summarized as follows:

1. Legitimacy of origin.
2. Exclusive territorial jurisdiction, except by mutual consent and/or treating.
3. Adherence to the Ancient Landmarks-specifically, a Belief in God, the Volume of the Sacred Law as an indispensable part of the Furniture of the Lodge, and the prohibition of the discussion of politics and religion in Lodge.

### **Grand Lodge of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Bulgaria**

The matter of regular Freemasonry in Bulgaria has repeatedly been addressed by the Commission (*see* 2008-2013 and 2015-2016, particularly 2016 and the supplement to 2008). The United Grand Lodge of Bulgaria has been determined to be a regular grand lodge. We see no reason to change this finding. The Grand Lodge of the Ancient and Accepted Rite of Bulgaria does not appear to meet the standards of recognition.

### **Grand Lodge Equinoccial of Ecuador**

A majority of grand lodges of this Conference recognize the Grand Lodge of Ecuador, AF&AM, founded in 1921. In 2022, the Grand Lodge Equinoccial of Ecuador requested findings that they met the standards of recognition in 2022. At that time, the Commission did not have evidence of an agreement or treaty to share the jurisdiction of Ecuador.

A presentation was made to your Commission on February 19, 2023, by Equinoccial. The Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ecuador, AF&AM, also appeared. He stated that the two grand lodges have been talking and that in the future they may sign a treaty of mutual recognition. At this point, there is no treaty.

Inasmuch as there is no treaty to share the jurisdiction, it does not appear that the Grand Lodge Equinoccial of Ecuador meets the Standards of Recognition.

**Grand Lodge of Georgia, A.F. & A.M. (the country).**

In 2022, the Commission set out facts regarding the grand lodges in the country of Georgia. The Grand Lodge of Georgia, AF&AM was formed in 2015. The United Grand Lodge of Georgia (UGLG) was formed in 2018. Last year UGLG sought a finding that they met the Standards of Recognition. Numerous questions were raised by the Commission, including the existence of the 2015 A.F.&A.M. Grand Lodge of Georgia. The Commission was told that the 2015 grand Lodge was no longer in existence. The Commission found that the documentation failed to demonstrate that UGLG met the Standards of Recognition adopted by this Conference.

The 2015 AF&AM Grand Lodge is now before us seeking a finding that it meets our Standards of Recognition.

Representatives of both grand lodges appeared before the Commission on February 19, 2023. This year, the UGLG alleges that the Grand Master of Georgia AF&AM was present in Cologne in October 2016, when the decision to form the UGLG was made, and that he consented to the formation of the new grand lodge. AF&AM of Georgia responds that this Grand Master was expelled from Georgia AF&AM on May 30, 2016, before the October 28, 2016, Cologne meeting occurred, and he therefore had no authority. Further, the AF&AM Grand Lodge never voted to merge. Additionally, it was reported that the Grand Lodge of Russia was informed of the expulsion of the AF&AM grand master prior to the Cologne meeting. The AF&AM of Georgia reports seven lodges currently working, and that at least three AF&AM lodges have continued to work since 2015.

The UGLG Grand Chancellor represented his Grand Lodge before the Commission. He did not address whether the AF&AM Grand Master was expelled by AF&AM of Georgia.

UGLG had no proof that the existing AF&AM Grand Lodge of Georgia ever approved the merger into or with UGLG.

The Commission again notes the issues with the 2018 charter issued to UGLG. We invite attention to our 2022 report.

Consequently, the Commission sees no reason to change its opinion of 2022 regarding the 2018 UGLG. Indeed, there is now even greater evidence supporting that finding.

Based on the facts presented to us, it appears the Grand Lodge of Georgia, AF&AM, founded in 2015, meets the Standards of Recognition.

#### **Grand Lodge of Lebanon, F. & A.M.**

In 2022, the Grand Lodge of Lebanon, F&AM sought a finding that it met the Standards of Recognition. The Commission declined to make findings at that time. The Grand Lodge of Lebanon has returned, asking that we issue “a clear statement of finding about the regularity” of the Grand Lodge of Lebanon. The Grand Lodges of Scotland, Washington, D.C., and Grande Loge Nationale Frances have responded at length, arguing that the Grand Lodge of Lebanon was not begun in a regular manner.

At presentations on February 19, 2023, the following facts regarding the founding of the Grand Lodge of Lebanon appeared established:

There were three New York lodges listed as founding the Grand Lodge of Lebanon: Ani, Fakhrudin, and Chouf.

No minutes from these lodges have been provided showing the lodges approved of the new grand lodge. No minutes of an assembly or convention of Freemasons have been provided showing the masons of Lebanon approved the founding of a new grand lodge.

Importantly, after the formation of the new grand lodge, the three lodges said to have founded the Grand Lodge of Lebanon actually requested and received new charters from the Grand Lodge of New York, keeping the same names they had as lodges under the Grand Lodge of New York and subsequently Lebanon.

Based on the facts presented to the Commission, the Grand Lodge of Lebanon does not appear to meet the Standards of Recognition.

We hope the Freemasons residing in Lebanon will continue to seek the Freemasonry they envision for their country.

#### **Grande Lodge Nationale Togolaise.**

There is a division in this grand lodge under two grand masters: Clomegah and Pessinaba. In 2019, the Conference of Regular African Grand Lodges determined that Ignace Clomegah was the legitimate grand master.

The Commission declines to make any findings regarding the conflict.

#### **National Grand Lodge of Romania**

We have been advised that individuals claiming to be officers of the National Grand Lodge of Romania have appeared at a regional masonic conference, seeking to “reconfirm” existing treaties of recognition. It is noted that they have a similar, but different coat of arms on their letterhead. The National Grand Lodge of Romania advises that they are not seeking to reconfirm existing treaties of recognition. The Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Romania is Radu Balanescu.

Respectfully submitted,

Jorge Aladro, PGM, Chairman  
Richard Brown, PGM, Vice-Chairman  
Cameron Bailey, PGM  
Anthony Craaco, PGM  
Adam Hathaway, PGM  
John Liley, PGM  
Glen A. Cook, PGM, Secretary/Treasurer