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Foreword

Dear reader,
Dear friends of Malawi,

The situation in Malawi is not good: little is decided politically and when it is, one wonders why. Economically, people are suffering from horrendous prices for basic foodstuffs, which has already led to tangible disputes - despite the oft-cited patience and friendliness of Malawians. And the police and military do not play a good role in these situations. The ambassadors of the most important donor countries have protested against this in a clear note to the Malawian government.

What can we do? Wait and see and look for positive news for our work. And there is some.

‘Umodzi wa a Malawi’ e.V., the diaspora organisation of Malawians in Germany, celebrated Malawi's 61st Independence Day with an impressive all-day and well-attended event in St. Augustin/NRW.

The Mulanje Massif in southern Malawi has been added to the list of World Heritage Sites. Congratulations to Malawi and a highlight for tourism!

Malawi's (still) small stock exchange in Blantyre is attracting the attention of the business community. Instead of banks, companies can - under certain conditions - also get ‘money’ here. Malawians can work with shares - an idea that is also being discussed in other countries. It still sounds very theoretical, but give it a chance!

The Norwegian visa application centre in Lilongwe for the Schengen states is due to reopen on 01.09.2025.

Last but not least: We are working on presenting our homepage and our newsletter in German and English soon.



Enjoy reading and maybe see you again in Berlin on 27 September 2025 (see below for details).

Kind regards,

Christiane Bertels-Heering

Malawi@61 in Germany: Celebrating Unity in Diversity

Over 100 guests gathered in Bonn on Saturday, July 5, 2025, to mark Malawi's 61st Independence Day under the uplifting theme, "Living Together in Diversity." Hosted by Umodzi wa a Malawi in Germany e.V., the event showcased the rich cultural heritage of Malawi while promoting unity across borders. The celebration brought together Malawians living in Germany, members of the African diaspora, friends of Malawi that are German and their families, and local dignitaries. The event was supported by the Bridge2Success Project of the Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg and the City of Sankt Augustin.



The day kicked off with a family-friendly morning program. Children painted Malawian-inspired art with Gift Gama and enjoyed storytelling and music with Stefan Thiel. Young professionals and local university students took part in an intercultural workshop run by the Bridge2Success Project. "We wanted to create a space where youth could connect, reflect, and grow as future ambassadors of Malawian culture," said the Chairman of Umodzi wa a Malawi in Germany e.V, Mr Alex Semba.

In the afternoon, the celebration was honoured by the presence of several distinguished guests, reflecting the depth of Malawi's international relationships and the strength of its diaspora. Among the dignitaries were His Excellency Mr. Joseph John Mpinganjira, Ambassador of Malawi to Germany and his Deputy Mr. Derek Lakudzala as well as other Diplomats; Dr. Billy Mayaya, Head of Chancery and Counsellor at the Malawi Embassy in Belgium and EU; and representing the host city, Frau Jutta Bergmann-Gries, First Deputy Mayor of Sankt Augustin.

The event also welcomed Mr. Jürgen Borsch, former German Ambassador to Malawi and Board Member of the Malawi–Germany Society; Ms. Silvia Hesse, Head of the Friends of Malawi and the Hannover-Blantyre Sister City Association; Professor Dr. Teena Chakkalayil Hassan, Vice President for International Affairs and Digital Transformation at Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg; Prof. Dr. Kerstin Rosenow-Williams, Co-Head of the M.Sc. Social Protection Program at Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg; and Ms. Paulina Hinz, International Partnerships Coordinator at the university.



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Mr. Matthias Scharpf of the Liberating Education Organization, who contributed to the podcast roundtable on education for sustainable development was also in attendance. Adding to the vibrant spirit of regional solidarity was Mr. Enock Chota, Chairperson of the Zambian Diaspora in Germany, who also served as a commentator during the community dialogue. Their participation emphasized the celebration's message of unity, collaboration, and shared purpose.

Chairman of Umodzi wa a Malawi in Germany, Mr. Alex Semba, officially opened the main ceremony with heartfelt reflections on the resilience and unity of Malawians living abroad. "This gathering is proof that even far from home, we carry Malawi in our hearts in our music, dance, language, and values," he said, setting the tone for a day rich in cultural pride and solidarity.

