

Another baking hot Vigil, this time enlivened by a passing parade of drag queens from the annual Gay Pride march. Despite Mugabe's close interest in gays, they were more interested in their gorgeous plumage than Zimbabwean human rights abuses.

As always, there were many newcomers to the Vigil and much discussion of the situation back home. Supporters are worried at suggestions that the timescale for new elections may be pushed back. This comes not only from Zanu-PF. The rationale is that the country is not ready and there may be violence etc. The Vigil insists that the timescale envisaged in the GPA be honoured. This provided for a new constitution within 18 months followed by elections.

During his visit to London Morgan Tsvangirai appealed to the diaspora to return home. The Vigil believes there is little prospect of this until an MDC government is in power. We think that the longer it takes to get rid of Mugabe the less likely it is that Zimbabweans will return home in any numbers.

The reason is that people are putting down roots in their new countries: children are at school etc.

The Vigil has received a letter from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in response to our request to the Foreign Secretary not to grant visas to Zimbabwe ministers on the EU travel ban list. The letter says the EU allowed exemptions to attend intergovernmental meetings for political dialogue which promotes democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Zimbabwe

. The Vigil believes this must include free and fair elections – our one and only demand.

Attendance was a bit down this week but we notice that our partner organisation ROHR was having no less than six meetings today around the UK: Bedford, Wolverhampton, Woking, Bournemouth

,
Liverpool
and
Manchester

. In the first half of this year 2,040 people came to the Vigil at least once.

This approaches the figure for the whole of last year (2,421).

You will be pleased to hear that Sue Toft's eye operation seems to have been a success though she has been unable to rejoin us as yet. Thanks to her daughter Francesca for standing in for her and also to Caroline who comes all the way from Exeter to help us out.

Thanks also to Cleopas Tapambwa, a faithful supporter, who lends a hand everywhere and lends two hands to the drumming.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 137 signed the register.

FOR YOUR DIARY:

·■■■■■■■■■■ **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 Coventry general meeting.** Saturday 11th July from 3 – 5.30 pm. Venue: P aynes Lane

,
Coventry
CV1 5LJ

. Contact:

E Nyakudya

07876796129, M Sibanda(Nashe)

07788560068, P Makuwerere 07599401559 or V J Mujeyi 07534034594

·■■■■■■■■■■ **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,

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Written by Administrator

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invited guest: Cllr 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.

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,
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).