

The release of a UN report naming Zimbabwe as the worst country in the world to live in prompted debate at the Vigil on how we can get the UN to do something about it – namely to send a peacekeeping mission to ensure that the promised elections next year are not a repeat of the violent 2008 charade.

The report by the UN Development Programme said Zimbabwe was poorer than 40 years ago. It ranks Zimbabwe at the very bottom of a list of 169 countries for which figures were available; it has the lowest income per head – 40% lower than the second worst-off country, the DRC. (See: http://www1.zimbabwesituation.com/nov6_2010.html#Z11

–
Norway
best,
Zimbabwe
worst places to live: UN
).

Another startling report (see: http://www1.zimbabwesituation.com/nov5_2010.html#Z13 – Life Expectancy for Zimbabwe Women Falls) says life expectancy for women in Zimbabwe is now 30 – four years less than when the coalition government was formed! Ok, one wonders how accurate statistics for Zimbabwe are, but they all tend to undermine the case for the continuance of the current regime.

If things are not getting better why continue along a sterile path? Investment is not flowing into Zimbabwe . The only thing flowing into Zimbabwe is Western aid and that will not turn around the situation for our desperate people.

The Vigil has been hearing the despairing voices of the people of Muzarabani in the borderlands of Mashonaland Central and Mozambique. They say they are prepared to sell their chickens and goats to help finance foreign observers: ‘

If we are to have elections next year we want the UN and EU to come and observe the elections . . . What does it take for them to come and protect us? If it is money, we villagers in Muzarabani are prepared to sell our chicken and goats to pay them to come. We cannot have a repetition of 2008 when SADC observers were relaxing in hotels while we got beaten here! . . . ‘

said
Mr Goto, during one Heal
Zimbabwe
meeting at Machaya village.

The Vigil is also prepared to sell our chickens and goats to get free and fair elections. The Vigil is working through our partner Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR) to resist violence and work for a peaceful Zimbabwe. ROHR is leading a consortium of four organisations which had a meeting in Zimuto in Masvingo Province, one of the first places to be hit by the 2008 violence (see: <http://www.rohrzimbabwe.org/Latest-News-from-ROHR-in-Zimbabwe/>

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Resist instigators and agents of violence!). We support their determination to stand up for peace and, as they put it, ‘repossess the keys to the gates of Zimuto’.

The Vigil is hoping to present the following petition to the UN soon: ‘We call on the Security Council to ensure that the next elections in Zimbabwe are free and fair. We look to the United Nations to supervise the electoral process and the handover of power to a new government and believe peace-keeping troops will need to be in place before, during and after the polling.’ We are thinking of submitting the petition through the European Union via our good friend Geoffrey Van Orden, MEP, who has been an implacable opponent of the Mugabe regime.

President Zuma recently addressed the European Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee and was urged by Mr Van Orden to do more to resolve the ongoing political turmoil in Zimbabwe.

Mr Van Orden commented: “I put it to President Zuma that South Africa has been reluctant to show regional leadership on Zimbabwe

and has acquiesced while the Mugabe clique brutalised their country. In spite of some changes following the Global Political Agreement, Mugabe's people still grasp the levers of power. Key elements of the economy - especially the diamond mines at Marange - are plundered for their personal enrichment.

The restrictive measures are aimed specifically at Mugabe and his immediate supporters - they are not sanctions against

Zimbabwe

as such and have played no role in the economic decline of the country. It would therefore be premature to remove them until genuine democratic change had been achieved. Rather than calling for the EU's restrictive measures to be removed, I urged President Zuma to be more active in forcing the pace of change.”

We are hoping that Mr Van Orden will be able to visit us soon so we can pass on our petition, which has been signed by thousands of people from all over the world passing along the Strand

Other points

- This week was one of joy and sorrow for the Vigil. We rejoiced at the news that a baby daughter, Mandisa, was born to our co-ordinator Dumi Tutani and his wife Gugu, also a Vigil management team member. We grieved with Godfrey Madzungu whose mother died suddenly in Zimbabwe. We prayed and sang for Godfrey and his family at the Vigil today and a collection was made to help him at this difficult time.

- We were all transfixed by the Zimbabwe Tourist Authority's new video shown in the Embassy window. It depicts white tourists having a luxurious spa treatment and patting elephants and lions on the head. No wonder one tourist was eaten by lions recently! 'The mystique of the Eastern Highlands' is the title of the video which strangely enough has no pictures of the desperate scrambling for diamonds . . .

- The Vigil was surprised not to receive an invitation from the Foreign Office to a meeting on Monday with the British Ambassador to Zimbabwe. We only heard about the meeting by chance. The Foreign Office seems to prefer dealing only with a Zimbabwean group set up by the UK government. See 'Events and Notices' for how to attend.

