



MZUZU talks WORLD listens

<https://vimeo.com/270347561>

pw MALAWI2018

Greetings from the 'Warm Heart of Africa'. We would like to enlist the support of friends and colleagues in the teaching community to help with a small project we are running here in Malawi. With the help of Mr. Alex Bell, www.portlandeducation.co.uk who visits Mzuzu International Academy on regular occasions, we have been working on developing 'Student Voice.' Our project 'Mzuzu talks World listens' is designed to allow students to speak to a global audience - our target is to be heard in at least twenty countries.

After reading this and hopefully viewing the speakers we would like you to simply send an email to mzuzutalks@mzuzuacademy.org addressed to one of the speakers telling us your location and giving some feedback on the talks.

Firstly, before introducing the speakers a little about Mzuzu International Academy. We are located 350 km north of Malawi's capital Lilongwe in the Northern Region. Lake Malawi, which stretches the entire length of the country, is about 45 Km east of Mzuzu.

The academy is a charitable foundation initially set up to provide children from disadvantaged backgrounds with access to an international style education. Over 25% of the senior school student body is made up of scholarship children from the local area who study here as boarders. We have students here who come from homes without electricity; homes devastated by HIV; a number who are themselves positive and many who are orphans or from one parent families. Talking to grandma about student progress is a common occurrence.



Thanks to our growing reputation for academic success the academy continues to grow and we now attract students from all backgrounds from across Malawi offering education from Reception to Year 11.

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in Africa and presents challenges in terms of attracting staff, buying resources outside the country and trying to keep up with educational and technological developments. Blackboards remain major teaching tools, we do have whiteboards but not interactive - and if we did we can't always guarantee the electricity supply. We do have the internet but it tends to be slow and disrupted by power issues. Funds are very limited here in Malawi and we are reliant on generous supporters in the USA and UK.

Nevertheless, many expatriates who come here enjoy the tranquil life style and are rewarded by helping to develop the skills of local teachers and the thirst for learning of our students. In terms of value added this is a very high performing school and a credit to its dedicated team of teachers the vast majority of whom are Malawian Nationals.

Let me now introduce our six speakers, all of whom are Year 9 or 10 students and have never spoken in public before:



Marumbo looks at Global warming and how it has affected the people of Malawi, especially those in Mzuzu. This is a matter of life and death as any failure of the rains, including this year's, has a direct impact on food production. As the vast majority of Malawians are subsistence farmers the country is facing the prospect of food shortages in the coming months.

Isaac takes a look at deforestation and what are the realistic hopes of stopping it taking place. He takes a very pragmatic view that it won't stop while some of the poorest people in the world depend on free wood as a source of fuel. Isaac puts forward some interesting suggestions to meet this challenge well beyond the normal cry of telling people not to chop trees down.

Tingo compares his good friend Morton with a rhino, both being hunted to extinction for body parts. Morton, a Year 7 student, is an albino and survived a very vicious attack.

Khumbu, should be every teachers friend, after spending time teaching English to students from local schools he explains how he feels about teachers and the pressures they face.

Tryness explains how the tomato changed her life and the lives of over 200 other young Malawians. From an incredibly disadvantaged background Tryness is now on course to complete her IGCSE studies next year.

Last but not least is Charity who is very outspoken on the state of her country asking the question -what has 50 plus years of independence achieved? Her working title was Africa-the Promise: Lost, stolen or bought.



They all speak with great passion and not a little trepidation at the thought of being watched by fellow students from across the globe. The whole programme is introduced by Madalitso and Tamika.

We hope that students across the globe take up some of the challenges put forward by Mzuzu International Academy students.

With all best wishes from the 'Warm Heart of Africa'

Peter Yates (Principal) and the Mzuzu International Academy Community.