His message was echoed by H.E. Mr. Joseph John Mpinganjira, Malawi's Ambassador to Germany, who remarked:

"Today's celebration is a powerful reminder that Malawi's identity transcends borders. Whether at home or abroad, we are one people—united by our culture, our values, and our hope for a better future. As we mark 61 years of independence, let us continue building bridges of cooperation, peace, and opportunity."

Adding a German perspective, Frau Jutta Bergmann-Gries, First Deputy Mayor of Sankt Augustin, praised the event's spirit of inclusion and friendship:

"Today we celebrate not just Malawi's independence but our shared commitment to intercultural understanding. International exchange and mutual respect are more important than ever."

The program was rich in cultural performances. Traditional dances such as Manganje, Malipenga, Mangoni, Gule Wamkulu and the rare Maria Nyau were met with thunderous applause. Artist and educator Stefan Thiel also performed a heartfelt one-man band session. "Culture connects generations," said Thiel. "This event is a beautiful fusion of memory and movement, I am so happy to be a part of it."

A roundtable podcast moderated by Mr. Mada Daniel Nkhoma explored the evolving German-Malawi partnership. Panelist Ms. Silvia Hesse emphasized that, "Municipal partnerships like Hannover and Blantyre help us stay grounded in real relationships. However much more needs to be done to make this a really mutually beneficial partnership." Former German Ambassador Mr. Jürgen Borsch added that, "We should be the engine behind sustainable bilateral ties." Mr. Matthias Scharpf further stressed the "need to empower youth through our development projects."

A moving "Voices in a Box" session allowed attendees to write down personal challenges and aspirations for 2035. Commentators Mr. Enock Chota (Zambia), Ms. Caroline Yator (Kenya), and Mr. Andrew Kasiya (Malawi) offered reflections on diaspora struggles and hopes.

The evening concluded with guests mingling and networking over Malawian cuisine that included Chambo, Nsima, thelele and Thobwa, enjoying the sights, sounds, and tastes of Malawi.



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Throughout the day, the exhibitions at Malawi@61 offered guests a vibrant glimpse into Malawi's cultural and economic landscape. Display tables featured locally made products such as Malawian coffee, tea, Nali chili sauce, traditional baskets, handmade curios, bawo game, and travel brochures promoting the country's scenic destinations. Guests, both Malawian and international, engaged with exhibitors, sampled products including Malawi Gin, Brandy, Vodka as well as Malawian Linga wine, and learned about Malawi's entrepreneurial spirit and tourism potential through posters. The showcase not only celebrated creativity and heritage but also highlighted opportunities for cross-border trade, investment, and cultural exchange.



As Deputy Ambassador Derek Lakudzala closed the event, he reminded attendees: "Wherever we are in the world, we are Malawian first and we have a role to play in our nation's development." He thanked all for their participation and contributions to make the 61st Malawi Independence Celebrations a success.

World Heritage List grows

Further sites were recently added to the World Heritage List. This was decided by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee at its meeting at the headquarters of the World Cultural Organisation in Paris. Among the new additions is the cultural landscape of the mighty Mulanje Massif in southern Malawi.

In southern Malawi, the mighty Mulanje Massif rises out of the landscape - the heart of a living cultural landscape. For generations, the Yao, Mang'anja and Lhomwe have characterised this place with their spiritual practices, rites and traditions, which they regard as the seat of gods, spirits and ancestors. Hills, caves, waterfalls and rapids are associated with them and worshipped. The result is a culturally moulded space in which nature and faith are closely intertwined and where traditional rules for dealing with the sacred sites help to preserve the natural environment of the mountain massif.

Dates

Public event

What will happen in Malawi after the elections? -

Our ideas and our support for Malawi



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Saturday, 27 September 2025

11.00 am - 1.30 pm

Hans-Dietrich-Genscher-Haus, Room 2

Reinhardtstraße 14

10117 Berlin-Mitte

Public general meeting

Saturday, 27 September 2025

2.45 pm - 4.00 pm

Hans-Dietrich-Genscher-Haus, Room 2

Reinhardtstraße 14

10117 Berlin-Mitte

Reading tip: Why Malawi is now focussing more on share trading

<https://table.media/africa/analyse/boerse-in-malawi>

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