

Induna Katema's spell in the limelight—A case of acute amnesia or simply the profile of a shameless liar

by Mungandi wa Muwina-Mungandi

It is a shame that Induna Katema, Mr. Mowa Zambwe, and all those other Indunas who have not disassociated themselves with his statements can choose to be so economical with the truth by trying to paint a picture that they were not part of the [Barotse National Council \(BNC\) Resolutions](#), the ACHPR petition or indeed Barotseland's UNPO membership. It is even more shameful that the Barotse National Freedom Alliance (BNFA) could be portrayed as doing its own things without involving, informing or consulting the Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE). History will indeed judge them harshly for betraying the people of Barotseland and trying to sell their birth right for 'a morsel of red stew lentils' (Gen 25: 29-34) and betraying their nation for 'thirty pieces of silver'. As for those that may unwittingly be part of that company, let them be aptly warned that they should make haste to come out from among them lest they be partakers together with them of their plagues and drink from the cup of that wrath poured out without mixture.

It is not until recently when it became completely clear that the BRE was not towing the same line with the people and to move at the pace dictated by them would take another 50 years before we would get to where we wanted to be that the BNFA made a resolution to move forward irrespective of whether they were coming along or not. It was further resolved that when the path that the BNFA takes begins to make sense to them, they will be welcome on board. It has since come to the BNFA's realization that after all the BRE has never been part of our culture, tradition or governance system. It is as foreign as anything foreign can be and designed to keep Barotseland under subjugation to their North-Eastern Rhodesia overlords.

The not so honourable Induna Katema has enjoyed quite a spell in the limelight over the past several weeks, courtesy of the Daily Nation, one of Zambia's tabloids currently sympathetic to the ruling Patriotic Front party. The news outlet went out of its way in covering Induna Katema's misleading, disjointed and unfactual statements against the people of Barotseland's resolve to claim their inherent RIGHT to self-determination anchored on the [27th March, 2012 BNC Resolutions](#).

Firstly, those of us who know better have allowed his spell in the limelight to continue for a while because of the general policy which dictates that we should not at anytime be seen to be at loggerheads with our traditional leadership in this shell called the BRE. Secondly and most importantly, we had hoped, maybe against hope, that either Induna Katema would come out and dispel or disown the statements, even by implying that he had been misquoted or, alternatively, we expected a statement from the 'BRE' disassociating itself from the misguided and unfactual statements that have been running in the named tabloid since the first week of October, 2015. Induna Katema who is referred to as the 'BRE Spokesperson' is quoted as having said, among other things, that:

- The Kuta is not part of the BNFA's Petition against the Government of Zambia before the ACHPR;
- The Kuta rejected the hoisting of the UNPO flag at the BRE grounds; and
- The BRE will not succumb to pressure by those calling for self-determination.

We wish to put the record straight by dismantling these disjointed, misleading, misguided and unfactual statements. Hopefully, by the time we are done our dear Induna Katema may not enjoy the limelight as much.

From the word go, I wish to dispel the myth about the BNFA Petition before the African Commission of Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) in Banjul, The Gambia. The petition sent to the ACHPR was mandated by the historic BNC of March 26th – 27th 2012. This historic meeting was dully called and superintended by the Litunga-in-Council under the tutelage of the Right Honourable Ngambela, Mr. Clement Wainyae Sinyinda, and the able chairmanship of Hon. Induna Mukulwakashiko, Mr Batuke Imenda, with the full participation of all Indunas from the Saa-Sikalo Kuta who included the current Induna Katema then as Induna Namunda, as well as all the District Kutas. The BNC was also graced by some chiefs from Southern province, politician from both sides of the divide, that is to say ruling and opposition and members of parliament, and the diplomatic corps. As I recall, after the BNC, the current Induna Katema accompanied by this author, were tasked by the Kuta to travel to Lusaka and distribute the Dossier of the BNC proceedings to all the foreign missions based in Zambia. While he spent most of that time relaxing at his son's place in Chelston, I and some colleagues trotted from one embassy to another under close police surveillance. Soon thereafter, Ngambela Sinyinda, in the company of Mr. Zambwe as Induna Namunda at the time and the then Induna Katema who is currently Induna Kalonga, travelled to Lusaka to deliver what was dubbed as a '[Letter of Dispute](#)' to the late Zambian President Mr. Michael Chilufya Sata (MHSRIP). The [letter](#) in question was drafted in Lusaka with the full participation of the two Indunas aided by some legal brains. Other members of the drafting team were Honourable Mutungulu Wanga, currently BNFA Deputy Chairman-General for Strategy and Diaspora Liaison as well as Honourable Batuke Imenda in his capacity as Induna Mukulwakashiko.

