

The ignominious failure of the Mugabe regime's court challenge to the sanctions imposed by the European Union has escaped much attention. That the challenge was a ludicrous waste of public money was obvious to the Vigil from the start – thrown into comic relief anyway by the gradual removal of the targeted measures.

The court's slap in the face for Mugabe should resound throughout Africa, which has been told by Zanu PF that the sanctions cost Zimbabwe fifty billion dollars. Zimbabwe must now foot the bill for this legal circus – and the bill will be sizeable given that it has been ordered to pay all the legal costs of the European Union, as well as its own expenses. Judging by the per diem allowances awarded to Zanu PF flunkies on their non-stop journeys abroad with Mugabe, this will be enough to put the final nail into the Zimbabwean economy! Except that, of course, Zimbabwe will not pay.

Even now, the Vigil doubts that the Zanu PF propaganda machine oiled by Jonathan Moyo will give up the tired mantra of 'illegal sanctions'. It has been a reliable prop for so many years that the party faithful recite it automatically as a reassuring slogan when discomfited by reality.

And what else can Zanu PF use as a fig leaf for their gross incompetence and nepotism. Official statistics put Zimbabwe's imports for the first quarter of this year at \$1.6 billion against exports of only \$716.6 million. That's less than half. The trade deficit in March alone was reported as \$340.2 million. In that month exports to our great Chinese partner amounted to the grand sum of \$47,000. A least that's what the official figures say.

Nevertheless it is becoming clearer by the day that reality is biting home as a disintegrating Zanu PF fails to put in place a strategy to save the economy sinking like a stone. Any initiative by Finance Minister Chinamasa or anyone else for that matter is immediately stymied by Mugabe. The real sanctions against the Zimbabwe economy are shown to be his short-term expediency with the sole objective of preserving himself.

He certainly does not seem to be interested in saving anyone else, notably the thousands of Africans drowning in the Mediterranean in a desperate attempt to escape violence, oppression, misgovernance and poverty – things he provides in abundance. While European governments met urgently to discuss the plight of migrants, the normally voluble AU Chair Mugabe was silent on the matter. But he knows why people are fleeing. And it's not because of 'illegal sanctions'.

The well-attended Vigil was exhorted by ROHR President Ephraim Tapa: 'we must not allow the world to forget Itai Dzamara'.

Other points

- Before the Vigil there was another demonstration outside the nearby South African High Commission against the xenophobic violence. Among those there were South Africans who proclaimed 'not in my name'. During the week Vigil supporters also took part in another xenophobia protest outside the High Commission organized by the human rights activist Peter Tatchell.

· The Vigil welcomes the independence day message by opposition parties which said: 'Zimbabweans must be ready to fight Mugabe as they did the Rhodesians. Just as we fought a brutal protracted struggle against white minority repression, so too must we be ready to redeem ourselves from the current penury, poverty and deprivation inflicted upon us by our own kith and kin. Independence is not enough without freedoms and prosperity and we must be ready to pay the ultimate price once again to save ourselves' (see:

Prep for new freedom fight, opposition –

http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit_w_prep-for-new-freedom-fight-opposition/

).

· **Thanks to Esther Nyambi, Fungayi Mabhunu and Ephraim Tapa who were there at the start to help set up and to Enniah Dube and Patricia Masamba who looked after the Vigil table.**

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website.

FOR THE RECORD: 58 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

· **ROHR Executive Meeting:** Saturday 2nd May at 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. For directions see below.

- **The Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR)** is the Vigil's partner organization based in Zimbabwe. ROHR grew out of the need for the Vigil to have an organization on the ground in Zimbabwe which reflected the Vigil's mission statement in a practical way. ROHR in the UK actively fundraises through membership subscriptions, events, sales etc to support the activities of ROHR in Zimbabwe. Please note that the official website of ROHR Zimbabwe is <http://www.rohrzimbabwe.org/>
· Any other website claiming to be the official website of ROHR in no way represents us.
- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF)**. Saturday 2nd May from 6.15 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. From the Vigil it's about a 10 minute walk, in the direction away from Trafalgar Square. The Strand Continental is situated on the south side of the Strand between Somerset House and the turn off onto Waterloo Bridge. The entrance is marked by a sign at street level. It's between a newsagent and an optician. Nearest underground: Temple (District and Circle lines) and Holborn.
- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF)** meets regularly after the Vigil to discuss ways to help those back in Zimbabwe to fight oppression and achieve true democracy.
- **Next Swaziland Vigil**. Saturday 2nd May from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.
- **[12 Years: Zimbabwe Association Exhibition Launch](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/12-years-zimbabwe-association-exhibition-launch-tickets-16235246058?ref=enivtefor001&invite=NzczMTg2NS9jby1vcmRpbmF0b3JAemltdmlnaWwuY28udWsvMA%3D%3D&utm_source=eb_email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inviteformalv2&ref=enivtefor001&utm_term=attend)**. Tuesday 5th May from 6 – 8 pm. Venue: Oxford House in Bethnal Green, Derbyshire Street, London E2 6HG. The project is funded by the Heritage Lottery and shares the oral histories of Zimbabwean asylum seekers' experiences in the UK from 2001 to the present. This exhibition contains material from the Zimbabwe Association archive, an extensive collection of records of individual cases, legal documents, press cuttings, reports, correspondence, and TV and radio recordings. To book: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/12-years-zimbabwe-association-exhibition-launch-tickets-16235246058?ref=enivtefor001&invite=NzczMTg2NS9jby1vcmRpbmF0b3JAemltdmlnaWwuY28udWsvMA%3D%3D&utm_source=eb_email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inviteformalv2&ref=enivtefor001&utm_term=attend
- **Zimbabwe Yes We Can meeting**. Saturday 30th May at 12 noon. Venue: The Theodore

Bullfrog, 26-30 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL.

- **Zimbabwe Yes We Can Movement** holds monthly meetings in London as the political face of ROHR and the Vigil.

- **Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2014** can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/642-zimbabwe-vigil-highlights-2014>

- Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2014 Highlights page.

- **Facebook pages:**

Vigil: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8157345519&ref=ts>

ZAF: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>

ROHR: <https://www.facebook.co/pages/ROHR-Zimbabwe-Restoration-of-Human-Rights/301811392835>

- SW Radio Africa's website and sound archive is being hosted on www.archive.org . Go to the site and type in swradioafrica which will link you to snapshots of their site over the years and at the top of that page a link to their website where, under podcasts, you will find the audio.