

Barotseland urges Her Majesty to intervene

by William Kirtley



Barotseland was recognized as an independent State for five centuries, but made the mistake of signing a treaty guaranteeing it autonomy within an independent State of Zambia in 1964. Within a year of independence, the dictatorial tendencies of Zambia's first President, Kenneth Kaunda had already emerged, and he ignored the terms of the Barotseland Agreement 1964, destroying the institutions of Barotseland, removing Barotseland from the Constitution, and even "annulling" the act of Parliament that granted independence to Zambia since it mentioned Barotseland. To add insult to injury, President

Kaunda changed the name of the Barotseland region to the generic "Western Province," in an attempt to destroy all memory of Barotseland.

For 50 years the people of Barotseland have peacefully protested the violation of the Barotseland Agreement 1964, and in 2012 a Barotseland National Counsel, attended by thousands of Barotseland leaders, was held that voted to accept the abrogation of the Barotseland Agreement 1964, restoring Barotseland to the status of an independent nation.

Barotseland has been an independent nation, continuously, since the 16th-century, other than a brief 60-year period when it was a self-governing British protectorate, and the past 50 years when it has peacefully protested the occupation of Barotseland by Zambia, the destruction of its institutions, and the *de facto* economic embargo that has been placed on Barotseland to hinder its economic and political development.

The British royal family were close to the royal family of Barotseland and have visited Barotseland on a number of occasions, whereas the royal family of Barotseland has attended the coronation of every king and queen of England since the 19th century.

Barotseland is therefore appealing to the royal family, in the hope that they will urge Her Majesty's Government to support Barotseland's quest to have the status of Barotseland determined by the International Court of Justice.

Barotseland has also asked the Zambian Government to agree to [PCA arbitration](#) to determine the status of Barotseland, which Zambia has refused, and it has become a member of the [UNPO](#). It is also in the midst of a case before the [African Commission of Human and Peoples Rights](#) to end the many human rights abuses that have taken place in Barotseland over the past 50 years.

While Zambia is currently headed by a caretaker Government run by Guy Scott, following the death of President Sata, one may hope that the next democratically elected President will be willing to put an end to the 50-year conflict concerning the violation of the Barotseland Agreement 1964, and to engage in talks with the [Barotseland National Freedom Alliance](#) to find a peaceful solution to the 50-year conflict that has destroyed the economy of what was formerly the best-educated and wealthiest part of Zambia.



MR. S. J. THOMAS, GOVERNOR OF THE PROVINCE OF BAROTSE, INTERPRETER, MR. LORREY, MR. S. GARDNER, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, ZAMBIA, 1902. King Lewanika's visit to Bethany House School, Lusitania, July 2, 1902.