

# ZAMBIA'S LONG JOURNEY TO POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC EMANCIPATION

The role of Kenneth David Kaunda in nation-building and national development

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## **Abstract:**

*The social value or relevance of this article was to lift, highlight and re-affirm the role of Kenneth David Kaunda (1924 to 2021), First Republican President of Zambia, in nation-building and national development, oriented towards Zambia's long journey to political and economic emancipation, with far-reaching reverberations across nations of the world. This article sought to contribute a contextual reflection on Kenneth David Kaunda in order to 'narrow' the knowledge or research gap where freshly generated reflections about Kenneth David Kaunda have not yet been fully published to describe Kaunda's role in nation-building and national development, now that he has left this world. This is against a backdrop of realities of a post-colonial, post-independence, post-nationalist and post-Kaunda era. The historical setting of this article, as noted already, was the most recent departure of the dearly beloved Great Leader from this earthly life to another world of spiritual realms, where all humans gravitate to. The research methods used to write this article were essentially qualitative in nature, based on data analysis, by way of critical interrogation of credible phenomenology, that is, the authors' experiential and existential reflections about the Great Leader, and by way of systematically examining both primary and secondary sources of information. The findings of this research were that Kenneth David Kaunda was a man imbued with and formed by a deep faith in the Almighty, a cohesive people-person persona, a compassionate and gracious heart, a characteristic spirit of moderation, a penetrative charisma, an unshakable commitment to global peace and emancipation, an irreversible patriotism, a visionary mind beyond himself to the other, an impeccable belief in family values and the extended family relations and friendships which transcended national borders, and a passionate liberating love and emancipatory spirit for fellow humans, regardless of race, creed and status in society - the kind of traits of character which enabled him to execute his primary purpose on Earth, that is, to fight for Africa's freedom, liberate Africans and contribute to the evolving Africa's socio-politico-economic infrastructure against a human history tainted by slave-trade, slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism - creating a bright future for all Zambians and all Africans that would endure for eternity. Thus, as a legendary figure and a larger-than-life exemplification and epitome, Kenneth David Kaunda, fearlessly and courageously confronted 'head-on' tribalists, racists, fascists, imperialists, colonialists and neo-colonialists, and selflessly and vicariously fought for the independence of his people and their neighbors, liberated his people and their neighbors and laid a firm foundation in nation-building and national development, with remarkable positive impacts in the liberation struggle and the emancipation of Africa. The article concluded that the present generation of political leaders of the African continent must build on the historic achievements of Kenneth David Kaunda and his compatriots as a clarion call to servant leadership and duty, and set a very high tone for Africa's genuine political and economic emancipation, which must deliver human development and social progress and move away from repression, violence, destruction, death and hopelessness to tolerance, compassion, re-construction, life-affirmation and well-being, especially here in Sub-Saharan Africa.*

**Preamble:** On Thursday afternoon, 17<sup>th</sup> June, in the Year of our Common Era 2021, a very dark cloud was cast over the great nation of Zambia and beyond. It was on that very day, that Secretary to The Cabinet of the Republic of Zambia, Dr Simon Miti (MD), announced to the

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nation, on Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC)<sup>3</sup>, that our beloved Great Leader and one of the Giants of our African heritage and history, Kenneth David Kaunda, First President of the Republic, had succumbed to natural causes at Maina Soko Military Hospital in Lusaka, at 14:30Hrs, and thus, our Great Leader descended into the phase of ‘stillness’, a closure of the last chapter in one’s life, a conclusion of the last act on the stage of life, a closure of Earthly curtains in the life of a person - characteristic of all *homo sapiens*. What started as a social media rumor, was now confirmed to be authentically true, beyond any reasonable doubt nor scientific skepticism. The entire nation went into the seas and depths of sorrow, perplexity and disbelief. With this realization, the nation humbled herself to the fact that ‘the Almighty who gave us a rare gift has taken this rare gift away from us, never to be seen in this life, suffice to hold on to our most cherished and fondest memories of our Great leader Kaunda, The Man, The Parent, The Politician, The Freedom Fighter, The Liberator, The Humanist, The President, The International Icon and Elder Statesman, The HIV/AIDs Activist’.

The nation of Zambia started to adjust to the reality of the demise of the Great Leader and Founding Father, who has now joined his ancestors, fellow liberators, fellow compatriots and a cohort of our enlightenment advocates, justice-seeking leaders, freedom fighters, liberators and founders of our nation, including David Kaunda his father, Hellen Kaunda his mother, Mama Betty Kaunda his wife, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana, Samora Machel of Mozambique, Augustino Neto of Angola, Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, Oliver Reginald Tambo of South Africa, Walter Sisulu of South Africa, Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Milton Obote of Uganda, David Yamba, Godwin Mbikusita Lewanika, Harry Mwaanga Kumbula, Lawrence Katilungu, Paul Mushindo, Kapasa Makasa, Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe, Mainza Mathias Choona, Peter Matoka, Reuben Chitandika Kamanga, Edward Mungoni Liso, Arthur Wina, Munukayumbwa Sipalo, Paul Kalichini, Alexander Grey Zulu, Elijah Haatuakali Kaiba Mudenda, John Mwanakatwe, Solom Kalulu, Nalumino Mundia, James Skinner, Aaron Milner, James Changufu, Dingiswayo Banda, Justin Chimba, Shadreck Soko and Axon Soko<sup>4</sup>, to mention, but a few.

