

BNFA STATEMENT ON ZAMBIA'S INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION

by Maybin Mubita Sikwa, Deputy Chairman General

'Truth is by nature self-evident. As soon as you remove the cobwebs of ignorance that surround it, it shines clear.' Mahatma Gandhi.

On 24th October 2019 Zambia marks 55 years of independence from British colonial rule. On the other hand, Barotseland will mark 55 years of annexation (capture, seizure, takeover, occupation, or invasion) by Zambia.

Zambia has captured, seized, taken-over, occupied and invaded Barotseland. Barotseland on the hand has surrendered, yielded, capitulated or given up her sovereignty to Zambia.

Question is, when Zambians celebrate their 55 years of independence should the people of Barotseland celebrate with them? The answer is NO. The people of Barotseland CANNOT and MUST NOT celebrate Zambia's independence. We have NO independence to celebrate. We are not independent. If we celebrate Zambia's independence, which we have been doing all the past 54 years, we are displaying myopic, infantile folly. No one understands us. The international community laughs at us. Zambians enjoy our feeble mindedness.

Barotseland has been colonised by Zambia. The people of Barotseland should, instead, vigorously fight for their independence from Zambia. We should take back our sovereignty and reclaim our lost glory. Without the Barotseland Agreement 1964, there is no Zambia. Truth is Zambia is a lie. Zambia has had no noble moral leadership for all the 55 years of its existence. Zambia's leaders are liars.

Even more puzzling is the docility of the people of Barotseland. For 55 years we have been celebrating our captivity, the denial of our basic human rights. How meek and submissive?

As a people we should wake up from the 55-year slumber. We have surrendered our land, our being, our natural resources, our freedoms and our sovereignty to brutal strangers. We need to reclaim everything that belongs to us. We have to fight for what belongs to us rather than cry in smoke.

The enemy has even managed to divide us. Barotseland has 38 tribes or ethnic groups. The enemy has lied to us that Lozi is a tribe and we have accepted it. How comical! Lozi is citizenship of Barotseland, not tribe. All the 38 tribes of Barotseland are Lozi by nationality. There is no tribe called Lozi in Barotseland. It is a language unifying the people of Barotseland.

The enemy is scared of the truth. We are denied the platform to tell the Barotse people the truth because the enemy is scared. The oppressor is always afraid of the oppressed. We should not beg for our freedom. If only we could be united as Barotse nation, all the 38 ethnic groups, the enemy would scamper, scuttle. The enemy only tries. He has been taking away the Litunga's sovereignty authority bit by bit. And we do nothing. Kenneth Kaunda merged the Church of Barotseland with small churches from Northern Rhodesia, we did nothing. He changed the name of our territory to Western Province, we did nothing.

The enemy has made us believe that the Litunga has no sovereignty authority and we have believed him. How strange! The Litunga has enormous sovereignty authority to decree anything in Barotseland. In 2012 he decreed that there be Barotse National Council, and lo there it was!

We erode our own sovereignty and the authority of the Litunga by taking part in Zambian politics. We should never participate in their elections. By participating in their elections and politics we are legitimising our suppression, our oppression and segregation. Ours is self-inflicted bondage.

The Barotse National Freedom Alliance does not subscribe to any process that undermines the struggle for the independence of Barotseland. Participating in Zambian elections entrenches Barotseland's annexation by Zambia. The African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) verdict made this very clear.

WE CALL ON ALL GENUINE BNFA MEMBERS AND BAROTSE NATIONALS TO STAND BY THIS PRINCIPLED POSITION.