

ZAMBIA

Lozi (Barotse)

Activity: 1988-2020

General notes

- The Lozi are also referred to as Barotse.

Movement start and end dates

- The Lozi enjoyed autonomy under British rule, but at the cost of losing their resources and much of the power of the king. In 1961, the Lozi sent representatives to Britain to petition for the independence of Barotseland, but the petition was denied. On the eve of Zambian independence in 1964, the Lozi signed an agreement which made Barotseland part of Zambia. However, all of the traditional privileges of the kingdom were to be maintained. Legislation in 1969 rescinded this agreement and Barotseland became nothing more than another province.
- Prior to 1988, Kaunda, the president of Zambia since independence, had been able to placate the Lozi by including their traditional ruler in the Central Committee of his United National Independence Party (UNIP) party. However, when other political movements began agitating for a multi-party system, the Lozi took this opportunity to bring up once again their wish for autonomy. Both Englebert (2005:35) and Minahan (2002:1119) argue that 'Lozi nationalism in Zambia re-emerged in the late 1980s': 'no significant resistance developed against [the] dissolution [of the Barotseland Agreement]...until the appointment of Litunga Inyambo Yeta IV to the Central Committee of UNIP in 1988'. Therefore, the start date of the movement is 1988.
- In the first multi-party elections in 1991, the Lozi voted overwhelmingly for the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD), the main opposition party, in the hope that it would grant them autonomy. The MMD won and Chiluba was elected president. However, MMD has been just as unresponsive to Lozi claims as UNIP was.
- In 1992, the Barotse Cultural Association (BCA) was founded. In 1994, Lozi leaders ordered their lawyers to seek legal arbitration for settlement of the issue, possibly through the International Court of Justice. In 1995, the pro-secession Agenda for Zambia was formed. Subsequently, the Barotse Patriotic Front (BPF) was founded in 1996. Also in 1996, Agenda for Zambia was founded as a separatist party. In 1998, the BPF threatened armed conflict if Barotseland was not granted independence; however, the leader was arrested soon after (Englebert 2005: 35-36).
- Englebert reports that secessionist sentiment petered out around 2001. However, there were secessionist riots and outbreaks of violence in 2010 and 2011, with 'four rather amorphous and overlapping groups...implicated: the Barotse Freedom Movement (BFM), the Movement for the Restoration of Barotseland (MOREBA), Linyungandambo (meaning 'Alert your Kinsman') and the BPF' (Hogan 2014: 921). In September 2012, 'a group of around 60 young Lozi tore up hundreds of copies of the draft Zambia constitution', with one declaring: 'We have told you to leave us alone, we are no longer a part of Zambia' (Hogan 2014:922).
- In addition to claims for outright secession, Lozis in Zambia have also made claims for land and cultural rights.
- In 2013, an umbrella organization, named the Barotse National Freedom Alliance (BNFA) and comprising Linyungandambo, BFM, MOREBA, BPF and the Barotse Youth League, was formed (Hogan 2014: 922). The movement is ongoing.
- Additional sources beyond those mentioned above: Hewitt & Cheetham (2000: 37f; IOL News 2012; Keesing's; Lusaka Times 2012; Marshall & Gurr 2003; Minahan 1996; MAR). [start date: 1988; end date: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- The Lozi began agitating for autonomy for the Western province (formerly known as Barotseland) in 1988. The demand for autonomy continued after the end of one-party rule in 1991. In 1992, the Barotse Patriotic Front demanded the return to the autonomous status of 1964 (Minahan 2002: 1119). The claim for autonomy in these early years is confirmed by Minorities at Risk.
- Calls for autonomy have continued; however, starting in the early 1990s, there have also been calls for outright independence.
 - o In July 1993, Lozi leaders for the first time threatened secession if the autonomy agreement was not honored.
 - o In 1996, the Barotse Patriotic Front (BPF) was formed with the aim of achieving independence for Barotseland.
 - o In 1997, the prime minister of Barotseland sent a petition to the United Nations Security Council and other supranational organizations, outlining the Lozi position on secession.
 - o In 1998, several Lozi leaders demanded a referendum on whether Barotseland should reclaim independence as a self-governing monarchy.
 - o In 2012, the Barotseland royal household also demanded independence as the government has failed to honor the autonomy agreement of 1964 (BBC 2012).
 - o Newer movements, such as Linyungandambo, have also made claims for an independent Barotseland Kingdom (Hogan 2014).
- Overall, the movement seems to be split between moderates, who favor an autonomous province within a federal Zambia, and radicals who favor an independent Lozi state. Although Minorities at Risk state that secessionism is “only shared by a smaller number of Lozis, where many others do not see this stance as an advantageous one”, other evidence we found suggests that the main organizations and Lozi leaders advocate for the independence of Barotseland. Hence, independence is coded as the dominant claim after the formation of the first organization making claims for outright secession (coded from 1997 onwards, following the first of January rule. [1988-1996: autonomy claim][1997-2020: independence claim])