Among other issues, the [letter](#) was a formal notification to the Government of Zambia of the position adopted the BNC regarding Barotseland's decision to separate from the Republic of Zambia and further called on President Sata to engage the Barotse Government into disengagement dialogue that would see Barotseland separate from Zambia within five years. It is interesting to note how quickly Mr. Zambwe has forgotten all these details.

The originating documents of what is today the Communication before the ACHPR in The Gambian capital of Banjul were submitted to the Commission on 13th November 2012 by the Ngambela of Barotseland, as a follow-up action to the [BNC Resolutions](#). This was long before the BNFA was conceived or even conceptualized. It was only after the portrayal of excess inertia and lack of capacity by the BRE that the BNFA was formed to aid in the implementation of the [BNC Resolutions](#) in general and it particularly applied to be enjoined to the Banjul petition which has come to be dubbed '**Communication 429/12: The Ngambela of Barotseland and Others v the Republic of Zambia.**' Otherwise all the communication to Banjul has been done under the auspices of the Office of the Ngambela until recently. Of course the technical part that has seen the petition progress to its current status has been provided by the BNFA team who had always brought their work to the Kuta for endorsement and signature mainly by one, Induna Inete Mr. Akapelwa Tawila Silumbu, who had been particularly assigned to follow up on all issues pertaining to implementation of the [BNC Resolutions](#) in the aftermath of Honourable Sinyinda's ceasure of operation as Ngambela. It is so absurd that someone from the BRE, as senior as Induna Katema in the person of a Mr Zambwe, can deny participation in the Banjul process. Both the BNC and the Banjul process have been authenticated by the Litunga-in-Council as can be seen from the signed [press statement](#) which was trying to exonerate the Litunga from accusation in the Post Newspaper that he has turned against the [2012 BNC Resolutions](#). The other document of much interest is one that was sent to Banjul which effectively binds together the BRE at the apex (Namuso), the BRE at all the District kutas and the civil society organization which make up the BNFA as being equal stakeholders in the petition before the ACHPR which was titled '[Endorsement](#)'. Unless the Induna Katema is suffering from some form of amnesia, he cannot deny knowledge of these essential documents. Neither can the rest of

the BRE, otherwise why have they all remained mute while Induna Katema is having a field day misleading the masses and misrepresenting the BRE?

From its inception, the BNFA has gone out of its way in trying to work hand-in-hand with the BRE in a harmonious fashion. This situation persisted despite the warm blood that existed between the two entities. A little background is that when Hon. Clement W. Sinyinda offered to step down as Ngambela citing hindrances in the way of the [BNC Resolutions](#) implementation and inbuilt inertia caused by some systemic ills and institutionalised inadequacies which the struggle for a self governing Barotseland aims at remedying, a group of those that today hold prominent offices in the BNFA took it upon themselves to challenge the Kuta and indeed confront the Litunga to seriously reconsider the situation at hand pointing out that if action to reverse the situation was not urgently taken, the repercussions were too ghastly to contemplate and that there was no telling on what the end result was going to be. The group was promised something would be done to remedy the situation but nothing has ever been done.

