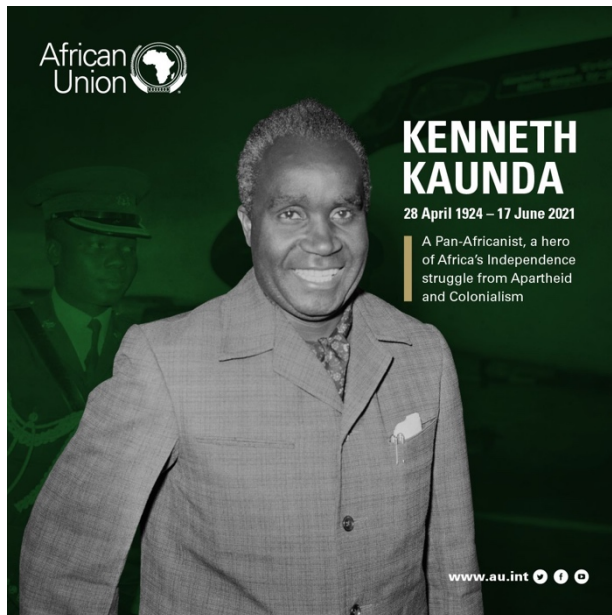


**REMARKS OF H.E. MOUSSA FAKI MAHAMAT,
CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION,
AT THE STATE FUNERAL OF H.E. DR KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA**

LUSAKA, FRIDAY 2nd JULY 2021:



**Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Your Excellency, President Edward Lungu,
The Esteemed Kaunda family,
Ladies and Gentlemen ,**

“The Independence of Zambia is meaningless if the rest of the Region remains under colonial rule.” These words speak volumes of who President Kenneth Kaunda was, and how much he was willing to sacrifice for the benefit of the African continent.

Today, we are united in deep gratitude for the life of President Kaunda, a unifier who had the unique ability to rally us all behind the cause of Pan Africanism.

On this solemn occasion, I stand before you, on behalf of the Organization that President Kaunda helped found, and whose values he embodied. And it is with the highest humility that I must confess, it is not easy to eulogize someone of President Kaunda’s stature.

In 1964, the year of Zambia’s independence, eight countries in the region were still under colonial domination, and their futures uncertain.

The contribution of President Kaunda to the total liberation of Africa is embodied in the values that underpinned the Mulungushi Club that he was a founding member of. This served as a precursor to the Frontline States, and was an instrumental building block for the regional integration agenda we now advance on the continent.

Under the OAU Liberation Committee which was based in Dar es Salaam, the legendary Liberation Center in Lusaka hosted liberation movements such as SWAPO from Namibia, UNITA and MPLA from Angola, ZANU and ZAPU of Zimbabwe, FRELIMO from Mocambique, the Pan Africanist Congress and the ANC from South Africa, which had its headquarters here for 30 years.

Today, the southern African region is a thriving region on the continent, a region Zambia paid a heavy price to liberate.

Today, we talk not only about regional integration, but through Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area, the vision of continental integration that was built here in Lusaka, under the leadership of President Kenneth Kaunda, has come to life.

I am here today to honour, with you, this giant among men, a baobab, the last of the Founding Fathers who delivered Independence to more than just his own land. Had it not been for the selfless efforts of his generation, I would not be before you today, as the African Union would not exist.

We are forever indebted to Kenneth Kaunda and the people of Zambia for their sacrifices, and we mourn with you in the understanding that President Kaunda shared himself with all of us, he shared his country and his people. We are privileged generations to have been afforded 97 years with him.

And to ensure that his legacy lives on, the African Union Commission commits to develop a mechanism to ensure that we preserve President Kaunda's legacy for posterity.

May he rest in peace.