

While both Mugabe and Tsvangirai have been seeking support from apostolic Christians, the Vigil was surprised to be joined by a large group of Zimbabwean Christians. We were grateful for their prayers – and touched when they prayed for those on our register. Dressed in white robes, they said they had come to London to spread peace. They are members of Friday Apostles 'Johane Masowe We Chishanu' and have a base in Sheffield in the north of England

Their attendance was timely as the Vigil has been reminded of the cost of Mugabe's misrule by a new report by the Solidarity Peace Trust titled 'A fractured nation: Operation Murambatsvina five years on'. Some 700,000 were left homeless and an estimated 2.4 million lost their livelihoods in the sudden destruction of informal housing and small businesses aimed at driving MDC supporters back to their rural homes where they could starve out of sight.

Looking back at the Vigil diary, we note the entry for 11th June 2005: 'The heavy media coverage given to Mugabe's scorched earth policy ensured that the Vigil was besieged by people eager to sign our petition demanding that South Africa stops supporting the Mugabe regime. Many people lingered to talk about the situation, expressing great concern at the plight of those made homeless in winter. And from the activists who support the Vigil week in and week out there was an anger unseen before – even during the successive stolen elections.'

(We recall our dismay at the time that the left of centre British newspaper the Guardian thought Operation Murambatsvina was a thoroughly sensible thing – talk about useful idiots!)

Solidarity Peace Trust has been tracking the fate of some of those displaced 5 years ago and notes: 'The story is a grim one with many of those we remembered now prematurely dead and others living in unspeakable poverty.' In short, those whose lives were devastated remain poverty-stricken and forgotten.

The state has done nothing whatsoever to alleviate the plight of those displaced by Operation Murambatsvina. In fact the only help they've got has been from NGOs and the Vigil is surprised that it is an MDC minister who now wants to block NGO work. Minister for Regional Integration

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and International Co-operation, Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga, echoing the Zanu-PF line, has ordered donors and NGOs to report all their activities to her – criticised as an attempt to divert donor funds from projects the government doesn't like. Before she joined the gravy-train, Ms Misihairabwi-Mushonga had opposed government interference in the affairs of NGOs. Can't she let well enough alone and concentrate on getting her share of the diamonds? See: <http://www.solidaritypeacetrust.org/787/a-fractured-nation-operation-murambatsvina-%e2%80%93-five-years-on/#more-787>

and

<http://www.solidaritypeacetrust.org/798/poverty-on-top-of-poverty/#more-798>

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Some other points:

- The UK Supreme Court has ruled that failed asylum seekers who made a fresh claim for refugee status should be allowed to work if they have waited more than 12 months for a new Home Office decision. See: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/7914736/Tens-of-thousands-of-failed-asylum-seekers-given-right-to-work.html> and <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jul/29/restrictions-sought-asylum-seekers-jobs>
- We were glad to be joined by the activist we helped to escape from Zimbabwe. He said after he was picked up he was randomly beaten up on the way to the police station. He was held in cells for 2 days in indescribable conditions and would probably still be there if we hadn't got legal help to get him out. The experience left him 2 kgs lighter.
- Our sympathy to committed supporter Patrick Nyamwanza who was very distressed to learn yesterday that his mother in Zimbabwe who he hasn't seen for many years had had a stroke. We pray with him for her recovery.
- Vigil supporters might be interested to see a piece about the Vigil on the Zimeye website: <http://www.zimeye.org/?p=20005>
- It was good to have with us for the whole afternoon, Adriano Navarro, a Portuguese student from the London School of Economics who bought a Vigil tshirt and a 'Mugabe must Go' wristband and generally empathized with the plight of Zimbabwe.
- While we were looking back at the diary we found that Roy Bennett visited us 5 years ago (6th August 2005) and described us as a 'Fire in Mugabe's bum'. We are not surprised that Mugabe is continuing to misuse the legal system to keep him from taking up his job as Deputy Agriculture Minister.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . For the latest ZimVigil TV programme check the link at the top of the home page of our website.

For earlier ZimVigil TV programmes check:

<http://www.zbnnews.com/home/firingline>

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**FOR THE RECORD:** 142 signed the register.

**EVENTS AND NOTICES:**

· **The Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR)** is the Vigil's partner organisation based in Zimbabwe. ROHR grew out of the need for the Vigil to have an organisation on the ground in Zimbabwe which reflected the Vigil's mission statement in a practical way. ROHR in the UK actively fundraises through membership subscriptions, events, sales etc to support the activities of ROHR in Zimbabwe

Zim

· **ROHR Liverpool Vigil.** Saturday 7th August from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: Church Street (Outside Primark), Liverpool City

Centre. For details please contact: Anywhere Mungoyo 07939913688, Trywell Migeri 07956083758, Panyika Karimanzira 07551062161. Future demonstrations: 21st August, 4th September. Same time and venue.

· **ROHR Stoke-On-Trent general meeting.** Saturday 7th August from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: YMCA Edinburgh House, Harding Road

Stoke-On-Trent  
ST1 3AE

· Substantive committee to be elected. Executive members present. Contact: Pauline Mutema on

07850462301

, David Mugwira

07866873493,

Maxwell

Dube

07533349840, P Chibanguza 07908406069 or P Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070

· **ROHR Woking general meeting.** Saturday 7th August. Venue: 61 Sunbury Lane, Walton-on-Thames

KT12 2JA

Surrey

· Contact: Isaac Mudzamiri 07774044873, Sithokozile Hlokana 07886203113 or P Mapfumo on 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **ROHR London South-East Branch general meeting.** Saturday 14th August at 1 pm.

## Zimbabwe Vigil Diary – 31st July 2010

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Venue:

16 Sydenham Road, Lond

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E26 5QW

. Contact:

Wellington

Rupere 07799702750, Priscilla Chitsinde 07804696328,

Courage Chiromo

07894586005 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

- **Vigil Facebook page:** <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8157345519&ref=ts>
- **Vigil Myspace page:** <http://www.myspace.com/zimbabwevigil>