This day will certainly go down in the Annals of Zambia’s History as one of the darkest days ever experienced since the founding of Zambia fifty-seven years ago. This is because this is the day when Heaven called home the Founding Father of the Nation and an International Icon and Elder Statesman, a Figure larger than life, leaving behind an impeccable and irrefutable track record of selfless and sacrificial good deeds and service to humankind in general and to the Zambian nation, in particular. This momentous occasion, a very sad development, called for reflections by those of us who knew the Great Leader and who were associated with Comrade Kenneth David Kaunda, fondly called KK, Super Ken.

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<sup>3</sup> ZNBC TV News, Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Maidstone Mulenga, ‘Zambia’s First Cabinet’ (Available online: <http://www.maidstonemulenga.com/zambias-first-cabinet.html>. Accessed on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2025), Bwalya, Musonda. 2021. *Zambia’s long walk to political and economic emancipation 1964 to 1999* (being published) and Phiri, Bizeck Jube. 2006. *A political history of Zambia from colonial rule to the Third Republic 1890 – 2001*. Trenton, New Jersey, USA: Africa World Press.

A new chapter, without KK has opened. A new chapter of Independence children, born between about 1945 and 1985, a generation of children who were 19 years old and below at the time of Zambia's independence and those who have a recollection of the reign of Kaunda who were born after Zambia's independence up to about 1985, has been 're-ignited' and 're-started'<sup>5</sup>, and the 'Torch of Independence' has been 'symbolically' re-passed to a new generation of post-independence leaders, who must reflect on KK and live by 'the ethos and ethic of life of the Great Leader and Founding Father', in unity and unison. This is in order for mother Zambia to evolve into a highly industrialized, a highly democratized, a highly tolerant, a highly unified nation and a highly civilized state, a nation in which civil freedoms and human rights of all Zambians will be respected, and in which each citizen shall be empowered to contribute their share to nation-building and national development, not only for themselves, but for those yet to be born 80 years away, at the beginning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> century.

On the basis of intellectual, cultural, economic, technological and political movements and revolutions initiated and envisioned by KK and his fellow compatriots, at home and abroad, which are now led by South Africa and Nigeria in Africa on the one hand and by India, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand and Indonesia in Asia on the other hand, the 22<sup>nd</sup> century<sup>6</sup>, *ceteris paribus*, is poised to be the African-Asian Century, supported by the South American-Caribbean countries who share similar stories of protests against repression and colonialism and the movement towards political and economic emancipation. This is a century in which the influence of Africans and Asians, at home and in the diaspora, supported by the South American, Caribbean and Pacifica compatriots, will be felt significantly the world over – the coming to full maturity of whole African and Asian nations who share a common experience against servitude, a propensity towards greater economic liberation and independence, a common heritage of rich human values, a greater understanding and depth of the future of humanity, a common scientific and technological grip, a common search for authentic truth and fulfilling religiosity and a better life for all, as envisioned by freedom fighters and liberators.

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<sup>5</sup> It is a considered view by the authors that the late Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa (1948 to 2008), Third Republican President of Zambia, 16 years old at the time of Zambia's independence, was the first independence child, grown up, to take up the mantle of leadership of the Presidency of Zambia. Similarly, the Sixth Republican President of Zambia, the current President, HE Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, 8 years old at the time of Zambia's independence, can be considered as the second independence child, grown up, to take up the mantle of leadership of the Presidency of Zambia. The two Presidents, Mwanawasa and Lungu, represent the fearless and determined generation of independence children in whom militant and triumphant genes are embedded. Ideally, the responsibility of taking Zambia to the next level of holistic development 'squarely' lies on these independence children in the present and in future, without whom the soul, spirit, character and aspiration of the nation will be lost. And as such, they need to carry themselves solemnly and vicariously as true carriers of the message of liberation and holistic emancipation passed unto them by a cohort of selfless freedom fighters, revolutionaries and liberators most of whom have traversed to the world beyond, except for the likes of Old guard Sikota Wina and the Young, but now old political guards like Fifth Republican President Mr. Rupiah Bwezani Banda, Vernon Mwaanga and Alexander Chikwanda, who are repositories of knowledge and wisdom in Zambia's political narrative and statecraft, who can help the independence children, now grownups, to navigate the rough edges and harsh waters of life towards political and economic emancipation, dos and don'ts in nation-building and national development.

<sup>6</sup> It is common knowledge that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is the Chinese Century and that the Chinese have put an undisputable stamp on world civilization.

What was started by human rights activists, freedom fighters and political liberators in Asia and Africa about 70 years ago is steadily being realized and as noted already, will have reached its fruition on a world scale by 2100<sup>7</sup>, about hundred and fifty years after Ghana became the first independent country in Black Africa. As the saying goes, ‘It takes time to build a nation and develop it’, by and by, in ‘leaps and bounds’, the vision of authentic political and economic emancipation inaugurated by KK and his fellow compatriots and comrades shall truly bear fruit, mature and ripen, and in the fulness of time, true emancipation and holistic development which was envisioned by forefathers and foremothers of Asia’s and Africa’s political and economic emancipation shall come to full realization.

### **Introduction, background and rationale:**

The writing of this article was necessitated by the need to urgently reflect on the life and work of the Great Leader, Kenneth David Kaunda, in the context of the Government-regulated 21 days of national mourning for the Great Leader<sup>8</sup>. The social value or relevance of this article was to lift, highlight and re-affirm the role of Kenneth David Kaunda (1924 to 2021), First Republican President of Zambia, in nation-building and national development, oriented towards Zambia’s long journey to political and economic emancipation, with far-reaching reverberations across nations of the world.

