

It's an up and down business being an activist in the Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK. When you are not battling with the Home Office to regularize your position and earn money to keep your family in Zimbabwe afloat you have to counter the poisonous Zanu PF leeches feeding off British society and try to explain the true situation in Zimbabwe to people more interested in other things – like football.

So everyone at the Vigil was delighted to see the photographs of FIFA President and Commander in Chief Sepp Blatter holding hands with Mugabe and discussing ways of dealing with corruption. Even people with only marginal interest in Zimbabwe – and they are the vast majority in the UK – could not fail to see the irony. It was like a meeting of Ian Smith and John Vorster to discuss democracy. There is hardly a soul in the UK who believes in the honesty of FIFA – perhaps fewer even than support Mugabe in Zimbabwe.

The irony got even more pronounced when Mugabe went off to Juba to explain to our newly liberated brothers in South Sudan why they should love his friend President Ali Butcher of Khartoum who – like his other friend, Libya's Colonel Gaddafi – is wanted by the international criminal court. Vigil supporters applauded Botswana for rejecting the AU's defence of these monsters.

Now the downside. Vigil supporters were disappointed but not surprised by the latest suggestions from Harare that the GPA inter-party negotiators have agreed that elections can't be held before the third quarter of next year. Every day that passes sees another delay. The Vigil suspects there won't be elections next year at all. Too many people are happy with the status quo: what unites all Zimbabwe's politicians is self-interest. They increasingly talk the same language. Listen for instance to Finance Minister Tendai Biti speaking in London about land reform being successful! As Muckracker in the Zimbabwe Independent says: 'The members of the Commonwealth Business Council who Biti implored to come here and invest are unlikely to do so when senior members of the government ignore confiscation of property and lack of compensation.... Biti sounded as if he was speaking for Zanu PF. He claimed the country's judiciary measured up to any other around the world. "The judges and officials are well-read," he claimed, "well-trained and respected globally.'

(<http://www.theindependent.co.zw/opinion/31614-muckracker-dubious-claims-left-right-and-centre.html>)

Vigil supporters were sorry that Mr Biti didn't come and speak to us outside the Embassy. It

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would have given us an opportunity to talk to him about the new tourist promotion posters “come and hear my story” in the Embassy windows. We particularly like this one: ‘Wonder what it feels like to tee off in Paradise? (picture of someone looking like Tiger Woods) James Mwanza (with a golf club over his shoulder), 28 years old, Eastern Highlands. Come and hear my story’. With Zimbabwe being the second poorest country in the world, the number of 28 year old golfers in the Eastern Highlands – Zimbabweans that is – is fairly small. And if we went to ‘hear my story’ it would be: my father is a Zanu PF chef and we are very busy dealing in diamonds.

The Vigil suggests that if Mr Biti wants to know what’s going on in Zimbabwe he could read the latest article by the exiled Zimbabwean commentator, Tanonoka Joseph Whande: ‘Who shall we believe, Zuma or SADC?’

(
<http://www.swradioafrica.com/pages/heart070711.htm>
).

Other points

- The Vigil sympathises with our brothers in Malawi who have had to write off a multi-million dollar loan to Mugabe: Malawians angry at Zimbabwe over unpaid debt (http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/jul8_2011.html#Z12). The Vigil warned Malawi at the time that it would lose its money – like China, Libya, Iran and every other country from which Zimbabwe has borrowed money.
- As usual hundreds of tourists to London signed our petitions. The front desk reports that there were an unusual number of Italians in town who stopped “to hear our story”. Two Italian girls went off happily in Josie Zhuga’s knitted hats in the Zimbabwe colours.
- Thanks to Mercy Muranganwa who looked after the back table in the absence of Vigil regular, Jonathan Kariwoh.

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: 75 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 Yorkshire general meeting.** Saturday 16th July from 2 – 6 pm. Venue: Dock Green Inn, Ashley Rd, Leeds LS9 7AB. In attendance ROHR National Chairperson **Mr A Mungoyo** and National Secretary **Mr C Chibumbu.** Contact: Chinofunga Ndogo 07877993826, Prosper Mudamvanji (Branch Chair) 07897594874, Wonder Mubaiwa 07958758568, Knowledge Kutekwa 07400540732 or R Chifungo (Co-ordinator) 07795070609.
- **ROHR North East (Newcastle) general meeting.** Saturday 23th July from 12 – 3.30 pm. Venue: Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead NE8 9SJ. 3 mins walk from the Gateshead Interchange. Contact: Susan Ndlovu 07767024586, Sharon Masocha 07751610298, Collin Matongo 07775987006, Rugare Chifungo (Coordinator) 07795070609.
- **ROHR Manchester Vigil.** Saturday 30th July from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: Cathedral Gardens, Manchester City Centre (subject to change to Piccadilly Gardens). Contact ; Delina Tafadzwa Mutuambizi 07775313637, Chamunorwa Chihota 07799446404, Panyika Karimanzira 07551062161, Artwell Pfende 07886839353. Future demonstrations: 27th August, 24th September, 29th October 26th November, 31st December. Same time and venue.
- **ROHR Wolverhampton general meeting. Saturday 30th July from 1.30 – 5.30 pm.** Venue: Heath Town Community Centre, 208 Chevril Rise, Wolverhampton WV10 0HP. ROHR National Executive and a well-known lawyer present. Contact: Tsvakai Marambi 07915065171, Flora Nyahuma 07501843253, Rumbi Mudyanadzo 07867844699, P Chibanguza 0798406069 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

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- **ROHR Nottingham general meeting.** Saturday 30th July from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: St Saviour Community Hall, 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, Raymond C Chisuko 07832927609. Mary Chabvamuperu 07412074928, Christopher Chibumu 07775888205, P Chibanguza 07908406069 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.
- **ROHR Woking Summer fundraising barbeque.** Saturday 6th August from 2 pm till late. Venue: The Old Ford, Lynchford Road, Ash Vale, Aldershot GU12 5QA. Everyone is invited – come and enjoy a fun-filled day out.

Braai, sadza, rice, chicken, salads, cakes, snacks, drinks. Games for children including karaoke. Boot sale, auction and raffle with amazing prizes.

Contact: Stanford Munetsi 07584161806 . Pauline Nyikadzino 07906726477 and Sithokozile Hlokana 07886203113.

- **ROHR Ipswich launch meeting.** Saturday 6th August from 2 – 5.30 pm. Venue **Citizens Advice Bureau,** Tower Street, Ipswich IP1 3BE. ROHR National Executive and a well-known lawyer present. Contact: Dhumisani B Muchipisi 07432722907, Lovemore Muzadzi 07552560184, R Chifungo 07795070609, P Chibanguza 0798406069 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.
- **ROHR Manchester Meetings.** Saturday 13th August (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 Mutuambizi 07775313637, Chamunorwa Chihota 07799446404, Panyika Karimanzira 07551062161, Artwell Pfende 07886839353. Future meetings: 10th September, 8th October, 12th November, 10th December. Same times and venue.
- **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 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

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co-ordinator Takudzwa Mukiwa (
takudzwa.mukiwa@tth.org.uk)
if you are interested in taking part.