

The mystery of Mugabe's whereabouts as his 87th birthday approached was solved when he suddenly arrived at the Vigil to launch his planned two million person petition against the illegal sanctions which as you all know have done so much damage to our country by beating up innocent people, raping and starving them etc and generally sanctioning them with the aim of illegal regime change.

The Commander-in-Chief and Head of Everything, Robert Mugabe (Dickson Munemo in our Mugabe mask) emerged tottering on walking sticks from Rymans Stationers next to the Vigil. He had apparently mistaken it for the optician's shop on the other side of the Embassy. Supported by First Lady Grace (played by Josephine Zhuga) he signed our petitions without looking at them saying 'Down with gay Bliar and all his friends' before falling asleep in our chair. The couple were greeted by Vigil supporters holding up placards saying: 'Mugabe's 87th Birthday – Time to Go', 'People Power in Tunisia', 'People Power in Egypt', 'Watch out Mugabe' and 'Ben Ali & the Forty thieves gone! Mubarak gone! Mugabe must go'.

Asked how the President and Commander in Chief had evaded the illegal travel sanctions, Grace's personal helper, Gideon Gono, said the birthday boy had travelled very comfortably in Grace's fully-equipped shopping bag. Mr Gono, who is said to know something about these matters, seemed to think that all Zanu-PF wives delisted from the illegal sanctions nightmare would soon be swooping on Harrods with the missing hundred million dollars in diamond money. The Vigil wants to tell them that we are watching every entrance to Harrods.

We were pleased to be joined by two leaders of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights): Kucaca Phulu (Chair) and Okay Machisa (Director). They are visiting London as part of a tour of six European countries organised by the Zimbabwe Europe Network in Brussels and the Zimbabwe Advocacy Office in Geneva to tell of what is going on in Zimbabwe.

(See our Events and Notices section below for details of the London meeting and photographic exhibition on Monday). To the delight of Vigil supporters, Mr Machisa launched into singing and dancing. He said every week he checked what was happening at

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the Vigil. He spoke of the obstacles to democracy at home . . . the army, police, COI . . . We were so pleased when he said 'You at the Vigil are in our hearts - your love of your country.' For his part, Mr Phulu pointed to the Embassy and said 'One day freedom will walk out of that building and find you here.' He added he had been 'inspired and touched by the Vigil' and expressed his confidence that the wave of freedom would reach Zimbabwe

Other Points

- Thanks to Kelvin Kamupira for looking after the register and merchandise on the back table and to Nelie Masiyambiri for her donation of paper and envelopes to the Vigil.
- We were touched when an Egyptian family stopped and asked us if they could photograph one of our posters: 'People Power in Tunisia, People Power in Egypt. Watch out Mugabe'.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/> . For the latest ZimVigil TV programme check <http://www.zimvigil.com/>

FOR THE RECORD: 108 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.
- **Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum Meeting: Elections in Zimbabwe 2011 – good idea?** Monday 21st February 7.30 – 9.30 pm. Venue: Amnesty International UK Human Rights Action Centre, 17-25 New Yard Inn, London EC2A 3EA. Nearest tube: Old Street (Exit 4) or

Liverpool Street

(Bishopsgate West Exit). Speakers:

Okay Machisa and Kucaca Phulu National Director and Chair of Zimbabwe

Human Rights Association (ZimRights). You will also be able to view the ZimRights photographic exhibition 'Reflections' which features images of Zimbabwe's violent 2008 election period.

· **ROHR Peterborough general meeting.** Saturday 26th February from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: Millfield Community Centre, 3 N

ew England

Complex,

Lincoln Road

,
Peterborough

PE1 2PE

. Contact: Alista Mabiya 07724540506, Bertha Chiyangwa 07846151527 or P Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070.

· **ROHR Bournemouth general meeting.** Saturday 26th February from 2 – 5.30 pm. Venue: East Cliff Reformed Church opposite ASDA store, Holdenhurst Road

,
Bournemouth
BH8 8AY

. Contact: Sekai 07772211220, Sledge 07788850146, Abi 07780831455, P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **ROHR South East London general meeting.** Saturday 26th February at 1 pm. Venue: 16 Sydenham Road

, Sydenham,
London

SE26 6QW. All members, non-members & all human rights defenders are welcome. Contact W Rupere 07799702750, C Chiromo 07894586005, Patience C 07896496379 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070

· **ROHR Bristol general meeting.** Saturday 5th March from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: St Joseph

's
Presbytery
Church

,
232 Forest Road

, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3QT. Contact: Ronald Oputeri 07791109394, Bridgita Mubaiwa 07789084534, Cecilia Ndlovu 07740122687 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> .

· **'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

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ngwenyasr@yahoo.co.uk

and 0send 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 provides bursaries to needy A Level students in

Zimbabwe

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

co-ordinator

Takudzwa

Mukiwa

([t](mailto:takudzwa.mukiwa@tht.org.uk))

akudzwa.mukiwa@tht.org.uk)

if you are interested in taking part.