The life and work of the Great leader was not only felt among Super Power leaders such as President Jimmy Carter, President Ronald Reagan and President Bill Clinton of the USA, Queen Elizabeth and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom and President Mikhail Gorbachev of Russia, but that his liberative and emancipatory influence penetrated Africa, South America, The Middle East, Asia, Europe and The Pacific, and he was well-thought of by regions and peoples of the World, including China under Chairman Mao.

This article sought to contribute to a ‘critical reflection on the Great Leader’ in order to ‘narrow’ the knowledge or research gap where freshly generated reflections about Kenneth David Kaunda have not yet been fully published to describe Kaunda’s role in nation-building and national development, now that he has left this world. This is against a backdrop of realities of a post-colonial, post-independence, post-nationalist and post-Kaunda era, in which Zambia is now situated in a globalized post-modern epoch, where her *body politic* and democratic dispensation are still maturing and where her *body economic* and growth prospects have come under serious

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<sup>7</sup> With an exception of Singapore, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates and the like who took time less than 50 years to reach Rostow’s final stage of mass-consumption, hindsight tells us that it takes 100 and 200 years to develop nations and regions of the world into highly industrialized nations and regions which are able to afford mass-consumption for their citizens (See, for example: Todaro, Michael.1997. *Economic development*. Amazon: USA.)

<sup>8</sup> His influence on the continent was extremely efficacious and enormous such that other African countries declared days of national mourning, namely: South Africa 10, Botswana 7, Namibia 10, Malawi 7, Tanzania 7 and Zimbabwe 3 of national mourning (See SABC News, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2021, ‘President Ramaphosa declares 10 Days of mourning to mourn Kaunda’ ( Available online: [www.sabcnews.com](http://www.sabcnews.com) ; Accessed on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018) and Zambia Reports, 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2021, ‘Col Panji thanks countries who have declared days of national mourning in honor of KK’ (Available online: <https://zambiareports.com/2021/06/19/col-panji-thanks-countries-declared-days-national-mourning-honour-kk/>. Accessed 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2021).

stress, partly due to the impact of COVID 19 pandemic on the local economy, as Zambia has to find money to handle the pandemic, while she seeks to stabilize the economy and make the economy to grow.

The historical setting of this article, as noted already, was the most recent departure of the dearly beloved Great Leader from this Earthly life to another world of spiritual realms, where all humans gravitate to. But before that occurs, one has to fulfil the existential purpose for which they were born, and KK did just that and thereafter, 'slipped away' into eternity.

The research methods used to write this article were essentially qualitative in nature, based on data analysis, by way of critical interrogation of credible phenomenology, that is, the authors' experiential and existential reflections about the Great Leader, and by way of systematically examining both primary and secondary sources of information. Thus, the article attempted to form an approximation of the identity and function of Kaunda in human history, an approximation which is very close to the Kaunda narrative held by very close family members, friends and compatriots.

The Kaunda narrative is filled with intrigue, charisma and passionate achievements.

It is a well-known claim that the drive towards political and economic independence took a long time. It took almost 50 years<sup>9</sup> for Kaunda and his comrades to strategically birth, nurture and build a young, but dynamic nation of Zambia and lay a firm foundation for phased out nationhood and national development prospects for the past and present generations and for posterity. This was against a backdrop of very harsh Western colonial domination and repression against indigenous Africans, including KK, which lasted for almost 80 years, 1890 to 1964, in which Zambia lost so much, for example: a retardation in socio-scientific- intellectual- technological advancement because African education was strategically repressive and was kept 'down' by British colonialists to the basic levels of up to Standard Four from early years, between 1890 to 1940, to Standard Six in the middle years to Form Two and Form Six in the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s in the later years<sup>10</sup> of colonial history especially at Munali; and the loss of substantial profits from copper mines which went into building the livelihoods and economies of *BaMwisa*<sup>11</sup> (A Bantu Bemba word for colonial foreigners) in the United Kingdom, in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, to the disadvantage of indigenous Africans in Northern

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<sup>9</sup> That is, when years of systematic African welfare movement, civil rights and liberties advocacy and political onslaught against colonizers (about 1940 to 1963) and post-colonial, independence years under Kaunda (1964 to 1991) are considered.

<sup>10</sup> Munali Secondary School established as Entral Trade School in 1938 and founded as Munali Secondary School in 1947, based at David Kaunda, the old campus, and moved to its current site in 1953 to cater for talented indigenous boys. See Munali Secondary School. *sub verbo* 'School history' (Available online: <https://munaliboysschool.wordpress.com/school-history/>. Accessed on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Nchindila, Bernard. 2008. 'Honest by chance: An investigation into Bemba music in Zambian politics, in Muziki. November, 5(2):298-322, DOI: [10.1080/18125980902798581](https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980902798581), North-West University, Mafikeng. Accessed on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

Rhodesia<sup>12</sup>. To date, the British have not yet settled reparations for the harm they caused on indigenous Africans in Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia, during the colonial period, from 1890 to 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1964<sup>13</sup>.

This state of affairs, as alluded to above, required the emergence of a coordinated country-wide mass movement of *de-construction politics* and *reconstruction politics*; de-construction and reconstruction because the newly independent country needed to pull down useless building materials and retrieve useful building materials from the old regime and blend these with the new thinking which would reflect the African language, idiom, art, belief, manifest destiny, aspiration, ethos and ethic. This was in order to create a society based on authenticity, inclusive politics, equality, equity, fraternity, freedom, democracy, fair play and social justice for all races.