When the [BNC Resolutions](#) implementation process was seen to be grinding to a complete halt, the idea to form the BNFA was muted, and it was to be an alliance of the existing Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) then engaged in the struggle for Barotseland's right to self determination. Hon. Sinyinda was then picked to be the leader of this alliance. From the point of view of the CSOs, this was seen as a natural choice but from those of the BRE it was perceived as an antagonistic tactic. It has been the position of the BNFA that whatever differences existed between Hon. Sinyinda and some members of the BRE, which mainly bordered on personalities and probably ambition by some to take over as the next Ngambela that could be buried as we forged ahead in the interest of a free Barotseland.

There is overwhelming evidence in support of the fact that the BNFA tried its level best to embrace the BRE in its activities aimed at implementing the [BNC Resolutions](#). This can be seen by the numerous trips made by the BNFA Executive Committee to Namuso to brief the Saa-Sikalo Kuta and the Litunga himself on the progress and forward motion being made by the Alliance. Standing out of many such meetings, is one that was made on the 10th of September 2014 when the BNFA engaged the Saa-Sikalo kuta for the whole day presenting its activity report and making suggestions and proposals for the way forward. The BNFA took it upon itself to ensure that all requisites necessary for a day-long non-stop meeting were put in place and, indeed all Indunas from both the Sikalo and the Saa Kutas, including Induna Katema, participated to the full. It was at this special 'meeting' that the famous Barotseland Transitional Authority (BTA) proposal was made and accepted in principle by the Saa-Sikalo Kuta. The BNFA was actually tasked to take the report and proposal to all the district Kutas. It is very difficult to imagine how Induna Katema could forget that landmark meeting, discussions and its conclusions.

The issue of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) flag and, indeed, the UNPO Membership which BNFA holds on behalf of Barotseland was discussed at length in the meeting of the 10th September 2014 as can be seen from the document cited above. When preparations were made for someone to travel to Brussels and attend the General assembly of UNPO wherein Barotseland would be formally accepted into UNPO membership, made to sign the UNPO Covenant and exchange flags with UNPO, the BRE was completely kept in the loop. We have the UNPO flag today as a result of those preparations and it must be known that the Barotseland flag is flying at the UNPO headquarters in Brussels together with the flags of all other Nations and Peoples that are members of UNPO. The BRE was consulted on what it deemed to be the legitimate flag of Barotseland and goodwill messages were sent to the BNFA representative who made the flight to Brussels to represent Barotseland from the Kuta and purportedly from the Litunga himself.

When this Barotseland emissary Mr. Mutungulu Wanga returned, message after message were sent to him to come over and present the UNPO flag before the Kuta and the Litunga such that he had to make an abrupt mission to Mongu-Lealui. It is only when it was clear that the flag was causing heightened euphoria among Barotse Nationals that the Kuta felt they couldn't handle the excitement and started growing cold feet about the whole issue.

For anyone within the BRE circles to deny knowledge of Barotseland's UNPO membership of which that flag represents is a blatant falsification of facts and like a huge elephant trying to hide behind a small shrub. The UNPO flag is here to stay and additional flags have since been brought in. It will be hoisted on Barotse soil and it will soon become a common feature flying at every meeting called to discuss the Barotse issue and we make no apologies for that because we are proud of our UNPO membership which stands for **non violence, rule of law, respect for human rights, democracy and protection of the environment**. Why would anyone shy off from such noble ideals? You certainly have to be barbaric and a vandal to end up being ashamed of such noble tenets and ideals.

The BNFA has remained true to its desire to work hand in hand with the BRE. When it, jointly with the BRE, accomplished the task of responding to the Zambian government sham submission to the ACHPR on admissibility, the BNFA Chairman General wrote a [letter](#) to the Kuta thanking it for the spirit of cooperation and looking forward to much more collaboration. As recent as mid-August, the BNFA Secretary General wrote a letter to request for an [appointment](#) with the Kuta and the Litunga for a meeting to discuss issues pertaining to the continued collaboration between the two stakeholders in the struggle for the actualization of the aspirations of the people of Barotseland.

GOD BLESS BAROTSELAND!