



BNFA invited to celebrate the International Human Rights Day

by BNFA Publicity Wing

The Barotse National Freedom Alliance (BNFA) celebrated the International Human Rights Day, which took place on Monday December 11, 2017 at the Southern Sun Hotel in Lusaka at the invitation of the European Union (EU) Delegation headed by HE Alessandro Mariani, Ambassador of the EU to the Republic of Zambia. The occasion was also graced by several member states of the EU represented by their High Commissioners. The BNFA was represented by a three man delegation led by Hon. Clement Wainyae Sinyinda. The BNFA takes cognizance of the EU's invitation to such a high profile international forum and used the opportunity to draw the attention of international community to the continued human rights violations of the Zambian government against the people of Barotseland. In particular, the BNFA addressed the violations of the Right of Assembly; Right of Speech; Right of Association; Zambia police brutality and ongoing discrimination against the people of Barotseland as well as the recent [denial by Zambia police for the people to hold a public meeting](#), during the question and answer session. The occasion was also attended by several Zambia civil society organizations who expressed ignorance of the ongoing human rights violations against the people of Barotseland.

Earlier, the Ministry of Justice and the Zambia Human Rights Commission debriefed the participants on their report at the 28th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group in Geneva. The report exposed a lot of challenges faced by the Zambian government in addressing the worsening human rights situation in the country. It was also clear that human rights violations against the people of Barotseland were skirted. Nonetheless, the Zambian government assured the International community that it was putting in place processes to improve the implementation of human rights instruments.

Human Rights Day is observed every year on December 10—the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This year, Human Rights Day kicked off a year-long campaign to mark the upcoming 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The period also corresponds with the 28th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group whereby Zambia was required to submit a UPR National Report to declare actions it has taken to improve the human rights situation and overcome challenges to the enjoyment of human rights. Alas, on this day, the Zambian government, through their state police, [denied the people of Barotseland to hold a public meeting](#) to discuss the outcome of the [UPR submission](#) but instead celebrated the International Aids Day in the territory of Barotseland. The Zambia government neither has the will nor intention of respecting the human rights of the people of Barotseland. It is now incumbent on the international community to directly support the work of the BNFA and directly intervene in order to ensure the respect of the Human Rights of the people of Barotseland as [requested in Geneva](#).