Independence claims

- See above. [start date: 1997; end date: ongoing]

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by the Lozi is the province formerly known as Barotseland, which is today named the Western Province (Roth 2015: 284). Some nationalists have also claimed Greater Barotseland, which includes almost the entire Northwestern and Southern Provinces and a big part of the Central Province. In addition, some have claimed adjoining cross-border territories, especially the Caprivi Strip (Minahan 2002: 1115f; Roth 2015: 285). Following Roth (2015: 285) we code the Western Province in Zambia as the dominant claim, relying on the Global Administrative Areas database for polygon definition.

Separatist armed conflict

- The MAR rebellion score is 3 in 1994, but MAR also notes that “little violence has taken place”. From Minahan (2002: 1119) it does not appear as if there was violence in 1994, though he notes

that “[a]bout 3,000 Lozis took up arms after rumors that the litunga was being sought by government forces in March 1994.” Rather, it appears that MAR gave a rebellion score of three in 1994 due to a ‘declaration of sovereignty’: “In 1994, Lozi leaders ordered their lawyers to seek legal arbitration for settlement of the issue, possibly through the International Court of Justice” (MAR Group Assessment), an event also noted by Minahan (2002: 2002: 1119). 1994 is coded NVIOLSD. We found two casualties in 2012 resulting from secessionist violence (this is insufficient for a LVIOLSD code). Thus, the entire movement is coded as NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- The Lozi people are also known as the Barotse, and live along the upper Zambezi River floodplain in Zambia’s Western Province which, historically, has been known as Barotseland (Shoup, 2011:167). The Lozi language is Silozi and, in 2011, the Lozi numbered approximately 800,000 (Shoup, 2011:167). The Lozi kingdom was first established in the late 1700s (Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000:37) and re-established in 1864 (Minahan, 2016:249).
- Lozi Kings are known as Litunga (Shoup, 2011:167). The Litunga maintain a traditional court system, the kuta system, which is known as the Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE) (Shoup, 2011:168). Litunga Lewanika, who reigned between 1876 and 1916, negotiated with the British South Africa Company, and secured the establishment of Barotseland as a Protectorate and not a colony (Shoup, 2011:168) in 1890 (Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000:37; although Minahan (2016:249; 2002:1117) states it was created in 1889). However, in 1900, the British formally annexed Barotseland, and the region became part of North-Western Rhodesia (Roth, 2015:284; however, Minahan (2016:249) writes that Barotseland was incorporated into Northern Rhodesia in 1911). Roth (2015:284) nevertheless suggests that ‘the Lozi never lost their sense of distinctiveness’ and ‘they lobbied for, and got, more autonomy within Northern Rhodesia than other nationalities enjoyed’. Minahan (2002:1118) suggests that Barotseland was ‘neglected’ by the colonial government and that, in the 1920s, ‘Lozi resentment’ sparked the ‘first stirrings of nationalism’ and a ‘campaign for Lozi self-government’.
- Zeller and Melber (2019:301) write that, in 1924, the Colonial Office took over the administration of Northern Rhodesia. The new Litunga, Yeta III, undertook ‘intensive lobbying’ and Barotseland was granted ‘special status’ and ‘officially declared a protectorate within a protectorate’.
- In 1935, the Barotse Native Authority (BNA) was established with a treasury and far-reaching responsibilities in the fields of land and natural resource management, jurisdiction, and law enforcement. The powers of the BNA were ‘greater than those granted to any other Native Authority within Northern Rhodesia’ and this remained the case until the end of the British colonial period (Zeller and Melber, 2019:302-3).
