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The President of the  
Republic of Zambia  
State House  
LUSAKA

Mr. President Sir,

re: BAROTSELAND AGREEMENT 1964

We represent the Barotse Traditional Authorities in this matter who now have instructed us to contact you on the same.

Mr President Sir, we believe you are familiar with this Agreement and the circumstances that led to the signing of it which principally was meant to induce the Barotse to enter independence into Zambia as a Unitary State within Zambia but ensuring an entrenched visible safeguard to their old autonomy in land and many Local Government matters, and it was so widely designed to include the Barotse wholly as a people within Zambia and yet providing legal entitlement for each and everyone of them, the Barotse, individually.

Sir, we further understand that this Agreement which was entered into in London on 18th May 1964 between Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia's President designate) and Sir Hwanawina Lewanika III Litunga of Barotseland was meant to establish Barotseland's position within Zambia in place of the Agreement which existed at the time between Britain and Barotseland which was going to be terminated upon Zambia's attainment of independence in 1964, and in accordance with the Barotseland Agreement, Barotseland would have continued to enjoy special status in an independent Zambia. This Agreement was to remain in force indefinitely and any amendment to it would have required consultations between the two signatory parties as is the case with any other form of Agreement.

Mr President Sir, we are informed by our clients that this Agreement has not been honoured by the Government of the Republic of Zambia. In dishonouring this Agreement, the Zambian Government through it's Parliament from 1965 to 1970 passed numerous legislations which completely watered down

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this Agreement without providing for any compensation by way of damages to the aggrieved party - the Barotse Royal Establishment. As if not enough, the Zambian Government further through parliament took over the assets of the Barotseland National Council through the Ministry of Local Government and Housing and the Litunga's treasury at the time amounting to £78,500,000.00 was forfeited to the State.

Mr President Sir, the members of the Barotseland Royal Establishment had constantly reminded the UNIP government about the breach but due to the perpetual State of Emergency that existed at the time coupled with UNIP's dictatorial tendencies, it was feared and indeed reasonably so, that any pressure exerted on the UNIP government would have serious repercussions on the members of the Barotse Royal Establishment and therefore the grievances could not be publicly voiced out.

Sir, the Barotse people are now desirous to have your comments on this matter as they feel betrayed by their own government in whom they had entrusted their rights and believed were entering into this Agreement in good faith.

Sir, the former President Kenneth D Kaunda did at last concede to dialogue with the Barotse people and its our client's wish that you personally meet them to discuss this long standing matter which has caused a lot of anxieties among the Barotse people whom we understand Sir, tirelessly campaigned for your government's victory in the last elections and have vowed to continue to support your government with blind loyalty.

It is our considered opinion Mr President Sir, that this is not the kind of matter that we should merely leave to the courts to decide because of it's sensitive nature and the need for continued peace, unity and stability in our nation of Zambia. We therefore, as a result have halted the court proceedings which were commenced in the Second Republic to allow you, Mr President Sir, to discuss this matter with the Barotse people through their Royal Establishment.

Our clients anxiously await your word Sir.

Yours faithfully  
RMA CHONGWE AND COMPANY