Between 1900 and 1945, Zambia, Northern Rhodesia then, begun to see the emergence of organized mass movements and protests by Africans for Africans against colonial repression and racial discrimination through political forums such as the Federation of African Societies in

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<sup>12</sup> See, for example: Bwalya, Musonda. (2021). *Zambia's long journey to political and economic emancipation, 1964 to 1999* (being published); Kanduza, Ackson M. "TOWARDS A HISTORY OF IDEAS IN ZAMBIA." *Trans-African Journal of History*, vol. 19, 1990, pp. 24–42. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/24328673](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24328673). Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021; Resnick, Danielle; and Thurlow, James. 2017. The political economy of Zambia's recovery: Structural change without transformation? In *Structural change, fundamentals, and growth: A framework and case studies*. McMillan, Margaret S.; Rodrik, Dani; and Sepúlveda, Claudia (Eds.). Chapter 6. Pp. 235-266. Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). [http://dx.doi.org/10.2499/9780896292147\\_ch6](http://dx.doi.org/10.2499/9780896292147_ch6); Global Non-Violent Data Base. 'Zambians campaign for independence, 1944 – 1964. Available online: <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/zambians-campaign-independence-1944-1964> . Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021; Mushinge, Chiponde. "THE EVOLUTION OF ONE-PARTY RULE IN ZAMBIA, 1964-1972." *Transafrican Journal of History*, vol. 22, 1993, pp. 100–121. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/24328639](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24328639). Accessed 25 June 2021; Datta, Kusum. "The Political Economy of Rural Development in Colonial Zambia: The Case of the Ushi-Kabende, 1947-1953." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 1988, pp. 249–272. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/219936](http://www.jstor.org/stable/219936). Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021; PHIRI, Bizeck J. (2006). *A political history of Zambia: from colonial rule to the third republic, 1890-2001*. Trenton, NJ, Africa World Press; NORTHERN RHODESIA INDEPENDENCE CONFERENCE. (1964). *Northern Rhodesia: report of the Northern Rhodesia Independence Conference, 1964*. London, H.M.S.O. <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/903376.html> ; MWEWA, C. (2011). *Zambia, struggles of my people & western contribution to corruption and underdevelopment in Africa*. Lusaka, Maiden Pub. House; CHAN, S. (1992). *Kaunda and Southern Africa: image and reality in foreign policy*. London, British Academic Press.

<sup>13</sup> Although this is not satisfactory in some cases, Canada has at least started to set a very good example in settling reparations for indigenous peoples of Canada for the harm they caused on these peoples and their environment during the colonial take-over of land and property taken away and for any acts of injustice done by the Canadian government against First Nations peoples. See for example, The Guardian , "Canada will pay compensation to thousands of indigenous 'stolen children'", 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2017,( Available online: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/06/decades-after-government-seizure-of-children-indigenous-canadians-will-receive-compensation>. Accessed on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2021).



Northern Rhodesia<sup>14</sup>, African Mine Unions<sup>15</sup> and the early African Political movements<sup>16</sup>, led by such African notables in history as Dauti Lawton Yamba, a key leader in the African Welfare Association movement, Godwin Mbikusita Lewanika, the First President of Northern Rhodesian African Congress, Paul Mushindo, another key leader in the African Welfare Association movement who spoke fearlessly against colonial rule<sup>17</sup> and Lawrence Katilungu, the First President of the African Mineworkers' Union. The main aim of their African advocacy and political involvement was to agitate for African civil rights and liberties, and to move towards the uprooting and driving out of colonizers and their repressive colonial rule, using all means available.

These welfare societies and early political movements were 'precursors' to a sustained rise of the freedom struggle and persistent call for independence and self-rule which culminated into Zambia's independence on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1964. According to well-known historical witness, these movements were led first by Harry Mwaanga Kumbula, a distinguished political Godfather, 'the old lion', who took over from Godwin Mbikusita Lewanika as President of African National Congress (ANC), who initiated and mentored a number of upcoming politicians, including Kaunda himself who was the Secretary General of ANC. These were later led by key young political activists and leaders, such as Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe, Kapasa Makasa, Kenneth David Kaunda, Munukayumbwa Sipalo, Arthur Wina, Sikota Wina and Mainza Chona, who broke away from ANC and formed the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC) which was banned by colonial authorities towards the end of the 1950s due to heightened political strife galvanized by 'young African political Turks' and which later transformed itself into the United National Independence Party (UNIP), under Comrade Mainza Chona as President who handed over the party presidency to Comrade Kenneth David Kaunda when he was released from prison by colonial authorities.

Armed to the teeth with the arsenal of the Christian gospel armory of peace, justice and fair play, with training in the Western scientific rational education under the missionary mode and classical mode, and imbued with a passion for liberation, they became 'political prophets' and

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<sup>14</sup> Musambachime, Mwelwa C. "Dauti Yamba's Contribution to the Rise and Growth of Nationalism in Zambia, 1941-1964." *African Affairs*, vol. 90, no. 359, 1991, pp. 259–281. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/722782](http://www.jstor.org/stable/722782). Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

<sup>15</sup> SINGH, Raja J. "Trade Union Development in Zambia." *Présence Africaine*, no. 131, 1984, pp. 15–23. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/24350926](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24350926). Accessed 25 June 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Ranger, Terence, O. "NATIONALITY AND NATIONALISM: THE CASE OF BAROTSELAND." *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1968, pp. 227–246. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/41856747](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41856747). Accessed 25 June 2021.