- Barotseland’s special status as a protectorate was ‘further entrenched’ by an Order in Council of the British Council in 1953 (Zeller and Melber, 2019:304).
- Lozi nationalism, according to Minahan (2002:1118), peaked in the early 1960s as independence seemed imminent; fearing domination, ‘Lozi nationalists demanded separate independence’ and Lozi representatives travelled to London in 1961 ‘to petition for separate independence for Barotseland but failed to win British support’ (Minahan, 2002:1118; Englebert, 2005:32; MAR, 2006; Hewitt and Cheetham (2000:37), however, claim that Mwanawina flew to London in 1960). In the early 1960s, Zeller and Melber (2019:305) describe the BRE as an ‘elaborate and vast network of chiefs’, and as an ‘administrative system using all the signature elements and symbols of state bureaucracy: stationery and flags, uniforms and administrative buildings, written permits and formal meetings held in official languages, security forces and official holidays’. However movements seeking liberation from colonialism are not included in the dataset.
- In 1964, Zambia was brought into existence. The Lozi King, Mwanawina I, negotiated the Barotseland Agreement with the first Zambian Prime Minister, Kenneth Kaunda. This agreement ‘guaranteed an enhanced level of autonomy for Barotseland in an otherwise quickly centralising Zambia’ (Roth, 2015:284; Minahan, 2002:1118; Zeller and Melber, 2019:294, 305; Caplan, 1968;

MAR, 2006). The Agreement promised to recognise Barotseland's special status and to preserve the Litunga's powers to make laws for a wide range of regional and local government matters in Barotseland, including land and natural resource management, the judiciary and finances (Zeller and Melber, 2019:305). While this could be considered to be the start of the movement, the government 'ignored' the Barotseland Agreement and the Constitutional Amendment Act of 1969 overrode the Agreement; Barotseland was rendered 'equal to the other provinces' (Minahan, 2002:1118; Zeller and Melber, 2019:294, 306; Englebert, 2005:35; MAR, 2006). While the majority of Zambians voted for the Amendment, 69% of Barotseland voted against (Minahan, 2002:1118).

- MAR reports that Kaunda placated the Lozi by including their traditional ruler in the Central Committee of his United National Independence Party (UNIP) party. MAR does not provide a date for this although it could be assumed that this took place in 1964. However, given the neglect of the Barotseland region, this move may not have been meaningful; moreover, inclusion in party leadership does not constitute an autonomy concession and this took place before the ten years prior to the movement's inclusion in the dataset.
- In 1965, the government announced plans to reduce the Litunga's traditional powers, including control over the Barotseland treasury (Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000:37; Caplan, 1968:358). The Litunga further lost the right to appoint councillors and judges, and the right to reject legislation of which they disapproved (Caplan, 1968:358). This constitutes a restriction but took place before the ten years prior to the movement's inclusion in the dataset.
- In 1968, Kaunda officially terminated the Barotseland Agreement and the province's special status. The Litunga's powers to redistribute land were removed and Barotseland was renamed Western Province (Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000:37; Zeller and Melber, 2019:294). Zeller and Melber (2019:306) note that, by 1969, all major institutions of the Barotse administration were either 'dismantled' or had their 'funding streams rerouted through Lusaka'. This constitutes a restriction but took place before the ten years prior to the movement's inclusion in the dataset.

