

We gathered as news broke of a police raid on an MDC house in Harare – ‘looking for weapons’. We have been there before. Zanu PF was predictably trying to produce a red herring before the SADC Troika meeting in Harare on Thursday. It knows any pretext will work with SADC.

The Vigil remains convinced there will be no solution in Zimbabwe until South Africa acts. There is little evidence that this is on the cards at present. But as the situation worsens and the World Cup approaches perhaps this will change.

A telling confession of deception came from the MDC itself at a news conference addressed by Tendai Biti on Thursday. He admitted that the party had been telling lies about so-called progress made by the coalition government. Read the MDC media release (http://www1.zimbabwesituation.com/oct24_2009.html#Z3

). One of the most alarming comments in this statement is that ‘there is a resurgence of violence in most areas across the country’

Vigil stalwart, Josephine Zhuga, shared with us this email message she has just received:

‘I am quite sure that news has reached you that the coalition government is about to collapse and that an orgy of violence might befall us once again. I have had the opportunity to interact with some people within SADC and it seems nothing is going to happen when the Troika on security, politics and defence meets. I understand Morgan was told by President Zuma to go back and work with Zanu PF while SADC deal with the issues. As for us human rights defenders we have been receiving warnings that we need to be cautious with our movements when in Zimbabwe since Zanu PF has begun an active process of re-oiling its violence machinery.

‘I am also worried that if you have any plans in the near future to come back home you might not be met with the historic smiles we used to experience at the airport or in Glen Norah since you might be a target as a result of your active involvement with the Zimvigil and other human rights organisations. I did see your photos. They were amazing but a recipe for disaster if you decide to visit or return home permanently.

‘Last week an MDC supporter was beaten to death and the WOZA women and other progressive organisations continue to receive the lash from state agents and the case of Roy Bennett is a point in issue since it whittles down any hope that we were beginning to build around the all inclusive government.

‘I am told that Zanu PF and its coterie of thugs is beginning to target human rights activists so as to silence any dissenting voices so that any violations undertaken would be swept under the carpet.

‘I am not trying to frighten you since you are fighting for your country from a different battle front but the truth must be told that things are beginning to lose track and we might find ourselves in another cycle of violence.

Well, we in the UK have rather more mundane problems to deal with. The Vigil was interested to see that a Zimbabwean asylum seeker has been jailed for 3 years by Leeds Crown Court for his part in a fraud which cost banks about £1 million [Click here for more](#). We recognised his name – Sonny Chibwe – because he wrote an article attacking the Vigil and Restoration of Human Rights Zimbabwe (ROHR) which was published on the Zimeye website on 21st June (<http://www.zimeye.org/?p=6098>

). On the basis of no evidence whatsoever he blamed us for the boozing of Morgan Tsvangirai at

Southwark Cathedral when the Prime Minister called on the diaspora to return home because all was now well. The Vigil and ROHR did not orchestrate anything; our presence there was to draw attention to human rights failings in Zimbabwe. In a piece titled 'The day I was embarrassed to be a Zimbabwean', Mr Chibuwe said 'There are some bad elements within our Zimbabwean community'. Quite! (Now expect more poisonous articles attacking the Vigil and ROHR on these trashy websites written by Chibuwe's pals such as Brilliant Stinko and his like.) The judge in the Chibuwe case said the sentence meant Chibuwe was now liable for deportation. We know recommendations like this sometimes fall by the wayside so we are sending a copy of this piece to the UK Border Agency to book his ticket. After all, in his article, Chibuwe supported enthusiastically the Prime Minister's call for people to return home to start rebuilding Zimbabwe. He can start with the banks.

All in all we at the Vigil had both good and bad developments. First the bad: the Water Board has taken over most of our space to repair their sewers so Zimbabwe House doesn't get cholera. Now the good news: despite all threats the rain held off. We were very vulnerable because we couldn't have put up our tarpaulin. Another good thing was a new placard brought by Francesca Toft quoting the Kenyan Prime Minister Odinga's comment: 'In Zimbabwe Mr Mugabe is not part of the solution to the political problem; he himself is the problem'. Francesca's parents, Sue and Alfred, organised a service for Zimbabwe at St Mary's, Speldhurst, Kent, borrowing one of the Vigil drums. Sue led the prayers – including one that Mugabe should see the error of his ways.