<sup>17</sup> See Mukosa, Kalalwe, 'Who was Paul Mushindo?', in *Zambian Observer*, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020(Available online: [www.zambianobserver.com](http://www.zambianobserver.com). Accessed on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2021).

‘political generals’ on behalf of their people, the Africans, and fought persistent political battles which ‘birthed’ ‘*Ubuntungwa*’ (A Bemba word which means ‘Freedom of self-rule’).

This article from Copperstone University, a Higher Education Institute, through its representative staff member voices, attempts to commiserate with the Kaunda family, friends and relatives at home and in the other parts of the world, by sharing reflections on how the university remembers our Great Leader and Founding Father of the Nation, and say, ‘Thank you for Kaunda who was a rare gift to all of us’.

The article articulates Kaunda’s role in nation-building and national development in relation to Zambia’s long journey to political and economic emancipation, with tangible and proven positive reverberations and impacts across neighboring countries and nations of the world.

The elements presented are:

- Preamble
- Introduction, Background and Rationale
- Kaunda, Son of Missionaries, A Gift to the world and his guiding Philosophy of Life
- Kaunda, The First President, The Chief Strategist, and The Chief Technocrat of the Nation
- Kaunda The Architect of Education Par Excellence
- Kaunda The Frontline States Leader in the Liberation Struggle and International Icon
- Findings and Conclusion
- Recommendations and Way Forward

### **Kaunda, Son of Missionaries, a Gift to the world and his guiding Philosophy of Life**

Nature had it that Kaunda, son of missionaries from Nyasaland (now Malawi), should be born not anywhere else in the world, but at Lubwa mission in Chinsali District, among the Bantu-speaking people of North of Northern Rhodesia. He was born into a church inclined family in a green, leafy and mountainous district of Chinsali, one of the key settlements of the Luba-Lunda people, presided over by Senior Chief Nkula. This means that his upbringing was highly spiritual, authentically African and civile, demonstrating attributes of a fine gentleman, a well-nourished *homo Africanus* and a God-fearing subject, showing true manliness and godliness, grace and compassion, as he matured mentally, physically, socially and in favor with Almighty. The mantle of African leadership did not fall on the first generation of distinguished leaders who led the way in earlier welfare advocacy and political activism nor on his contemporaries, but on Kaunda. For Kaunda, his function and destiny in human history was extremely huge – to liberate his people, a true Moses of Africa.



Born on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1924, Kaunda, in line with the Abrahamic-Judeo-Christian tradition<sup>18</sup>, was already selected and anointed by Almighty to be the First President of Zambia on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1964, and this choice meant to serve fellow man, women and children, and the differently abled humans, bringing into being, eternal and immeasurable political, social, economic and development benefits not only to Zambians, but to his brothers and sisters in Africa and beyond, including South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Angola, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Namibia. Who does that? Except one anointed by the sovereign Lord Maker of Heaven and Earth, a legendary *Luceleng'anga*, that is, one tasked by the Almighty to fulfil the mission of guiding his people to their destination and once that is done, he disappears<sup>19</sup>. Thus, he was a rare and special gift to Zambia and to the world, a political liberator of his people and others, and very consistent with the core message of his fundamental Kaunda Doctrine, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself'<sup>20</sup>, which he embedded in his Philosophy of Life premised on Humanism<sup>21</sup> – *Ubwananyina* (A Bemba word for unity and working together; *Tukongote* in Si-Lozi). This was codified in national symbols and emblems, including the

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<sup>18</sup> This tradition generally articulates the belief that there is a Supreme and Sovereign Ruler of the universe, who, according to divine providence, guides human affairs and apportions a path and purpose for every human being on Earth.

<sup>19</sup> In hindsight, Kaunda and his comrades laid a firm foundation for what a modern society ought to be in terms of economic, social and political deliverables, that the current generation should build on what these gallant men and women did. Further, for almost thirty years (1991 to 2021) after he left power, Kaunda gave us a brand-new bonus of good deeds, a new lease of life, about how to look after the most vulnerable members of our communities, especially children and those afflicted with disease such as HIV/AIDs, actualizing the 'preferential option for the poor and marginalized'. We even got used to the idea that Kaunda would remain with us for many more years to come and forgot that fifty-seven years after KK and his compatriots gave us our independence, KK would transit into the world yonder.

<sup>20</sup> A quote from the New Testament Bible, Luke 10 verse 27, New International Version, based on the *Shema Yisrael*, 'She-ma yisrael, eloheinu, adonai echad', 'An affirmation of God's singularity, its daily recitation is regarded by traditionally observant Jews as a biblical commandment': 'Hear O' Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Take to heart these instructions with which I charge you this day. Impress them upon your children. Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them serve as a symbol on your forehead, inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates'(See My Jewish Learning, *The Shema*; Available online: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-shema/>; Accessed on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2021), Leviticus 19:18: 'You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.'( New Revised Standard Version)( See Bible Gateway, Leviticus 19: 18; Available online: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+19%3A18&version=NRSV>. Accessed 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2021), and a well-known 'Parable of the Good Samaritan' in the New Testament, in which one notes the Jesus The Teacher-An Expert in law encounter, in which Jesus The Teacher illustrated that true neighborliness is based on the extension of acts of mercy by fellow humans to fellow humans, especially those who are in greatest need, to the point of death ( See Bible Hub, Luke 10; Available online: <https://biblehub.com/bsb/luke/10.htm>. Accessed 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2021).

