

BNFA Report on the 26th UNPO General Assembly

by BNFA Publicity Wing



Barotseland attended the 26th Unrepresented Nations and People's Organization (UNPO) General Assembly held in Washington DC on March 26-27, 2022. Barotseland was represented by the Barotse National Freedom Alliance (BNFA). Participation was both physical and virtual, the BNFA delegation comprised of four representatives. Barotseland effectively participated in both the deliberations and elections for the first time since joining the organization in 2013. Our participation in the past was hampered by lagging behind in financial standing. Moving forward, it is imperative that we get up to speed so as not to be jeopardizing our membership and derive full membership benefits.

Day one was devoted to deliberations of UNPO/member business focusing on a shift of UNPO business to ensure that it is truly participatory and energetic movement for self-determination, and one that meets the member's hopes in a sustainable and practical way.

It was resolved that a constitutional committee be created , which is tasked with understanding what members of UNPO desire of the organization and the feasibility of delivering such outcomes, through talking with the members (one-on-one and in groups) about their desires and practicalities of UNPO, including funding, consulting with secretariat staff, former members, partners, donors and any other group, which could provide relevant information and perspectives and report to the next General Assembly within a time period of one year.

Thus far, the work of UNPO has focused on:

1. strengthening member movements;
2. strengthening work on self-determination;
3. thematic campaigns of high-relevancy to members—compromised spaces, new forms of colonialism, peaceful and inclusive societies;
4. rebuilding UNPO presence in the USA and before the United Nations in New York; and
5. improving visibility and communication with the membership.

Day two was dedicated to elections, in which a female member was elected to the position of President and approval of the resolutions. While Barotseland could not secure any of the elective positions, our participation was nonetheless of great benefit to our nation by securing it greater visibility and partnerships with other nations.

The legitimize of our right to self-determination as a sovereign nation is now irreversible. The onus is on us to take the right steps in the realization of that cause. It is no longer the question of whether Barotseland can be free but when shall that take place. The when question is answered by the steps we take. We call on the BNFA membership and Malozi to stand firm, strong and do what is needed.