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# MAKUKA NKOLOSO THE RACE TO THE SPACE: THE FORGOTTEN HISTORY OF ZAMBIA

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# SHORT BIOGRAPHY



Map of Africa with Zambia in red



[Mukuka Nkoloso](#) was a Zambian school teacher and self-taught astronaut who gained notoriety in the **1960s** for his unconventional attempts to launch a space program in Zambia.



# APPEARANCE OF THE FIRST AFRONAUT IN 1960

**Nkoloso's** space research program aimed to send Zambia's first astronaut into space, competing with the US and USSR. His unconventional training methods included spinning astronauts on a homemade centrifuge and having them crawl on their hands and knees. He built an aluminum and copper wire spacecraft called the "AFRONAUT" but failed to secure funding and government support. Despite not being taken seriously by the scientific community, **Nkoloso's** program is now recognized as a grassroots effort that inspired African space enthusiasts and is celebrated in Zambia and beyond.



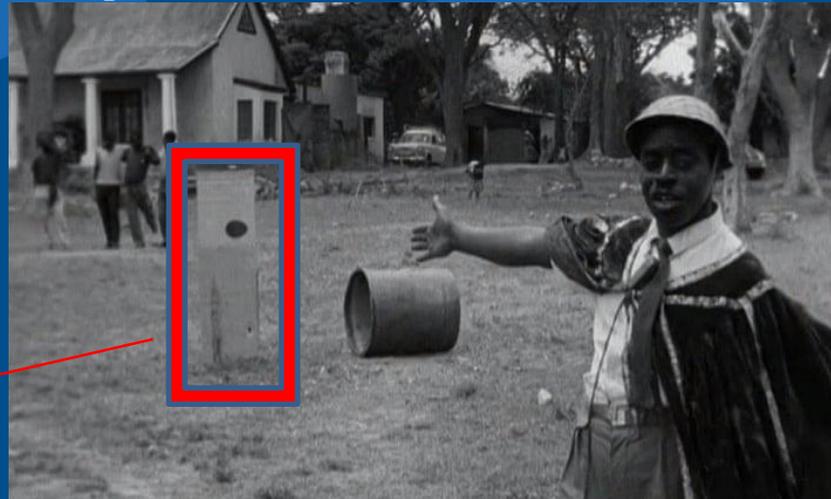
**ZAMBIA'S COSMONAUT**

Edward Mukuka Nkoloso, in spaceman's helmet and ornate cloak, interrupts a telephone conversation in Lusaka, Zambia, to talk to Zambia's No. 1 cosmonaut, Godfrey Mwango. Zambia is Africa's newest nation, formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, a British protectorate. Nkoloso, self-appointed Zambian minister of space research, boasts, "I'll have my first Zambian astronaut on the moon by 1965." He estimates he'll need almost \$2 billion to place him there.

## ROCKET A BIT WOBBLY

### Zambia Warns Russia, U.S. We'll Beat You to Moon

By DENNIS LEE ROYLE  
LUSAKA, Zambia (AP) — Edward Mukuka Nkoloso has designated himself Zambia's minister of space research, and says the United States space. I also make them swing from the end of a long rope. When they reach the highest point I cut the rope — this produces the feeling of free-fall." a project of this magnitude," he said. "Some of our ideas are way ahead of the Americans and Russians and these days I will not let anyone see my rocket plans."



**Afronaut  
Spacecraft**



# Development

The development of space research has continued in Zambia.

-In 2018, the Zambia Amateur Radio Transmitters Society (ZARTS) hosted a workshop on Amateur Radio Satellite Communications in Lusaka, aimed at promoting satellite communication among amateur radio enthusiasts.

-The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) launched the first-ever African Regional Workshop on Space Law in Lusaka, which aimed to create awareness and capacity building on space law in Africa.

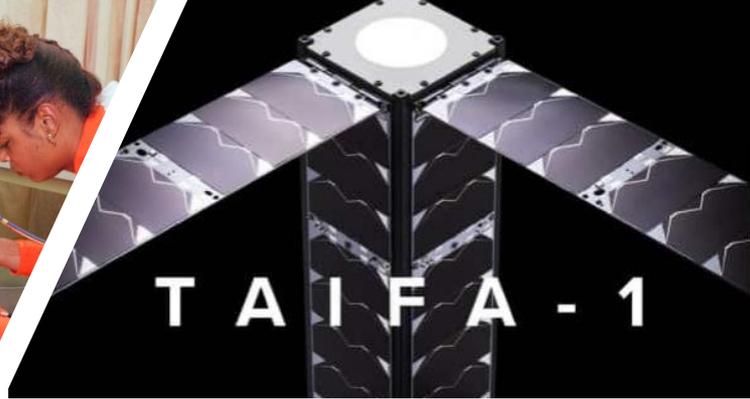
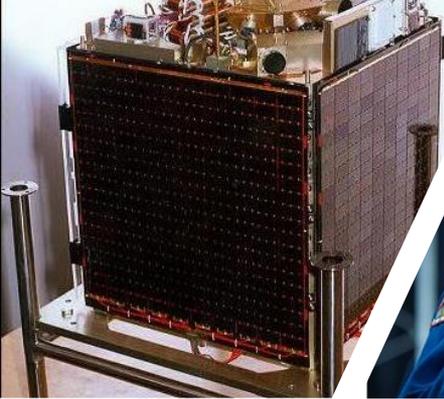




# DEVELOPMENT

• In 2019, the Zambian government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom to cooperate in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, including the possible establishment of a Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology in Zambia.





## DEVELOPMENT

Since then, 53 satellites have been launched by 15 African countries.

Out of the 53 satellites 9 were launched by commercial entities.

The first satellite was launched in 1998 by South Africa – SunSat-1. Kenya is the latest African country to launch a satellite. They launched Taifa-1 on April 14, 2023. Whereas over 350 NASA astronauts have traveled into space, Commander Glover currently stands as one of only 15 African Americans who have made the historic trip.





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**Спасибо за внимание!**