<sup>21</sup> Kaunda's Doctrine of Humanism is explicated in Kaunda, Kenneth. 1968. *Humanism in Zambia: And a Guide to Its Implementation, Part 1* Lusaka: Zambia Information Services and Kaunda, K. 1968. *Humanism in Zambia: And a Guide to Its Implementation, Part 2*. Lusaka: Zambia Information Services.

national motto, ‘One Zambia, One Nation’, exemplified in the way of life, in political activities and appointments, and in all nation-building events. No one was left behind. Tribalism was uprooted and people lived together as brothers and sisters. Anyone who dared to raise the ugly face of tribalism or nepotism or corruption or slothfulness was punished harshly in order to rebuild them<sup>22</sup>. Everybody felt happy and felt to be part of the modern Republic of Zambia, characterized by fulfilment and a sense of achievement during the Golden Years of Zambia, 1964 to 1984, except for the usual political dissension which is common in political dispensations, anywhere in the world<sup>23</sup>. Everybody sung in unison and gratitude:

*Chawama yasokona lelo baKaunda;*

*Abana baZambia balefwaya chachacha lelo;*

*Chawama yasokona lelo baKaunda;*

*Abana baZambia balefwaya chachacha lelo;*

*Chawama yasokona lelo baKaunda;*

*Abana baZambia balefwaya chachacha lelo;*

*Ahee baKaunda;*

*Ahee baKateka;*

*Ahee baKapwepwe;*

*Ahee baKaunda;*

*Ahee baKateka;*

*Ahee baKaunda;*

*Ahee baKateka;*

*Ahee baKapwepwe;*

*Chawama yasokana lelo baKaunda*

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<sup>22</sup> It is a well-known historical fact that Kaunda did not hesitate to fire reckless drunkards, corrupt and nepotistic elements, thieves and tribalists from his government.

<sup>23</sup> For example, the Lenshina Zionist Movement and the Adamson Mushala Rebel Movement were ‘thorns’ in the political history of Zambia in the 1960s and 1970s.

*Abana baZambia balefwaya chachacha lelo;*

*Chawama yasokana lelo baKaunda*

*Abana baZambia balefwaya chachacha lelo;*

*Kwacha!*

*Ngwee!*

*Kwacha!*

*Ngwee!*<sup>24</sup>

A nation was willing to actualize the emancipatory and unifying song towards one common and unified action towards nation-building and development as one people, that ‘All people must move together with one heart’, that ‘the youth, Africa, etc., must move together with one heart’, towards one bright future, demonstrated in this song popularized by Kaunda:

*Tiyende pamodzi ndi mutima umo;*

*Tiyende pamodzi ndi mutima umo;*

*Tiyende pamodzi ndi mutima umo;*

*Tiyende pamodzi ndi mutima umo;*

*baYouthi Tiye;*

*Tuli pamodzi;*

*baYouthi Tiye;*

*Tuli pamodzi ndi mutima umo;*

*Tuloke Limpopo ndimutima umo;*

*Tuloke Limpopo ndimutima umo;*

*Unipi Tiye;*

*Tuli pamodzi;*

*Ndi mutima umo;*

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<sup>24</sup> Banda, Stephen(editor). (2020). ‘Chawama chasokona’ song by Dark City Sisters, in You Tube, 26<sup>th</sup> October. This had also the Bemba version and other versions with similar notes.

*Africa, Tiye;*

*Tuli pamodzi;*

*Africa, Tiye;*

*Tuli pamodzi ndi mutima umo*<sup>25</sup>;

A nation, happy and contented, under the Grand Unifier, the Bond of love and unity, Comrade Kaunda, was trained and prepared to move as one people, save for the economic melt-down of the 1980s, leading to change of government in November 1991<sup>26</sup>, and the late President Frederick Titus Jacob Chiluba (1942 – 2011) took over as the Second Republic President.

### **Kaunda, The First President, The Chief Strategist, and The Chief Technocrat of the Nation**

With very poor infrastructure and industrial base, a garage type of infrastructure and industrial base, reminiscent of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Great Britain, Kaunda and his team embarked on a rapid program of industrialization, which was anchored and supported by technical and managerial skills and knowledge impartation at home and abroad so that government, social sectors and industry can be looked after by skilled and trained manpower. Guided by the ‘rapid industrialization’ and ‘principle of growth from our resources’, anchored on Mulungushi and Matero Reforms of 1968 and 1969, in which ‘the government declared its intention to acquire an equity of holding (usually 51 percent or more) in foreign-owned firms , to be controlled by the Industrial Development Corporation(INDECO)’ and ‘under which Zambia’s mines were partly nationalized’, and under which ‘the government bought a controlling interest in the two largest mining concerns, one owned by Anglo American Corporation(Anglo) and the other by Roan Selection Trust Ltd.(RST)’<sup>27</sup>, respectively, Kaunda, being the First President, Chief Strategist and Chief Technocrat, and his loyal team members went about to lay down excellent infrastructure in terms of the road network, railway systems, communication systems, sewer systems, schools, clinics, hospitals, colleges, the university and industries<sup>28</sup>. This is the period which saw the birth of industries in almost every corner of the country, including, Mwinilunga Pineapples, Mununshi Banana Scheme, Livingstone Motor Assembly and Kapiri Glass Company. Some of the best infrastructure which has stood the test of time including state of the

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<sup>25</sup> Kenneth David Kaunda improved upon this song which was synonymous with his ethos and ethic of life – See You Tube Song, ‘Tiyende pamodzi ndimutima umo’ by Kenneth David Kaunda (2010).

