

Vigil supporters welcomed the prospect of a meeting between Morgan Tsvangirai and Jacob Zuma and hoped that the South African President would live up to his word and be tough with Comrade Mugabe, “head of state and government, commander in chief . . . “

Six months into the unity government it is clear that Zanu PF will have to be dragged kicking and screaming from power and regional pressure is essential if real progress is to be made on restoring the rule of law, opening the way for development aid and investment. One supporter has just returned from

Zimbabwe

and says that the grass roots were happier because food was more readily available. However there were still human rights abuses and a lack of democracy and he said the danger was that people would relax and it was very important for human rights activists like the Vigil to keep holding the government to account.

The Vigil was encouraged by some recent moves, such as the agreement to ease media restrictions, but supporters were suspicious that these promised concessions may be short-lived, designed only to pull the wool over the eyes of SADC. The Vigil believes that SADC must insist that the power-sharing agreement is implemented in full, ending the targeting of MDC and human rights activists and that free and fair elections are held next year and not postponed.

Our tarpaulin was again called into service as Harare North continued its wet summer. But at least it was warm and morale was high among the singers and dancers crushed together under our flimsy shelter. Of course we couldn't all fit in but the outer reaches survived the rain with umbrellas and anyway we escaped quite lightly give the weather forecast. There were the customary cheers as tourist buses passed and guides could be heard telling their passengers about the Vigil – the biggest regular protest in

London

. Judging by the addresses written on our petitions people from all over the world are supporting our cause.

Jeff Sango, a regular at the Vigil and Chair of MDC South East District, told us about an internship scheme organised by Citizens for Sanctuary which is trying to secure work placements for qualified Zimbabweans with refugee status or asylum seekers. For more information check: <http://www.citizensforsanctuary.org.uk/pages/Strategic.html> or contact: [zim](#)

babweinternship@cof.org.uk

We were also joined by Dr Timothy Rusike and his television team from ZBN (Zimbabwe Broadcasting Network). They are human rights activists based in Reading who filmed us comprehensively. Dr Rusike (a medical practitioner) says he believes in activism journalism.

There has been a lot on Zimbabwe in the British media this week, not surprising given the lifting of restrictions on the BBC. They have been reporting nightly and no doubt will soon start digging seriously into the lop-sided power arrangement and be kicked out again.

We were glad to see a more challenging approach from the UK's Channel 4 which showed a

programme 'Bankrolling Mugabe' – you can watch it on this link for the next few weeks:

<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches/episode-guide/series-32/episode-1>

A new poster joined our selection: '3 days peace. On day 4 bullet sent via post' – a reference to the three days of national hypocritical healing and the bullet sent to Tendai Biti. The poster was produced by Brian Sibanda who calls himself a 'people's poet'.

The Vigil has its singers and dancers, preachers and drummers, so we must have a poet . . .

Thanks to supporters Xolani Simozo and Gladys Mapanda for their help today – setting up the Vigil, helping throughout the day and packing up the Vigil at the end.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 168 signed the register.

FOR YOUR DIARY:

· **ROHR Hayes and Northolt launch meeting.** Saturday 8th August 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, Rodah Kuhlengisa 07958205544

or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **ROHR Milton Keynes general meeting.** Saturday 15th August from 1.30 – 5.30 pm.

Venue: Old Bath House Community Centre,
205 Stratford Road

, Wolverton, Milton Keynes MK12 5RL

(near Tesco and 2 mins away from Wolverton train station). Contact Punish Mandere

07883071990,

Martha Jiya

07727016098,

Josephine S Phiri

07853572982,

Diana Satumba

07737879653.

· **ROHR Swansea launch meeting.** Saturday 22nd August 1.30 – 6 00 pm. Venue: Morris ton Memorial Hall, Heol Gwernen, Morrision, Swansea SA6 6JR. Present ROHR President and some members of the ROHR Executive.

Contact: Kudzai Ruzwidzo 07824967317,

Israel

Ncube 07789814159 or P Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070.

· **ROHR Derby general meeting.** Saturday, 5th September 1.30-5.30pm. Venue: The Community Block,

Pear

Tree

Community

Junior

School

,

Pear Tree Street

,

Derby

DE23 8PN

. ROHR Executive present and a substantive committee to be elected.

Contact: Tsitsi Razawe

07773649330

, Wonder Katurura

07858699224

, Phenias Tutayi

07825524519

. FREE PARKING AVAILABLE.

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

Zimbabwe Vigil Diary – 1st August 2009

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 02 August 2009 10:57 - Last Updated Sunday, 02 August 2009 11:01

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).