

There was a buoyant mood at the Vigil as SADC met in Johannesburg to discuss the way forward for Zimbabwe. For us it was sunny despite the threatened rain – and there was a feeling of confidence that history was on our side after our long struggle.

We were encouraged that so many Zimbabwean groups had worked so hard to produce incontrovertible proof for SADC of what we have suffered in Zimbabwe. If they reject this evidence they are blind indeed.

President Zuma's report to the SADC Troika's Livingstone meeting suggested that the Zimbabwe problem was only of concern because the West was piqued. The inference was that the fate of Zimbabwe was of no real consequence: there was just a need to keep the West quiet. Whatever the South Africans may think, the reality is that Zimbabwe is important: it is not just another African basket case. One of the best economies in Africa has been reduced to one of the worst. Is this of no consequence – even a lesson to South Africa itself? (See Eddie Cross: http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/jun11_2011.html#Z14 - Zimbabwe cursed by diamonds.)

A more pressing reality was the bullyboy Zanu PF tactics in Sandton. And SADC must have been surprised by the presence as a member of the Zanu PF delegation of Tafataona Mahoso, Chief Executive Officer of the Zimbabwe Media Commission who also happens to be the Chairman of the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe. That must have told them a lot . . .

At the Vigil we felt a corner had been turned. We know that whatever deal is reached Mugabe will set out to outmanoeuvre it. But SADC has reached the point of no return and must curb him. Confirmation of this came from two Angolan diplomats who parked outside the Zimbabwe Embassy and happily told us they thought Mugabe was finished – too old. (We were too polite to ask them about President Dos Santos who has not faced elections since 1992!) Their

comments confirmed reports from Luanda that Dos Santos has given up on his good pal Mugabe. We are sure he is not alone.

But we know we still have a long road ahead. We spoke by phone to management team member Fungayi's sister in Mbare and asked what was happening on the ground there. She said 'Zanu PF are forcing us to go to their meetings. If we don't go we are dead.'

Other Points

- We mentioned last week that a bird nesting in one of the trees at the Vigil had defecated on one of our petitions and got several messages back from Zimbabwe saying we should catch and roast the bird. Unfortunately we couldn't find it today . . .

- Vigil founder member Ephraim Tapa has been elected President of the new Zimbabwe 'Yes we Can' Movement. Ephraim is also President of our partner organisation Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe

. (For details check:

http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/jun8_2011.html#Z16

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Launch of the Zimbabwe

'Yes we can' Movement).

- Vigil Co-ordinator Rose Benton was interviewed on Wednesday evening by Lance Guma of SW Radio Africa for his Question Time programme. It was a 15 minute interview discussing the Vigil.

To access the interview log into

www.swradioafrica.com

and click on Archives in the menu on the left side of the front page, choose either PC Archives or MacArchives, then click onto Question Time on Wednesday 08 June.

It will be accessible for another week or so.

- It was good to have back with us regular supporter Gladys Mapanda of whom we haven't seen as much recently because she moved to Wales. She was with us from the start and was a great help throughout. Thanks to Iline Manhunzi who brought a box of homemade buns for hungry Vigil supporters and was a great help on the front table. The buns were particularly appreciated by Memory Chatambudza who had made the long journey from Belfast without any breakfast.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/> . Please note: Vigil

photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website – they cannot be downloaded from the slideshow on the front page of the Zimvigil website. For the latest ZimVigil TV programme check <http://www.zimvigil.tv.com/>

FOR THE RECORD: 74 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 wishes 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: www.imusicafrica.com and to watch the video check: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QukqctWc3XE>

- **ROHR National Fundraising Event. Saturday 25th June from 12 noon till late.**
Venue: St Peters Church Hall,
Whitehall Road, West Bromwich B70 0HF. Come and enjoy African dishes and music while donating to a good cause.

Admission fee £8 includes a plate of food and a soft drink. Raffle tickets on sale @ £1. Contact: Peter Nkomo 07817096594, V J Mujeyi 07403446696, Tsvakai Marambi 07915065171, Solomon L Matshoba 07733741065, P Chibanguza 07908406069, R Chifungo 07795070609 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070

- **Free film screening of 'Hear Us'.** Saturday 25th June from 7 - 9 pm. Venue: The

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Frontline Club, 13,

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. 'Hear Us' is a film from inside

Zimbabwe

about political violence against women. Kudakwashe Chitsike of the Research and Advocacy Unit will introduce the film and take your questions. For more information contact: the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, tel: +44 (0)20 7065 0945 or check:

<http://www.hrforumzim.com/hear-us-film.png>

· **Service of Solidarity with Zimbabwe's torture victims: Sunday 26th June from 2 – 4 pm. Venue:**

ey's Chapel and Leysian Mission,

49 City Road

,

London

EC1Y 1AU

(nearest tube:

Old Street

). The event is organized by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (

www.hrforumzim.com

). Speakers are Irene Petras, Director of the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and Kudakwashe Chitsike, Lawyer in the Women's Department of the Research and Advocacy Unit

(
Zimbabwe

). Vigil supporters will be providing the music in the form of Zimbabwean hymns. (Because this is a human rights event the Vigil register will be taken.)

· **Stop the violence in Zimbabwe: Vigil for democracy and rights. Monday 27th June**

from

– 2 pm

outside the

Zimbabwe

Embassy, 429

Strand

,

London

WC2R 0JR. This protest marks

the anniversary of the fateful 2008 presidential 'run off' election when Zanu PF ran a brutal campaign of violence including mass rape in a bid to retain power.

Zimbabwe

may have elections within the year. We cannot let the violence happen again. The protest is organised by Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA), the successor to the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

ACTSA will be presenting hundreds of stop the violence cards to the Embassy. To get copies of the card or to let ACTSA know you'll be attending, please email

campaigns@actsa.org

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- **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 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 issue** s. Organised by the Terrence Higgins Trust (www.tht.org.uk). Please contact the

co-ordinator

Takudzwa

a Mukiwa

(takudzwa.mukiwa@tht.org.uk)

if you are interested in taking part.