

Vigil supporters were not surprised to learn of the latest SADC fiasco which left President Zuma talking to himself at a meeting of the security troika in Gaborone called to discuss Zimbabwe.

Zambian President Rupiah Banda – obviously still to recover from being peed on by a monkey in State House – failed to turn up. The third member of the troika President Armando Guebuza of Mozambique had no such excuse: perhaps he just forgot to go.

Nevertheless the meeting was a brilliant success for President Zuma who managed to get his views on Zimbabwe across to himself without interruption. He no doubt congratulated himself on South Africa's efficient plans to expel hundreds of thousands of Zimbabwean refugees in the new year.

We at the Vigil looked elsewhere for inspiration – to Chief Chaka of Chirumhanzu in Midlands Province, who spoke at a meeting last Sunday arranged by our friends of Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR). A full report on this meeting can be seen on ROHR's website (<http://www.rohrzimbabwe.org/Latest-News-from-ROHR-in-Zimbabwe/>) but we quote some of it here because it exemplifies what the Vigil is trying to achieve:

“More than five hundred villagers, among them chiefs, counsellors, herdsmen, the representative from national youth service, church leaders, artists, women, youths, men, political party representatives and members from the MDC and from ZANU PF, gathered on Sunday afternoon 14th November at Muwani business centre, 5 km from Chaka business centre along the Harare – Masvingo road to commemorate the international day of peace organized by ROHR Zimbabwe. The commemoration was celebrated in the form of rich probing poetry, incisive drama, soothing music , testimonials and deep speeches interwoven together to popularize the inevitable need for sustainable peace for development, its attainment and the underlying advantages of the absence of violence. The moment came when his highness, the visionary Chief Chaka delivered the key note address directly to his people and the visiting chief Manhovo from the neighbouring villages. Unlike the other breed of chieftainship that has been mired in the political crisis rather than being part of the solution, Chief Chaka made it known openly to the gathering that he was neither MDC nor Zanu PF in assuming his priorities and duties as the leader.”

Chief Chaka said “People should be free to live in harmony. I have said to people particularly

the youths in my area, if I hear that you have burnt a house or that you have beaten other people because of politics then you have to depart from my area.” He went on to say: “As from today we do not tolerate any form of intimidation or any form of violence among the people of Manhovo and Chaka. We are one family therefore we encourage unity and development. I do not want to hear of any shaming incidents in newspapers of violence between Manhovo and Chaka. You are lucky to have wise leadership that respects truth telling . . . that is why I am here today. We want peace and unity. I am not aligned to any political party. I want to unite people to live in peace, exchange ideas on what to do to stir development forward. Let’s be in the papers for good reasons not violence. I want to conclude saying to the youths, do not let people buy you beer or drugs to commit murder. Human blood is sacred.”

As we sang and danced outside the Embassy, Vigil supporters could only pray that ROHR’s message will spread widely before elections proposed for next year. But Vigil supporter David Kadzutu of the MDC said that Zanu PF were already using their tactics of intimidation and violence. He said the MDC and all other opposition groups should join forces with one voice.

Other points

- Three ROHR representatives are currently in Mozambique engaged in a regional advocacy and exchange programme in support of democracy in Zimbabwe

(see:

<http://www.rohrzimbabwe.org/Latest-News-from-ROHR-in-Zimbabwe/>

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- Josie Zhuga addressed a meeting on behalf of the Vigil of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) on Monday. They are keen to involve Zimbabweans in their Voices of African Women campaign. (See Events and Notices Section).

- The Vigil is bemused by speculation about a rapprochement between Mugabe and the UK government. The Vigil will pursue under international human rights laws all the Zimbabwean human rights abusers who may come to the

UK

- The only safe haven that Mugabe can have in the

UK

is at the Broadmoor prison for the criminally insane.

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: 132 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.

· **WILPF Voices of African Women meeting.** Thursday 25th November at 6.30 pm. Venue: WILPF office, Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8RT near Old Street

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, The meeting is open to anyone who is interested and it is an ongoing campaign.

· **Launch of ZimVigil TV website.** Friday 26th November. Thanks to Dr Tim Rusike of ZBN News who is setting up a new website:

www.zimvigil.tv

in gratitude to the Vigil for allowing him to work at the Vigil to develop ZBN News.

The website will be managed by a team selected by the Vigil and will have space for videos, picture gallery, community area and blog.

· **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.** To 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 "Budiro Trust" to Emily Chadburn, 15 Burners Close, Burgess Hill, West Sussex

RH15 0QA. All proceeds go to the Budiro Trust which

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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 Takudzwa
Mukiwa ([t](mailto:akudzwa.mukiwa@tht.org.uk))
akudzwa.mukiwa@tht.org.uk
if you are interested in taking part.