

In the humid heat it was tempting to slope off from the Vigil and find a television to watch the second rugby test match between South Africa and the British Lions in Pretoria to see whether the Zimbabwean Tendai Mtawarira, known as 'the Beast', could repeat his heroics when he won the first test for the host country.

But Vigil supporters were too fired up about another matter – the silly allegations on some loud-mouthed Zimbabwean exile websites that the Vigil and ROHR were behind the booing of Morgan Tsvangirai when he spoke to the UK diaspora in Southwark Cathedral last week. Anyone looking at videos of the occasion will see that the angry response was prompted by Mr Tsvangirai's remarks and was spontaneous and could not possibly have been planned.

The meeting's organisers also sought to blame asylum seekers, accusing them of being selfish and not being up to date with the situation on the ground in Zimbabwe – the 'progress' that has been made. Well, frankly, with the abundant access to information that we have in the UK we sometimes feel that we have to tell people at home what is going on – that, for instance, the MDC Deputy Minister for Mines, Muringu Mutsvangwa, seems to have been co-opted by Zanu-PF in claiming that there is no evidence of killings in the Marange diamond fields.

What upset the Zimbabwean exiles at Southwark Cathedral was this type of half truth being peddled by the MDC leadership. We are not convinced that everything is ok, that Mugabe's grip on power is being loosened or that human rights violations and farm invasions are not happening.

The Vigil went ahead with our human rights demonstration outside the cathedral despite an extraordinary e-mail to us from an MDC organiser talking about possible violence. What was this about? The Vigil has been staging demonstrations at least once a week for seven years without any trouble.

Among the efforts to destabilise the Vigil are predictable allegations of the misuse of money, most recently accusations of 'selling' letters to support asylum claims. We have spelt out our policy before but here it is again:

1. We do not have membership fees.

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2. We do not make any charge to committed supporters of the Vigil for letters.
3. To people who have come 6 times or more (out of 350!) there is a fee of £10 to cover administration expenses for a detailed letter.
4. To those who have come less than 6 times we are reluctant to say they are supporters but will write a one-line letter confirming they have attended. We charge £20 to discourage this.

Now what happens to this money? No one draws a salary. Some of the money goes on administration expenses, some of it goes on fares and welfare expenditure for our supporters. The bulk goes to help ROHR and other Zimbabwean human rights causes as agreed by the finance committee and Vigil management team.

The role of the Vigil and ROHR was discussed extensively at our very well-attended monthly forum held after the Vigil. Ephraim Tapa, President of ROHR, said the organisation was non-party political and was working with many partners on various platforms in Zimbabwe

,
South Africa
and the
UK

. For further information see the ROHR press statement (see previous posting on this website). Vigil Co-ordinator Dumi Tutani was warmly applauded when he said we were being targeted for telling the truth but we would continue our demonstrations for free and fair elections for as long as it takes.

Thanks to Jonathan Kariwoh for helping the management team with the register. Thanks also to Pamela Dunduru, Chair of ROHR West Bromwich branch and Diana Mtendereki also of West Bromwich for supplying soft drinks for Vigil supporters.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 167 signed the register.

FOR YOUR DIARY:

- **ROHR Bedford general meeting.** Saturday 4th July from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: 64 Magnolia Close, Kempstone, Bedford, MK42 7NR. ROHR President, executive and a well known immigration lawyer present. Special guest the MP for Bedford
. Contact: Daniel Manyanga 07939184723, Sifelani Dziva 07936551476, Allen Gapara 07834231749, R Mwandira 07903434431 or Paradzai Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.
- **ROHR Wolverhampton general meeting.** Saturday 4th July from 12 noon – 4 pm. Venue: 149 Chervil Rise, Heath Town, Wolverhampton WV10 0HZ
. Contact: Colleen Maredza 077 333 94648, Veronica Chakeredza 078 537 52085
- **ROHR Surrey & Hants general meeting.** Saturday 4th July from 130 – 5.30 pm. Venue: 10 Elmdene Court, Constitution Hill, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7SA
. Contact: Isaac Mudzamiri 07774044873, Thoko Hlokama 07886203113, Thandi Mabodoko 01483600201, 01483826764 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070
- **ROHR Bournemouth general meeting.** Saturday, 4th July from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: East Cliff Reformed Church, Holdenhurst Road, BH8 8AW
. Contact: Mike Mhene 07774521837, Abigail Nzimba 07917458873 or Gift Pfupa 07909831158 or Sekai Mujeyi 07765244138.
- **ROHR Liverpool general meeting.** Saturday, 4th July from 2 – 5.30 pm. Venue: Prescott Lodge, 52-56 Prescott Road, Liverpool L7 0JA.
Contact Desire Chimuka 07917733711, Anywhere Mungoyo 07939913638 or Patrick Kushonga 07900857605
- **ROHR Hatfield general meeting.** Saturday 11th July from 1.30 – 6 pm. Venue: Lord William Cecil Memorial Hall, 1 French Horn Lane, Hatfield, Herts AL10 8AQ. Present ROHR President, Executive and a well known lawyer: Special guests Hatfield & Welwyn MP Mr Grant Shapp and Mr Geoffrey Van Orden Europe MP. A substantive committee to be elected. Contact: Paradzai Mapfumo on 07915926323 / 07932216070, Clarkson Shumbanhete 07958550506, Mary Muradzikwa 07920170620, Rewai Chikungwa 07862246960 or Emilia Muradzikwa 07861712566
- **ROHR West Bromwich general meeting.** Saturday, 18th July from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: St Peters Church Hall, Whitehall Road, West Bromwich B70 0HF. ROHR President, Executive and a well known lawyer present, Invited guest

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Simon Hackett. Contact Pamela Dunduru 07958386718, Diana Mtendereki 07768682961, Peter Nkomo 07817096594 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **ROHR Hayes and Northolt launch meeting**. Saturday 25th July from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: Brookside Community Centre, Hayes UB4 0PL. ROHR President and a well known lawyer present. Contact Snodia Chihowa 07852921523, Juliet Musandiriri 07551319522 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **Zimbabwe Vigil Forum**. Saturday 25th July at 6.30 pm. Upstairs at the Theodore Bullfrog, John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL.

· **Zimbabwe Association's Women's Weekly Drop-in Centre**. Fridays 10.30 am – 4 pm. Venue: The 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).