<sup>26</sup> See, for example: Bwalya, Musonda. 2021. *Zambia’s long walk to political and economic emancipation 1964 to 1999* (being published) and Phiri, Bizeck Jube. 2006. *A political history of Zambia from colonial rule to the Third Republic 1890 – 2001*. Trenton, New Jersey, USA: Africa World Press.

<sup>27</sup> See Britannica, *sub verbo*, ‘Mulungushi Reforms’, Available online: [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com) ;Accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 and Encyclopedia, *sub verbo*, ‘Zambia Industrial and Mining Corporation Ltd.’, Available online: [www.encyclopedia.com](http://www.encyclopedia.com). Accessed 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> Bwalya (2021), *op. cit.*, and Phiri (2006), *op. cit.*

art Lusaka international Airport (a great piece of architecture then), Hotel Inter-Continental, FINDECO House, TAZAMA House in Ndola, and ZSIC Building in Kitwe, comes out of this period.

In recent times, new infrastructure, which eluded Northern Rhodesia, Zambia now, have seen the light of day, including state of the art Road networks across the nation, the Barotse Plains Bridges, Levy Mall Business Center and Mall, Edgar Chagwa Lungu Business Center and Mall, refurbished first class Kenneth Kaunda International and first class Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula Airports, the Kazungula Iconic Bridge between Botswana and Zambia, and the newly constructed first class Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe International Airport. These have added beauty in the land due to the vision of infrastructure development first held Kaunda and his compatriots.

### **Kaunda The Education Architect Par Excellence**

It was extremely appalling that Zambia, at independence, had only 100<sup>29</sup> university graduates against a population of three million Zambians. Which meant 1 in 300,000 Zambians was a graduate. Such was a legacy of the colonialists. This is how the colonialists deliberately ‘stunted’ the intellectual and scientific growth and development of Zambia.

With that scenario, Kaunda and his team were energized to set up one of the best educational system in the world, patterned after the good old Cambridge University school system and academia, managed and tutored by some of the best brains from within and from all over the world, from primary to university<sup>30</sup>. Each level of education and training ‘fit’ into the overall nation-building and national development strategic agenda and objectives.

The Kaunda era, 1964 to 1991, saw the coming into being of very prestigious educational centers, including the University of Zambia, National Institute for Public Administration(NIPA), Natural Resources Development College(NRDC), Evelyn College of Arts and Applied Sciences, Zambia Institute of Technology(ZIT), MIMSU, Northern Technical College(NORTEC), Zambia College of Accountancy, Technical Teachers Training College(TVTC), Luanshya Trades School, Mawagali Trades School, and Lukashya Trades School, which produced hundreds of thousands of auto-mechanics, electrical auto-mechanics, technicians, technocrats, teachers, lecturers, managers, medical doctors, engineers, bankers, accountants and others who manned schools, colleges, industries and government departments. Education was given freely to young and energetic Zambians, some of whom were even sent abroad for initial and further studies and walked toe-to-toe with other students from other countries at very prestigious universities, including Cambridge, Yale, Harvard and Oxford.

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<sup>29</sup> Zambia had by the year 2003 managed to have well over 25,000 university graduates (Refer to the Citation about Kenneth David Kaunda on the occasion of being bestowed with the highest honor of Zambia, The Grand Order of the Eagle, by the Third Republican President the late Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa – See ‘Kenneth Kaunda, in Britannica; Available online: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kenneth-Kaunda>. Accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> See, for example: Makasa, Kapasa. 1981. *Zambia's March to Political Freedom*. Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books.

With this firm foundation, Zambia has now thousands of primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, public and private<sup>31</sup>, save for the need of improvements in educational delivery, in some cases. Investment in education was by far the biggest investment of the Kaunda regime, in that, this enabled impoverished children from impoverished families to rise up in masses unto the social echelons of society and power, some of whom rose up to occupy the highest office in the land, The Presidency. The majority came from the slums of cities and towns, from ‘Komboni’, from very impoverished villages, from islands. Had it not been for the visionary leadership of Kaunda and his team, most of them would have languished in perpetual poverty. Thanks to the wisdom, the tenacity and forthrightness of Kenneth David Kaunda and his compatriots.

As the adage goes, ‘*Pafwa bantu; Pashala bantu*’ (Bemba saying which means, ‘People die; People survive’) (Kutimela *batu*; *Kusiyala batu* in Si-Lozi). It is these *bantu* or *batu*, and their children who are now enjoying the fruits of the sweat, labor and blood of the freedom fighters, emancipators and triumphant soldiers of the political and economic struggle, lest they forget!

The story must be taught to their children and their children’s children.

### **Kaunda The Frontline States Leader in the Liberation Struggle of Africa**

The popular slogan in Kaunda’s ideology was that Zambia’s Independence would be meaningless until all African countries became independent<sup>32</sup>. As front-line leaders, Kaunda and Nyerere, with the support of other independent African countries such as Kenya and other like-minded nations of the world, waged a persistent political war against white colonial rule which saw the independence of Botswana<sup>33</sup> and Lesotho in 1966, of Lesotho in 1968, of Mozambique<sup>34</sup> and Angola in 1975, of Zimbabwe in 1980, of Namibia in 1990, and of South Africa in 1994<sup>35</sup>, at a very huge cost to the nation, of which Kaunda was criticized by some Zambians<sup>36</sup>.