The Ambassador will also be speaking at Chatham House in London on Wednesday.

- We recommend you read Solidarity Peace Trust's 'Initial Thoughts on the Matabeleland Constitutional Outreach Experience' – http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/nov2_2010.htm [#Z1](#) for why the programme has been such a

Zimbabwe Vigil Diary – 6th November 2010

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 07 November 2010 15:33 - Last Updated Sunday, 07 November 2010 15:43

colossal waste of time and money. Why the West funded this fiasco instead of reforms to make a free and fair election possible we will never know.

- Front desk lady Josephine Zhuga has been invited to talk about the situation in Zimbabwe and the achievements of the Vigil at

a meeting of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom on Monday 15th

November. See 'events and notices' for time and venue.

- Thanks to Loreta Govere for stepping in to help with the register today.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 140 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

- **Meeting on the situation and politics in Zimbabwe.** Monday 8th November from 2 – 3.30 pm. Venue: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, King Charles Street

,
London

,
SW1A 2AH

. The invitation to Zimbabweans is from The Minister for Africa

, Henry Bellingham MP, and will be chaired by the British Ambassador to Harare

, Mark Canning. Register your name with Margaret Belof (Margaret.belof@fco.gov.uk)

Zimbabwe Vigil Diary – 6th November 2010

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or 020 7008 2930) so that a security pass can be prepared in advance.

It is advisable to arrive ten minutes early.

· **Furthering Zimbabwe Debate in the United Kingdom.** Wednesday 10th November from 1.30 – 2.30 pm. Venue:

The Royal Institute of International Affairs,
Chatham
House,
10 St James's Square

,
London
SW1Y 4LE

. Participants: Henry Bellingham MP, Minister for
Africa

; Mark Canning, Ambassador to
Zimbabwe

; Dr Knox Chitiyo, Head of the
Africa

Programme, Royal United Services Institute; Chair: Dr Robin Niblett, Director,
Chatham

House. To secure a place email:

tamare@chathamhouse.org.uk

but hurry, the meeting is filling up fast.

· **ROHR Liverpool general meeting.** Saturday 13th November. Venue: Kensington Method
ist

rch

Liverpool

L7 2RN. Contact: Anywhere Mungoyo - 07939913688, Trywell Migeri 07956083758, Netsai
Karota 07767483180 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **Talk about the situation in Zimbabwe and achievements of the Zimbabwe Vigil.** Mo
nday 15

th

November from 6.30 – 8.30 pm. Venue: Commonwealth Club 25 Northumberland Avenue WC2
– downstairs room is booked in the name of Jane Grant. Speaker: Josephine Zhuga of the Vigil.
Organisers: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

· **ROHR Bournemouth Anniversary and Christmas Party.** Saturday 20th November from
2 – 10 pm. Venue: Strouden Community Hall,
Bradpole Road

,
Strouden Park
BH8 9NY

near Castle Point shopping Centre. Music, sadza, maguru, braai, drinks etc. Contact Sekai
Mujeyi 07772211220, Sledge Bova 07788850146, Tari Mashawi 07843614091, Abi Nzimba
07780831455 or P Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070

· **ROHR Basildon and Thurrock fundraising day.** Saturday 20th November from 1.30 –
1030 pm.

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Venue: WRVS,
Richmond Road

,
Benfleet
SS7 5HE

. Food, drinks, music. Contact: Tobokwa Malikogwa 07865156381, Nhamo E Kumumvuri 07623337115, Stephen Kamumvuri 07961677573 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070

· **ROHR Woking Christmas Party.** Saturday 4th December from 2 – 10 pm. Venue: The Church House, Oriental Road, Woking GU22 7BD. Contact Isaac Mudzamiri 07774044873, Thandiwe Mabodoko 07552402416, Thoko Khlokanka 07886203113 or P Mapfumo on 07915926323/07932216070

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

· **Vigil Myspace page:** <http://www.myspace.com/zimbabwевigil> .

· **‘Through the Darkness’, Judith Todd’s acclaimed account of the rise of Mugabe.** □ T
o receive a copy by post in the UK please email confirmation of your order and postal address
to

ngwenyasr@yahoo.co.uk

and send a cheque for £10 payable to “Budiriro Trust” to Emily Chadburn, 15 Burners Close,
Burgess Hill,
West Sussex

RH15 0QA. All proceeds go to the Budiriro Trust which
provides bursaries to needy A Level students in
Zimbabwe

· **Workshops aiming to engage African men on HIV testing and other sexual health
issues.** Organised by the Terrence Higgins Trust (www.tht.org.uk). Please contact the
co-ordinator

Mukiwa

Takudzwa

akudzwa.mukiwa@tht.org.uk

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if you are interested in taking part.