

The Vigil discussed plans for Independence Day on Saturday 18th April and agreed to mark the occasion by calling for an amnesty for prisoners in Zimbabwe. The Zanu-MDC government has done nothing – despite the worldwide revulsion – to address the horrendous prison conditions shown in the recent SABC television report.

Starvation, disease, filthy overcrowding – to add to the routine brutality and torture: prison in Zimbabwe can be a death sentence.

The Vigil believes that the Zimbabwean government must only imprison the number of people it can cope with humanely according to generally agreed standards. Others can be given non-custodial penalties. After all, most of those released from prison will be saints compared to Zanu-PF's murderous thugs still causing havoc in Zimbabwe.

We will take a collection on Independence Day to help pay for food for those starving in prison.

There was an enormous turnout despite the Easter holidays. Many people phoned to ask whether there was going to be a Vigil because it was Easter. We said human rights abuses don't take a holiday in Zimbabwe.

The Vigil also discussed plans to lobby the UK government against allowing in the Zanu-PF Foreign Minister Mudenge. He has been proposed as part of a Zimbabwean delegation to come to Europe to ask for money.

We will point out that the delegation does not need a Zanu-PF representative – especially one subject to targeted sanctions – as the begging function has been devolved to the MDC in the unity government.

Some other points:

Zimbabwe Vigil Diary – 11th April 2009

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 12 April 2009 17:38 - Last Updated Sunday, 12 April 2009 17:49

- Vigil supporters were sorry to hear that long-term supporter Geraldine Takundwa was seriously ill with a stomach ulcer. We took a collection which a group took to her after the Vigil.
- A supporter from Northampton was distraught when she found she had lost her return ticket – happily she was rescued by Patson who found a group who had space in their car to take her back to Northampton (75 miles away).

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/>

FOR THE RECORD: 277 signed the register.

FOR YOUR DIARY:

- **Central London Zimbabwe Forum.** No forum on Monday 13th April because it's a public holiday.
- **ROHR Coventry fundraising event.** Saturday 18th April. Time and venue to be advised.

Contact:

E Nyakudya

on 07876796129, M Sibanda 07788560068, P Makuwere 07533332306 or M Vijay on 07957907616

- **ROHR Leeds general meeting.** Saturday 25th April from 1.30 – 5 pm. Venue: Dock Green Inn, Leeds LS9 7AB. Contact: Wonder M Mubaiwa 07958758568, Donna Mugoni 07533259373 or

B Sikosana
07940181761

- **Fundraising for the Vigil at the London Marathon.** Sunday 26th April. Steve Garvey, teacher at the Dolphin School

, Battersea, is running in the London Marathon to raise money on behalf of the Vigil.

- **'Strangers into Citizens' Rally.** Bank Holiday Monday 4th May at 12 noon in Trafalgar Square

Meet in Tothill Street SW1 at 11.30 for walk to Trafalgar Square

. The event is preceded by services in a several churches including Westminster Cathedral, St Margaret's, Parliament Square and Central Hall, Westminster

. For more information:

www.strangersintocitizens.org.uk

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· **Service of solidarity with the torture survivors of Zimbabwe.** Friday 26th June from 7 – 8 pm. Venue: Southwark Cathedral. This is the 8th year the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum has marked UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

· **Zimbabwe Association's Women's Weekly Drop-in Centre.** Fridays 10.30 am – 4 pm.
Venue: T he Fire Station
Community and ICT Centre,
84 Mayton Street

,
London
N7 6QT, Tel: 020 7607 9764. Nearest underground:
Finsbury
Park

. For more information contact the Zimbabwe Association 020 7549 0355 (open Tuesdays and Thursdays).