



## SWAHILI INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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The **Swahili Institute of Chicago (SWITCH)** will officially celebrate **World Kiswahili Language Day** on July, 7, 2023 at 10707 S. Hale Ave., Chicago, Illinois in the Beverly area. July 7th of every year was established to be a global Kiswahili day by **UNESCO** Member States on November 24, 2021 at its 41st Session in Paris through Resolution 41/C/61.

**Kiswahili** is one of Africa's most widely spoken languages with over 200 million speakers and is one of the ten most spoken languages in the world. It is the lingua franca across several East, Central and Southern African nations. Furthermore, it is one of the official languages of the **African Union (AU)**, **Southern African Development Community (SADC)**, and the **East African Community (EA)**. Kiswahili is the leading language to become the Pan African Language of the African continent. Since the 1950's Kiswahili has had a Kiswahili language unit on United Nations Radio and is the only African Language within the Directorate of the Global Communications at the United Nations.

The **July 7th (Saba Saba)** date has important significance in East Africa as the birth date of the Tanganyika African Union (TANU) in 1954, which, under the leadership of **Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere**, achieved independence from British rule. Furthermore, on July 7, 2000, the East African Community (EAC) was reestablished to restart the spirit of cooperation and integration among Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, where Kiswahili is widely used and understood. Rwanda, Burundi and Southern Sudan are now also members of EAC. The unifying and multicultural/multiethnic use of the Kiswahili language is conducive to its expanded use on the continent and throughout the world.

The **Swahili Institute of Chicago (SWITCH)** was established as a not-for-profit organization in 1988 and has promoted **Kiswahili** classes, services and cultural performances and advocated for the inclusion of **Kiswahili** as a language option in public and private educational institutions locally, nationally and internationally. Therefore, the establishment of the **World Kiswahili Language Day** is a welcome boost for this incredibly rich and adaptable purveyor of African culture.

Please join **SWITCH** in observing this important date through music, proverbs, discussions, information, fellowship and refreshments. Share your ideas on how to take advantage of this opportunity to expand the usage of **Kiswahili**, especially with the children in the diaspora.

This observation will also include a brief ceremony to acknowledge the recent loss of one of the organization's founding members and long-time supporter, **Ndugu Habby Spartan** of Tanzania. He was an invaluable Kiswahili resource, but more importantly, he was a wonderful, generous, intelligent and beloved human being whose presence will be greatly missed.

**Time: 7:00 -10:00 P.M. Friday July 7, 2023**  
**Place: 10707 S. Hale Ave.**