Nonetheless, because of Kaunda’s magnanimous heart, his fraternal philosophy and pro-human liberative agenda, the peoples of these countries have found freedom and are charting their own destiny and when Kaunda departed from this life, the whole of Africa, especially East and Southern Africa cried, ‘Kaunda, an authentic African politician, The Frontline States Leader in the Liberation Struggle of Africa, has departed, after fulfilling his tasks on Earth, to the world

<sup>31</sup> From one public university, The University of Zambia, and with no private university as at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1966, the country boasts of 9 registered public universities and 54 private universities as at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020, under the watch of the Higher Education Authority(HEA)( See ‘Registered Universities in Higher Education Authority; Available online: <https://hea.org.zm/higher-education-institutions/registered-private-heis2> . Accessed 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2021)

<sup>32</sup> An adage attributed to Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah: ‘The *independence of Ghana will be meaningless* without the total liberation of the *African* continent.’ (Osogo, John N.B.1978. *Africa’s peoples in the past*. Kenya: Longman: page 74).

<sup>33</sup> Whose leader, Sir Seretse Khama joined Kaunda and Nyerere in the frontline leadership.

<sup>34</sup> Whose leader, Samora Machel, one the greatest African Field Marshals, most feared by Boers, killed in a tragic plane crash on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1986, joined the frontline leadership (See ‘Samora Machel’, in Britannica; Available online: [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com) . Accessed 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2021).

<sup>35</sup> Zuberi, Tukufu.2015. *African independence: how Africa shapes the world*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>36</sup> Bwalya, Musonda. 2021. *Zambia’s long walk to political and economic emancipation 1964 to 1999* (being published).

yonder, place where all humans will be judged insofar as they took care of the least of the brothers and sisters in this world, the children, the downtrodden of the Earth, the voiceless and excluded.'

And when history is re-written, Kaunda will be counted among the giants of Africa, who served his people well, with humility and distinction, to the very end of his temporal life on Earth.

## **Findings and Conclusion**

The findings of this research were that Kenneth David Kaunda was a man imbued with and formed by a deep faith in the Almighty, a cohesive people-person persona, a penetrative charisma, a compassionate and gracious heart, a characteristic spirit of moderation, a visionary mind, an unshakable commitment to global peace and emancipation, an irreversible patriotism, an impeccable belief in family values and the extended family relations, and a passionate liberating love for fellow humans, regardless of race, creed and status in society - the kind traits of character which enabled him to execute his primary purpose on Earth, that is, to fight for Africa's freedom, liberate Africans and contribute to the evolving Africa's socio-political-economic infrastructure against a tainted human history of slave-trade, slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Thus, as a legendary figure, a figure larger than life, Kenneth David Kaunda, confronted head-on tribalists, racists, fascists, imperialists, colonialists and neo-colonialists and selflessly fought for the independence of his people and their neighbors, liberated his people and their neighbors and laid a firm foundation in nation-building and national development, with remarkable positive impacts in the liberation struggle and emancipation of Africa.

The article concluded that the present generation of political leaders of the African continent must build on the historic achievements of Kenneth David Kaunda and his compatriots and set a very high tone for Africa's genuine political and economic emancipation, which must deliver human development and social progress and move away from repression, violence, destruction, death and hopelessness to tolerance, compassion, re-construction, life-affirmation and well-being, especially in here in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Kaunda has fulfilled his tasks on Earth; his State Funeral Church Service held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, at the iconic Cathedral of the Holy Cross, conducted by the United Church of Zambia, at which Synod Bishop of the United Church of Zambia, The Rev Sydney Sichilima, called on all Zambians to emulate the selfless life of Kaunda; his act of interment on the same day conducted, during a very solemn State Burial and Final Farewell Ceremony, led by the military, punctuated by well-scripted 'high-note' military honors; his final act of 'farewell and good bye', witnessed to by the Zambian Commander of the armed forces, President Edgar Chagwa Lungu and the First Lady Mama Esther Lungu, by Former President of Mozambique, Johachim Chissano, Kaunda's compatriot and comrade in the emancipatory struggle for Africa's independence, by his family and closest friends and allies, and by other distinguished and ordinary men and women, held at Embassy park, the Presidential Burial Site in Lusaka; while the



entire nation was glued to Television, quietly and solemnly followed the proceedings of the last acts of escorting the Great Leader to the world of his ancestors. Kaunda was no more; escorted to his rest by his people.

His mortal remains have returned to the soil, just like any person born of woman, but his faith in the Almighty the Redeemer and the LORD of all life and the universe will abide throughout the ages and his spirit will continue to live in the hearts and minds of those who loved him and accepted his doctrines for the sake of human progress and social harmony.

## **Recommendations and Way Forward**

In the light of the above, it is recommended that:

1. The entire birth place of President Kenneth David Kaunda, entire Lubwa Mission, be refurbished and converted into a National Heritage Site;
2. The current Government House, where national events usually take place, be renamed as The Kenneth David Kaunda Government House and that a library and a museum be constructed at the same site to honor the memory of the founding fathers and mothers, freedom fighters and war veterans;
3. A statue of great distinction be mounted at a strategic place in Lusaka to honor the memory of the First President of Zambia;
4. The current State House, Plot Number 1, be given to the Kaunda family as an inheritance in perpetuity and that a block of flats of 50 to 100 Units at the same place be built as a demonstration of eternal appreciation by Zambians for the role which Kenneth David Kaunda played in the march towards the political and economic emancipation of Zambia, especially in nation-building and national development;
5. The Kenneth David Kaunda Institute for African Studies, which, *inter alia*, will promote the study of peace, conflict resolution and governance, be established.

The way forward is that future writers and researchers must take a keen interest in writing about all our war veterans, freedom fighters and founding fathers and mothers, so that the evolving history of Zambia can be wholly enhanced and preserved, for future generations.

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