

Vigil supporters are disappointed that Mugabe's Ambassador to London has been invited to the Royal Wedding on 29th April. Management team member Luka Phiri spoke for many when he said he was shocked. But we understand that the demands of diplomatic protocol sometimes trump common sense. And – who knows? – the presence of Ambassador Machinga might be entertaining as he goes around Westminster Abbey soliciting signatures supporting the 2 million person anti-sanctions petition. Judging by the level of coercion, every signature counts!

Zim Vigil regular, Swazi national Thobile Gwebu took a stronger line when she heard that King Mswati of Swaziland would be present at the wedding, travelling to London with an entourage of no less than fifty to stay at the super expensive Dorchester hotel. Thobile, who launched a Vigil outside the Swaziland High Commission in London modeled on our own protest, was particularly annoyed that the world's last absolute monarch would make impoverished Swaziland a laughing stock at the occasion, what with his 13 wives. Mswati was a pupil at Sherborne public school in England which was founded in 1550 which seems to be the epoch where Mswati aims to keep Swaziland.

On the plus side, Thobile was able to reach a large audience by being interviewed on the BBC TV Newsnight programme on Friday (15th April), which looked at the brutal repression of the recent unrest in Mbabane (check: http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b010dggv/Newsnight_15_04_2011/ – 15.10 minutes into the broadcast – available until Thursday 21/4). She has since been invited to speak on South African radio.

'Mswati may be coming to London but I hope I have helped alert people to what is going on in my homeland', she told us at the Vigil.

Her comments resonated with President Zuma's report on the state of play in Zimbabwe. In the light of the uprisings in North and West Africa, he warned SADC leaders of the dangers of taking people for granted. Zuma's warning has not been heeded in Swaziland or Zimbabwe. Indeed, violence in Zimbabwe has been increasing – even in the absence of the whisky-loving commander of the defence forces, Constantine Chiwenga, who has gone to China to dry out.

The Vigil is marking the 31st anniversary of Zimbabwe's Independence on 18th April by

protesting outside the Zimbabwe Embassy from 12 noon to 3 pm against this violence. We are being joined by Action for Southern Africa, the successor organization of the anti-apartheid movement, which will be sending a card to the Zimbabwean Ambassador to pass on demands for an immediate end to the violence, free and fair elections and justice for the people of Zimbabwe.

On domestic matters, it was good to see several members of the Vigil management team back: Addley Nyamutaka (studying in Bournemouth), Bonny Adams (investigating sustainable farming in India) and Arnold Kuwewa (who has just come out of hospital). Also thanks to regular supporter Edna Mdoka for her help on the front table.

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

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FOR THE RECORD: 117 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.

- **ZBN News.** The Vigil management team wish to make it clear that the Zimbabwe Vigil is not responsible for Zimbabwe Broadcasting Network News (ZBN News). We are happy that they attend our activities and provide television coverage but we have no control over them. All enquiries about ZBN News should be addressed to ZBN News.

- The Zim Vigil band (Farai Marema and Dumi Tutani) has launched its theme song 'Vigil Yedu (our Vigil)' to raise awareness through music. To download this single, visit website: www.imusicafrica.com

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- **'Stop the Violence in Zimbabwe' Vigil.** Monday 18th April outside the Zimbabwe Embassy, 429 Strand WC2. The protest, on Zimbabwean Independence Day, has been organized by Action for Southern African (ACTSA) which has invited the Vigil to join them. ACTSA will be protesting from 1 – 2 pm but the Vigil will be there from 12 noon – 3 pm. Check: <http://www.actsa.org/page-1028-Events.html>

for more details.

· **ROHR Newcastle general meeting.** Saturday 23rd April from 2 – 6 pm. Venue: Warwick Court, Warwick Street, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE8 1EY. 3 mins walk from the Gateshead Interchange

opposite

Gateshead

Civic Centre

and Gateshead

Police Station

· Free parking

available. Contact Susan Ndlovu

07767024586

, Allen Chamboko

07500246416

, Kuda Derera

07411337933,

Rugare Chifungo (Coordinator)

07795070609

· **ROHR Yorkshire general meeting.** Saturday 23rd April from 2 – 6 pm. Venue: **Dock Green Inn, Ashley Rd , Leeds LS9 7AB. Contact:**

Chinofunga Ndogo 07877993826, Prosper Mudamvanji 07897594874, Wonder Mubaiwa 07958758568, Donna Mugoni 07748828913.

· **ROHR Manchester Vigil.** Saturday 30th April from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: Cathedral Gardens, Manchester City Centre (subject to change to Piccadilly Gardens).

Contact: Delina Tafadzwa Mutyambizi 07775313637, Chamunorwa Chihota 07799446404,

Panyika Karimanzira 07551062161, Artwell Pfende 07886839353, P Mapfumo

07915926323/07932216070 or P Chibanguza 07908406069. Future demonstration: 28

th

May. Same time and venue.

· **ROHR Harlow general meeting.** Saturday 7th May from 2 – 6 pm. Venue: Sherards

Hatch Nursery, Ployters Road, Harlow CM18 7PS. MP Mr Robert Halfon, ROHR President, UK

National executive and a well-known immigration lawyer will be present. Contact Bothwell

Nyemba 07725208657, Grace Kachingwe 07405637283, Aleck Kayima 07961907097, Lloyd

Kashangura 07506481334 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **ROHR Woking general meeting.** Saturday 7th May from 2 – 6pm. Venue: Woking

Homes, Oriental Road, Woking, GU22 7BE. Contact, Isaac Mudzamiri 07774044873,

Sithokozile Hlokana 07886203113, Saziso Zulu 07861028280 or P.Mapfumo

07915926323/07932216070.

· **ROHR Manchester meeting.** Saturday 14th May: (committee meeting from 11 am – 1 pm, general meeting from 2 – 5 pm). Venue:

The Salvation Army Citadel, 71 Grosvenor Road,

Manchester

M13 9UB.

Contact: Delina Tafadzwa Mutyambizi 07775313637, Chamunorwa Chihota 07799446404,

Panyika Karimanzira 07551062161, Artwell Pfende 07886839353, P Mapfumo 07915926323 /

07932216070 or P Chibanguza 07908406069.

- **ROHR Nottingham general meeting.** Saturday 14th May from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: St Saviours in the Meadows Church, Arkwright Walk, Nottingham NG2 2JU. The church is just a few minutes walk from the train station. ROHR National Executive members will be attending to discuss the abuse of human rights and political situation in Zimbabwe. Contact: Allan Nhemhara 07810197576, Mary Chabvamuperu 07412074928, Christopher Chibumu 07775888205, P Chibanguza 07908406069 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/zimbabwewigil> .

- **‘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 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 (takudzwa.mukiwa@tht.org.uk)

if you are interested in taking part.