

## **Sikweti-Kweti Lunar New Year Greetings**

by Chairperson General—Mukwae Wabei Siyolwe

In our traditional calendar, worldview and the way we used to time with nature, the movements of our ancestors were directed by the movement of stars and the moon which influences the annual flood of the Barotse Flood Plain. All of our ideas about the world came out of this interaction with the flooding of the plain - Bulози.

In our traditional thirteen month calendar they hoped to witness the first month of food after the drought of Nulule in December which is the month of hunger. By Sope, January, the first month for food would come after the month of little food called Njimwana which is November. Yenda, October had been the month of sun and rain, while Muimunene, September, was the month of fierce sun. For all of our months Muyana, August, Sikuluyu July, Mbuwana June, Kandao, May, Lungu, April and Liyatamanyi March, every change in the flooded plain represented a change in the annual calendar and directives for living our life on earth. We lost this sacred connection very recently with the last Kuomboka and now we are severed from the source as that national collective action of - getting out of the waters - was our umbilical cord, the switch to our metaphysical, biological electrical body and boy politic - African world.

We once related to the world in us, around us and the invisible to us through the rituals and objects of memory and ritual that Kuomboka and Kufuluhela represent. We now cease to exist in our centuries old cultural specificity as we can no longer define the world on our own terms as a people as Malози. This all happened right before my very eyes and I recorded the whole process since 1995.

Our story of disruption happened way back in Berlin in 1884, when Europe illegally carved up Africa and The British South African company (backed by the British Crown), went to work at dismantling our worldview (religion) and employing our own cowards (BRE) to discredit and now dismantle everything we once held sacred by the time the Barotseland Agreement had been signed in 1964. Words like Balimu, and Lifasi were seldom spoken, and now with the UNESCO and African Parks plan, we will be completely disconnected to our ancestors, as we will no longer be custodians of our own land and animals and the traditional ways of life between the plain and the bush will be gone forever.

Ten years ago when a small group of us in Diaspora were excited to see our nation evolving finally with the 2012 BNC Resolutions. We had the foresight to see the current geo political events coming of corporate corruption and government collusion, mass peaceful civil disobedience against mandates most everywhere in the world. We knew this was coming and we aligned ourselves with UNPO in the hope that by organizing, even a handful of ourselves, to have structures in place in the inevitability of a land grab for Barotseland, there would be one or two who could represent us in the bigger picture and negotiate on our behalf. We know that we were one generation away from cultural genocide and when we started our campaign to actualize the Barotse National Resolutions (2012) motivated by an energy I cannot describe but it began with two words - justice and self-determination and how to illustrate to people that freedom is not free but we must continuously battle with greed, ignorance, and corruption Everyone conscience being is awake to the grave situation we are in regarding geo politics, bio medicine and artificial intelligence impending on our every freedom in all spheres of life as the western world divides the world up -again- in order to appropriate wealth and control people. There is no doubt all systems are dying under the weight of global corruption but we must actually visualize the

world we want to see for ourselves by having the courage to stand up for what we value. Do we see ourselves as being black British with a most recent history yet as Malozi our roots as a nation dates back to 1200's? Even if you are in Canada, New Zealand or Australia you will never be fully accepted and besides all those countries are now verging on dictatorships? Who knew this could happen but it has. Once you see yourself in the current status, enthuse repeated cycles of ethnic cleansing, it is possible to see the bigger picture for us as a people related through kinship, through blood. BNFA emphasize our cultural citizenship as Africans must have more currency than our allegiance to nation states who are representatives for multinational corporations. Our partnerships have grown with other indigenous and the global majority through our membership at UNPO. In the past year BNFA has been able to participate in the UN Forums on Minority Affairs <https://youtu.be/ry1mEvwjqEA> with the Tom Lantos Institute and the Republic of Gambia as well as a keynote speech at the International Conference on African Cultures (ICAC) in Harare, Zimbabwe reporting on the land issue and repatriation of ritual objects, body parts and art from an African perspective. These interactions and interventions have been critical in understanding the roots of all of our political problems, addressing the injustices done to us at home and in the international forum up until now and from 2022 onwards we ask nothing from you but putting your own conscious to the test to either be a spectator to our unraveling global history or the writer of it. From all of us at BNFA we wish you good health and peace.

Shangwe