

The Vigil is not surprised that the MDC UK and Ireland Province has been suspended by the party's leadership in Harare. A letter from MDC Secretary General Tendai Biti spoke of financial irregularities, poor performance and 'disfunctionality' (see scanned copy on <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/sets/72157622770117445/>). The Vigil could add many other reasons. Since former Assistant Police Commissioner Jonathan Chawora was foisted on the membership going on 2 years ago, the MDC in the UK has gone steadily downhill. All its efforts have gone into fundraising but it seems Harare has seen none of the funds. Where has the money gone?

The Vigil has a good idea.

Well, the party leaders in Harare are to send an investigating committee to find out. The Vigil can tell the committee that the disgraced UK Executive has done nothing to publicise the plight of Zimbabwe or promote the party to the British public. Instead it has devoted its energy to trying to undermine the Vigil – sometimes with veiled threats of violence. We remember Hebson Makuvishe, Tsvangirai's uncle and representative in the UK, angrily waving his fists, trying to take over a vigil. (Hebson has been nominated as Ambassador to Germany – let's hope he's learned some diplomacy.)

Although Vigil supporters were pleased that action had finally been taken against the MDC bullies in the UK, many people expressed their impatience at the slow pace of talks in Harare: belatedly started on Monday only to be suspended on Wednesday, with Welshman Ncube openly scoffing at SADC's timetable.

There is growing suspicion among Vigil supporters that the politicians in Harare are happy to see things drag on until elections in 2013.

Their attitude seems to be: 'as long as we have our jobs and cars and official business trips to

Peru, Nepal, Azerbaijan or anywhere we can go on talking forever.’

The Vigil trusts that President Zuma will knock heads together. (He will have to knock very hard otherwise they won't notice!) Fourteen months after the GPA there has been zero progress on the rule of law, freedom of the media – or just about anything. With our politicians left to their own devices we doubt that there every will be.

Similar pessimism was expressed on Wednesday at a meeting in London at the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum's offices attended by Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu of WOZA, fresh from their wonderful reception by President Obama in Washington

. The

London

meeting was attended by Josephine Zhuga and

Sue and Francesca Toft from the Vigil who reported there was deep concern about the human rights situation in rural

Zimbabwe

. There was criticism that the MDC were not reaching these areas.

Similar comments were made by Gertrude Hambara, General Secretary of the General Agricultural and Plant Workers Union of Zimbabwe, who dropped in at the Vigil. Earlier in the week she had addressed the All-Party Parliamentary Committee on Zimbabwe and said the MDC needed to move into rural communities before they became 'no-go areas'.

Gertrude told the Committee that the so-called land reform programme had displaced about 350,000 farm workers, affecting two million people when their families were included.

The Vigil has been invited to take part in a demonstration to mark Human Rights Day on 10th December in Trafalgar Square. More details next week.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 188 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

· **ROHR Christmas party.** Saturday 5th December, time tba. Venue: Coronation Hall, Stoke Road, Water Eaton, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK2 3AB. Stations: Bletchley (nearest) or Central Milton Keynes

. Use Bus 5 from both stations. Parking: additional parking is available in the Veterinary Practice next door and on the gravelled area to the front of the Practice building. Further parking is available in the Plough Public House approx 100metres from the hall. Please do not obstruct the public footpath or highway or hamper access to the neighbouring properties. Contact: Martha Jiya 07727016098, Pamela Dunduru 07958386718, Jemias V Mujeyi 07534034594, Rodah Kulhengisa 07983057533 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070

· **ROHR Brighton general meeting.** Saturday 12th December from 1 – 4 pm. Venue: Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton BN1 3XG

. Rohr executives present and a well known lawyer. Substantive committee to be elected. Contact Sinikiwe Dube 07824668763,

Wellington

Mamvura 07949595506 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **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.citizensfor Sanctuary.org.uk/pages/Strategic.html>

or contact:

zimbabweinternship@cof.org.uk