

With only four days to go before the elections, the Vigil 'commends' President Mugabe on his 'credible' re-election for another 5 year term as he approaches his 90th birthday.

Despite overwhelming evidence that the elections on 31st July are being rigged, the SADC 'Summit' on 20th July had four 'commendations' and a 'credible' in its brief four-point communique released after meeting to consider complaints by the MDC about the election arrangements. For connoisseurs of bullshit, here is the communique in full:

'8. On the Republic of Zimbabwe

8.1 The Summit was pleased to note that all the political parties have committed themselves to ensuring that the forthcoming elections are held in a peaceful environment. Summit encouraged the Government, all political parties and leaders to continue with these commendable efforts which will help realize credible elections.

8.2 The Summit commended the Government of Zimbabwe for extending an invitation to SADC Member States to deploy election observers and the manner in which these (sic) Observer Mission has been received in Zimbabwe.

8.3 The Summit commended H.E. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa and SADC Facilitator for his tireless efforts in ensuring that the Zimbabwe political stakeholders hold successful elections.

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8.4 The Summit noted the problems that arose during the special vote on 14-15 July 2013 and would like to commend ZEC for taking these up as challenges to be overcome on the 31st of July, and called upon all political parties to cooperate as fully as possible with ZEC in order to ensure that it is able to meet these challenges.'

The Vigil 'commends' the observers who went to such pains to see that the elections were 'credible', including President Zuma's former wife, the AU Commission Chairperson, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, who astonished Morgan Tsvangirai by saying he had told her he

was 'happy' with the election environment

(see:

AU speaks on Zim elections –

http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/jul27a_2013.html#Z3

).

Tribute must also be paid to President Zuma himself and SADC's 'commendable' support for the elections without which the people of Zimbabwe would not be able to look forward to such a 'credible' disaster.

The Vigil further 'commends' the security forces who ensured that President Mugabe was 'credibly' returned to power.

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Lastly, to the UK, the EU and the US: the Vigil was impressed by the weasel words by which they abandoned the standards of 'free and fair' for the slippery slopes of 'credible'. We look to them to support President Mugabe's 'credible' and 'commendable' nomination for the Nobel Economics, Peace and Literature Prizes.

The Vigil's dyspeptic view is supported by the comprehensive account of Zanu PF's rigging which appeared in the UK's Daily Mail (see: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2371951/P roof-Mugabe-buys-elections-Astonishing-documents-evidence-neutralising-voters-millions-paid -systematic-rigging-smuggling-blood-diamonds--ensure-tyrant-89-clings-power.html>).

We were further persuaded by the analysis of SADC's dilemma by Herbert Moyo in the Zimbabwean Independent (see: Sadc fails to keep up reforms momentum – http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/jul27a_2013.html#Z4) and by Simon Allison's piece in the Daily Maverick (see: Analysis: Maybe we expect too much from SADC on Zimbabwe – <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2013-07-24-analysis-maybe-we-expect-too-much-from-sadc-on-zimbabwe/>).

Other points

- President Mugabe, in the form of Fungayi Mabhunu in our Mugabe mask, was again at the Vigil to stuff ballot boxes. He had with him two large black bags marked 'Nikuv', the Israeli company being paid millions to help the Zanu PF vote riggers. We were visited by a news team from the BBC for a report for Radio 4's 'The World this Weekend' on Sunday at 1.30 pm (

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http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b037gnxm/The_World_This_Weekend_28_07_2013/

– available about 16 minutes into the broadcast on BBC iPlayer until 4th

August).

- On Election Day – Wednesday 31st July – the Vigil is being joined by Action for Southern Africa (the successor to the Anti-apartheid Movement) and the Trades Union Congress to protest outside the Embassy at the rigging of the elections. We will launching a petition to President Zuma calling on him to arrange new elections in keeping with the roadmap and SADC principles. See Events and Notices for more details.

- Thanks to Helen Rukambiro, Nkosikona Tshabangu, Francesca Toft and Kelvin Kamupira for being at the Vigil early to help set up.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . 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. Extra photos of today's Vigil can be seen on: <http://www.demotix.com/news/2298169/freedom-zimbabwe-vigil-continues-outside-zimbabwe-house-london#media-2297791>

FOR THE RECORD: 34 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **Demonstration for Democracy.** Wednesday 31st July. The Vigil is to be joined by Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) and the TUC in a protest outside the Zimbabwe Embassy on election day. Meet at 12 noon. Visit the South African High Commission at 2 pm. The protest ends at 6 pm.

- **‘Will 2013 see the end of Mugabe’s 33-year rule?’** Wednesday 31st July at 7 pm. Venue: the Frontline Club, 13 Norfolk Place, London W2 1QJ. Panel includes Wilf Mbanga publisher and editor of the Zimbabwean newspaper. To buy tickets, check: <http://www.frontlineclub.com/will-2013-see-the-end-of-mugabes-33-year-rule>

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- **ROHR Executive meeting.** Saturday 3rd August from 12 – 3 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.

- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF).** Saturday 3rd August from 6.30 – 9.30 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. The Strand is the same road as the Vigil. From the Vigil it’s about a 10 minute walk, in the direction away from Trafalgar Square. The Strand Continental is situated on the south side of the Strand between Somerset House and the turn off onto Waterloo Bridge. The entrance is marked by a big sign high above and a sign for its famous Indian restaurant at street level. It's next to a newsagent. Nearest underground: Temple (District and Circle lines) and Holborn.

- **Zimbabwe Yes We Can meeting.** Saturday 17th August from 12 – 3 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.

- **Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2012** can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/the-vigil-diary/467-vigil-highlights-2012>

- Links to previous years’ highlights are listed on 2012 Highlights page.

- **The Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR)** is the Vigil’s partner

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organization based in Zimbabwe. ROHR grew out of the need for the Vigil to have an organization 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. Please note that the official website of ROHR Zimbabwe is <http://www.rohrzimbabwe.org/>. Any other website claiming to be the official website of ROHR in no way represents the views and opinions of ROHR.

- **Facebook pages:**

- Vigil: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8157345519&ref=ts>

- ZAF: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>

- ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/ROHR-Zimbabwe-Restoration-of-Human-Rights/301811392835>

- **Vigil Myspace page:** <http://www.myspace.com/zimbabwевigil>.

- **Useful websites:** www.zanupfcrime.com which reports on Zanu PF abuses and www.ipaidabribe.org.zw where people can report corruption in Zimbabwe