Concessions and restrictions

- As the ruling party's power waned in the late 1980s, Kaunda made 'several attempts to appease the Lozi leadership'; as noted above, in 1988, he appointed the Litunga to the Central Committee of the UNIP (Zeller and Melber, 2019:310). However, this move may not have been meaningful and, moreover, this does not constitute a concession according to the Coding Instructions.
- In March 1994, 3,000 Lozi took up arms to protect their Litunga; over the next year, the Zambian police seized caches of weapons in the region (Minahan, 2002:1119; Zeller and Melber, 2019:311; Englebert, 2005:36). This does not, however, constitute either a restriction or a concession according to the Coding Instructions.
- In November 1995, a mass meeting was convened by the Lozi to discuss the 'continuing impasse over the termination of the 1964 Barotseland Agreement'. The participants agreed that, if the government continued to ignore the Agreement, then Barotseland had a right to revert to their self-governing state which had existed prior to the Agreement (Minahan, 2002:1119-20). A resolution was generated which threatened the following: 'if the government continues to be obstinate, the people of the Barotse shall have the right to self-determination by reverting to the original status of Barotseland before 1964' (Zeller and Melber, 2019:311). This declaration, however, does not seem to have been pursued, and therefore does not constitute a concession.
- The government introduced a land reform law in 1995 which stripped the BRE of its power to allocate land (Zeller and Melber, 2019:311; Minahan, 2002:1120; Englebert, 2005:36). However, Zeller and Melber (2019:311) argue that the implementation of the Land Act 'remained superficial' (see also: Englebert, 2005:37). We therefore do not code a restriction.
- In 1996, the reformed Constitution created a national House of Chiefs to act as an advisory body to the government (Zeller and Melber, 2019:310). This included the Litunga. However, this inclusion within the advisory body was not a meaningful move towards increased autonomy. We therefore do not code a concession.

- In 1998, several nationalist Lozi leaders demanded a referendum to allow the Lozi to decide whether Barotseland should reclaim its independence (Minahan, 2002:112). This referendum does not seem to have taken place and therefore a concession should not be coded.
- In January 2011, violent clashes between Lozi activists and government security forces took place in the provincial capital of Mongu; 120 people were arrested on treason charges and jailed for up to nine months (Zeller and Melber, 2019:320). Government crack-downs do not constitute a restriction.

Regional autonomy

NA

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

NA

Sovereignty declarations

- In March 2012, 2,000 delegates attended a Barotse National Conference (BNC) at Limulunga. The resolution produced stated: ‘Barotseland is now free to pursue its own self-determination and destiny. We are committed to a peaceful disengagement with the Zambian government’ (Zeller and Melber, 2019:321; Englebert, 2005:36). A Barotse government was supposedly established, including defence forces and ministries; Zeller and Melber (2019:321) claim that ‘soon thereafter a mushrooming of websites and pages on social media indicated these decision had at least some results in the virtual world’. However, we found no evidence that sovereignty was unilaterally declared.

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Lozi (Barotse)
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Lozi (Barotse)
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	55103000

Power access

- We adopt data on the Lozi’s access to central state power from EPR. [1988-2020: junior partner]

Group size

- We adopt data on the Lozi’s relative group size from EPR. [0.08]

Regional concentration

- EPR codes regional concentration, but it applies a lower bar. MAR also codes regional concentration, suggesting that >75% of Lozis live in their regional base where they make up the predominant share of the local population. This information matches with Minahan (2002: 1115), who however suggests that the Lozis make up only 49% of the local population in Barotseland. [not concentrated]

Kin

- Minahan (2002: 1115) suggests that there are around 100,000 Lozis (East Caprivians) in Namibia (South Africa until 1990). [kin in adjacent country]

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