Thanks to Dumi Tutani, Moses Kandiyawo and Kelvin Kamipura who represented the Vigil at an event celebrating Black History Month at City and Islington College. Their dancing and drumming is always a highlight. Pictures of the event are on the Vigil Flickr website. Thanks also to Jonathan Kariwoh and Tendai Gakanje who stepped in to look after the Vigil back table to replace Vigil management team members who were absent through sickness and other commitments.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 159 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **Southern Africa: Democracy and Development.** Saturday 31st October at 2 pm.
Venue: Unite, 128 Theobald's Road, London WC1X 8TN. Will Zimbabwe's unity government collapse? When will the world wake up to the situation in Swaziland? ACTSA's Annual Conference will feature leading southern African trade unionists who will discuss key issues from the region, especially on democracy and development in Zimbabwe and Swaziland. Confirmed speakers include: Vimbai Mushongera, Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, and Vincent Dlamini, Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions. A British Government minister has also

been invited. For more information please visit:

[http://www.actsa.org/page-1421-Annual General Meeting.html](http://www.actsa.org/page-1421-Annual%20General%20Meeting.html)

- **ROHR West Bromwich general meeting.** Saturday 31st October from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: St Peter's Church Hall, Whitehall Road, West Bromwich B70 0HF. ROHR Executive and a well known lawyer present. Contact Pamela Dunduru 07958386718, Diana Mtendereki 07768682961, Peter Nkomo 07817096594 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 0793221607

- **ROHR Leeds general meeting.** Saturday 31st October from 2 – 4 pm. Venue: Dock Green Inn, Ashley Road, Leeds LS9 7AB. A well known human rights lawyer will be present. Contact Leeds interim Chairperson Prosper Mudamvanji 07897594874, David Munemo 07963708923, Benard Ndlovu 0795076774, Donna Mugoni, Wakefield & Northern Region Chairperson also UK National interim Vice Chair on 07533259373 or P Mapfumo UK National Co-ordinator 07915926323 / 07932216070.

- **ROHR Swansea general meeting.** Saturday 31st October from 2 – 4 pm. Venue: 9 Pleasant Street, SA6 6HJ, Swansea SA6 6HJ. There is a lot to discuss please come early. Contact Kudzai Ruzwidzo 07908029638 / 07824967317, Phillip Mpukutsa 07999615868 or Phyllis Chibanguza UK Co-ordinator 07908406069.

- **ROHR Liverpool general meeting.** Saturday 7th November from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: 80 Aspen Grove, Toxteth, Liverpool, L7 0ST. T-shirts available. NEW MEMBERS ARE VERY WELCOME. Contact: Desire Chimuka 07917733711, Anywhere Mungoyo 07939913688, Patrick Kushonga 07900857605, Trywell Migeri 07956083758.

- **ROHR North London launch meeting.** Saturday 7th November from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: Tottenham Chances, 399 High Road, Tottenham, London N17 6QN, Nearest Tube Station: Seven Sisters, then buses towards Tottenham, 3rd Bus Stop from 7 Sisters Station. Routes: 123, 149, 259, 279, 349, 476, 341 243. Contact: Gladys Mapanda 07877670522, Collin Chitekwe 07957712691, Valerie Chengaose 07956586377, Bekithemba Nyahwa 07534905348, P Mapfumo 07915926323 or Phyllis Chibanguza 07908406069

- **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).

- **Strategic Internship for Zimbabweans** organised by Citizens for Sanctuary which is trying to secure work placements for qualified Zimbabweans with refugee status or asylum seekers. For information: <http://www.citizensforsanctuary.org.uk/pages/Strategic.html>
or contact: zimbabweinternship@cof.org.uk

- **Vote for Betty Makoni** of Girl Child Network as one of CNN's top ten heroes of 2009 via

Zimbabwe Vigil Diary – 24th October 2009

Written by Administrator

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this link:

<http://edition.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes/>