

We need to be practical in dealing with the question of self-determination

by Ndate Mukete

The practical aspect means support by all Barotse of all our national aspirations. In our case, this means actualizing the [Barotse National Council resolutions of March 27, 2012](#). Security and national peace can be fulfilled by achieving complete democracy and securing equal rights, which create the best conditions for people to fight for independence. Our people should realize that the slogan of “**OneOne**” is used by the oppressor to encourage us to participate in their politics in order to serve their own interests and privileges at the detrimental of ours.

The oppressor always places his martial interests in the forefront and does this systematically. This is typical of Barotseland and Zambia, which has made the Barotse second class citizens. The resources of Barotseland are drained to develop Zambia, which goes back to the pre-independence period. In such a scenario, what we need to do is to demand independence by using any means possible and start running our own affairs, including rejecting participation in all activities put forward by the oppressor, especially political participation. We must concentrate on mobilising ourselves against the oppressor, for the oppressor’s target is to hamper our struggle by pushing its on national interest against our interests. This is done through harassment, denial of freedoms, such as freedom of assembly, freedom of speech and freedom of association. It is for this reason that we, the Barotse, must stand firm in our demand for recognition of our rights to self-determination without any pre-conditions. In this regard, our vital task is to strengthen ourselves against the oppressive regime of Zambia and to educate each other in both urban and rural areas in the spirit of consistent uncorrupted democracy. This shall guarantee Barotseland greater national harmony and peace.

Barotseland recognizes equality and equal rights of nations unlike countries like Zambia which do not respect international agreements and deaf to realities by enslaving other nations. Zambia should be advised by the international community to peacefully leave Barotseland, which it holds captive. Therefore, peace loving countries should not relent in telling the Zambian authorities to vacate Barotseland forthwith for the sake of respect for human rights and justice. We should be clear in our political agenda. If we fail to advance and advocate the slogan of “**we have a right to self-determination**” we shall be playing into the hands of not only the oppressor but also of the international community who will fail to understand what we really want.