

Don't use Barotseland as a test case for armed struggle—International community requested

by Walyata Utuweke

We request the SADC countries and the international community not to use Barotseland as a test case for an armed struggle. We peacefully tried a union with Northern Rhodesia/Zambia, which failed to work and have decided to peacefully agree to their severing our relationship. Why should we be held hostage on account of a union which the other party unilaterally decided not to honor? We are a people that have faced the misery of poverty and denial of our human rights at the hands of a ruthless Zambian regime. We are fed-up and we have decided to have our political independence. In the same way, let no BRE or Zambia force us to take up arms.

The people of Barotseland as an occupied country will never reconcile themselves to oppression by North Eastern Rhodesia (Zambia). They will fight this colonialism courageously and produce thousands of champions of freedom fighters and independence for Barotseland. The people of Barotseland know that the forces are unequal and the military hardware of the occupier Zambia and their surrogate Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE) continue to ruthlessly suppress the popular independence struggle.

The struggle of the oppressed Barotse has reached unprecedented proportions, embracing the entire occupied territory. It is in this context that Zambia can no longer sustain its colonial system and has reverted to the old tactic of restoring and re-negotiating a new Barotseland Agreement 2018 with Edwin Lubosi Imwiko with his self-appointed stewards—the so called BRE—who consciously choose to be agents of the oppressive Zambia government.

The BRE is in actual fact an institution created by the Kaunda regime for the purpose of destroying the democratic Barotse governance system as comprised in the Barotse government. BRE is devoid of democracy. Hence, we call upon the international community not to recognize any arrangement that they intend to make with the oppressive Zambian regime because it does not represent the interests of the people of Barotseland.

The international community, especially SADC countries whose people fought armed struggles to liberate themselves know the repercussions of oppressing people. We ask SADC leaders to prevail on Zambia and BRE to respect the will and aspirations of the Barotse. Zambia and BRE know that Zambia does not have a legitimate claim over Barotseland, which explains why the Zambian regime lied before the African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights in Banjul and keep running away from signing the Permanent Court of Arbitration submission agreement process.

BRE and Zambia cannot and should not sink so low and try to replace an international treaty signed by three countries with their own and with no mandate to do so. Zambia was born out of the [Barotseland Agreement 1964](#) and there is nothing that anyone can do now to change that basic fact of history. Doing so will not only be an insult to the Queen of Britain but also to the Commonwealth and to the people of Barotseland.

History shows that political independence was won by people from colonialists through long and tenacious struggle, in most cases these were armed struggles in which patriots displayed heroism and revolutionary determination, examples are Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Algeria and Cuba. Therefore, people who suffered colonialism disease should not pretend that what Zambia is doing is right. Barotseland existed as a country before Zambia. It has its distinct territory, people, language, national anthem and flag. We are ready to rule ourselves. We have a clear manifesto and economic blue print.