

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/50077726913/sizes/m/>

‘Slave wages’ was the reason the Zimbabwe Nurses’ Association (ZINA) gave for health workers going on strike in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

Slave conditions describes what was behind the pay dispute which saw two Gweru workers shot by their Chinese boss, one of the men five times. The Zimbabwe Environmental Lawyers’ Association said it was part of systematic and widespread ill treatment of workers by Chinese employers (see: <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/2020-07-01-zimbabwe-watchdog-accuses-chinese-bosses-of-worker-abuse/> ).

With the Black Lives Matter campaign in the United States reinforcing demands for a re-examination of history, it is shocking to see that slavery is becoming a reality in Zimbabwe under Zanu PF.

Certainly, the slave-like treatment of nurses is inexcusable. Health workers at Mpilo Central Hospital who contracted coronavirus were quarantined at the Elangeni Training Centre in Bulawayo. ZINA President Enock Dongo described the conditions there as ‘inhumane’ and said they had been left with no option but to sue the authorities that had failed to provide protective equipment (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2020/06/government-neglecting-covid-19-positive>

-nurses/ ).

Meanwhile, nurses at private hospitals cannot afford to be treated at their own workplace, which are charging a deposit of US\$5,000 for intensive care – well beyond the means of badly paid nurses.

The failing economy has caused morale in the army to hit rock bottom according to Defence Minister Oppah Muchinguri. She told parliament many soldiers were tempted by hunger to engage in corrupt activities to make end meet, affecting the army's efforts to help the police enforce lockdown regulations, especially as they had not been supplied with enough personal protective equipment (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2020/06/army-morale-at-rock-bottom/> ).

Comrade Muchinguri of course blamed the country's situation on 'illegal sanctions'. But the EU Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Timo Olkkonen, said the problem was that Zimbabwe was 'still failing to break from her past of corruption, human rights abuses and fiscal indiscipline'.

The Ambassador said Zimbabwe had failed to service its debts or pursue economic reforms so he could not support the EU providing budgetary assistance to stabilize its economy. In addition, he said, President Mnangagwa had failed to keep his promise to break from the past history of abductions and gross human rights violations. (See: <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-opinion-sc-columnist-byo-188278.html> ).

### Other points

- ROHR and Vigil activists got together last night at the first ROHR virtual party. After prayers and a welcoming talk from ROHR President Ephraim Tapa, some activists talked of their experiences during lockdown – the loneliness of having to stay in as a vulnerable person, the frightening experience of being very ill and the difficulties of not being able to get home from afar. After that it was music, dancing, food and drink. Special thanks to the organisers: Ra ngarirai Chivaviro, Enniah Dube and Esther Munyira, to Benjamin Molife for donating raffle prizes of a microwave and bottles of wine and to Simbarashe Jingo for acting as DJ and playing the music. Others who attended were: Rose Benton, Marian Machekanyanga, Chido Makawa, Dambudzo Marimira, Patricia Masamba, Joyce Mbairatsunga, Margaret Munenge and Molly Ngavaimbe.

- Because of the coronavirus we can no longer physically meet outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London, so we have a virtual Vigil while the lockdown continues. We ask our activists to put on Vigil / ROHR / Zimbabwe regalia and take a photo of themselves holding an appropriate poster reflecting our protest against human rights abuses in Zimbabwe. The photos are uploaded on our Flickr site (see: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/albums/72157714977430202> ). Our virtual Vigil activist today was Benjamin Molife who kindly contributed to Vigil funds.

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

### NOTICES:

- **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.

- **The Vigil's book 'Zimbabwe Emergency'** is based on our weekly diaries. It records how events in Zimbabwe have unfolded as seen by the diaspora in the UK. It chronicles the economic disintegration, violence, growing oppression and political manoeuvring – and the tragic human cost involved. It is available at the Vigil. All proceeds go to the Vigil and our sister

## Zanu PF slavery – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 4th July 2020

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organisation the Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe's work in Zimbabwe. The book is also available from Amazon.

- **Facebook pages:**

Vigil: <https://www.facebook.com/zimbabwевigil>

ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/Restoration-of-Human-Rights-ROHR-Zimbabwe-International-370825706588551/>

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