

A warning against allowing international NGOs to dictate the agenda for Zimbabwe came from Muzvare Betty Makoni, award-winning gender activist. Betty was speaking at the 'Restore Zimbabwe' All-Stakeholders' Conference of the Zimbabwe diaspora held in London on 24th October at the initiative of the Vigil. The Conference was attended by about 70 people and messages of support came from the US, South Africa, Australia and Zimbabwe. Among them were:

- Yours is a valiant effort to keep the struggle alive. We take comfort from Churchill's adage: "When you're going through hell . . . keep going!"

Well done for taking the initiative and holding this Conference – Dale Dore, Zimbabwean economist.

- All the best. Please give me feedback – Vince Musewe, Zimbabwean economist.

- This is a really important initiative of yours – Ben Freeth, Mike Campbell Foundation. What you are doing is so important and we would like to support you – Claire Freeth, Mike Campbell Foundation.

- I would love to attend and I wish this meeting the very best of success – Christopher Maphosa, Chair of ZAPU Europe Province. His life story inspired the play 'The rain that washes'.

- Good Governance Africa (Joburg) is planning a conference on Zimbabwe: Where to from here? for early next year, to be held in Johannesburg and attended essentially by Zimbabwe civil society activists. We would be grateful to hear a report on your meeting – R W Johnson, journalist.

The meeting was addressed by Kate Hoey MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Zimbabwe, who deplored international acceptance of the outcome of the sham elections. She said it was up to the diaspora to create a powerful voice to make the UK government listen – particularly about sanctions when they come up for debate in the EU in February. She said the diaspora had a responsibility to let the world know what was happening in Zimbabwe and went on to describe the Vigil as ‘a shining light these long years’ and added ‘you have been right when politicians have been wrong’.

Betty Makoni – a long-time friend of the Vigil – said Zimbabwe would never be free until women were treated equally. ‘Men have not ruled the world, they have ruined the world’. To restore Zimbabwe it was necessary to restore women. She said we needed to be aware that the NGO community were mainly concerned with protecting their own jobs. Those who were advocating re-engagement with the Zanu PF government had only recently said the elections were not free and fair and were starting from a premise of dishonesty and compromise. The NGOs were changing the goalposts to suit their own selfish ends. She went on to criticize churches in Zimbabwe for endorsing the patriarchal society.

Eye witness accounts of election rigging were given by Bie Tapa of the Vigil, recently returned from six months in Zimbabwe, and Jaison Matewu, unsuccessful candidate for MDC-T in Buhera West. Political analyst Wilbert Mukori said a recent scene in the Zimbabwean Parliament when Zanu PF blocked a debate on the elections showed that they knew the elections had been rigged.

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 27 October 2013 16:21 -

Chair of the meeting was Ephraim Tapa, a founder member of the Vigil and President of Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe. He said there was overwhelming evidence that the elections had been a sham. The opposition had been let down by compromised leadership and the diaspora must unite and agree on a common strategy to restore Zimbabwe.

The conference nominated an interim Restore Zimbabwe Task Force to carry forward ideas proposed by five thematic committees that looked at the way forward. For a fuller report, please check: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/537-restore-zimbabwe-conference-london--thursday-24th-october-2013>

Other points

- A big thank you to Christopher Kamuzonde of CK2 Catering Limited (07449 150 041) who cooked all night and served a delicious meal of Zimbabwean food at the Conference. Christopher's services were provided free. Thanks to the catering team: Grace Nyaumwe, Thandiwe Gwarumba, Shylette Chipangura, Mary Muteyerwa, Cephas Moswoswa and Patricia Masamba, who worked hard serving the food and cleaning up the kitchen after we had eaten. Thanks also to Michelle Dube and Rose Maponga who missed a lot of the proceedings because they were looking after the registration table.
- On a Saturday when people were pulled away by Tsvangirai's meeting for MDC UK structures, the Vigil was grateful to those who turned up early today to set up: Fungayi Mabhunu, Helen Rukambiro and Lydia Ncube.
- Betty Makoni's criticism of churches in Zimbabwe was reinforced by

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reports of ‘Mugabe worship’ by London-based Bishop Climate Irungu, ‘founder of World Conquerors Christian Centre’, who said ‘the people of Zimbabwe rejoiced in their current leadership’. The Vigil is sending a note to the Home Office asking whether they rejoice in his presence in the UK. After all we have a bad enough climate as it is (see: http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit_religious-tourism-hailed/

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Religious tourism hailed). We advise the Home Office to also look into Spirit Embassy founder Prophet Angel who says he’s worth more than \$60 million and has interests in the United Kingdom.

“Many people think that the church looks after me, but the truth of the matter is that the church cannot afford my lifestyle. I have very expensive tastes and that is why I am in business and make so much money. Money makes me happy and I have lots of it. I have never been broke all my life” added the prophet to thunderous applause

(see: The state of religion in Zimbabwe: Prophet Angel worth US\$60m –

http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit_the-state-of-religion-in-zimbabwe-prophet-angel-worth-us60m/

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• The Vigil is not surprised that Zimbabwe is to mark ‘World Toilet Day’ on 19th November (see: <http://www.herald.co.zw/zim-to-mark-world-toilet-day/> Zim to mark World Toilet Day – <http://www.herald.co.zw/zim-to-mark-world-toilet-day/>). Unfortunately it falls on a Tuesday not a Saturday or we could have all demonstrated suitably outside the Embassy in solidarity.

• It was good to be visited by Clifford Mashiri, political analyst and former diplomat. We had invited him to speak at our Conference – he was unable to come but submitted some useful ideas. He is planning to attend our next Zimbabwe Action Forum on Saturday 2nd November.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website.

FOR THE RECORD: 20 signed the register.

Jobs for the NGOs – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 26th October 2013

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Sunday, 27 October 2013 16:21 -

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **Next Swaziland Vigil.** Saturday 2nd November from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.
- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF).** Saturday 2nd November 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.
- **ACTSA annual conference 'Southern Africa: Human Rights and Democracy'**. Saturday, 9th November from 2 – 4.30 pm. Venue: The Human Rights Action Centre, Amnesty International UK, 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA. Participants are leading human rights campaigners from Zimbabwe and Swaziland:
McDonald Lewanika: Director, Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, Wandile Dludu: Coordinator, Swaziland Democracy Campaign and Swaziland United Democratic Front (tbc), Siphilwe Hlophe: Director, Swaziland for Positive Living (video message).
Hear from civil society leaders about the prospects for the future in Swaziland and Zimbabwe. What are the needs, priorities and what can we do to support those struggling to uphold human rights, democracy and eradicate poverty. For further information and to register contact ACTSA: Tel: 020 71860750, Email: info@actsa.org, website: www.actsa.org. See the flyer or go to <http://bit.ly/1i1CZCY> for more information. The conference follows ACTSA's AGM from 11 am – 1.30pm: http://www.actsa.org/page-1421-Annual_General_Meeting.html
- **Zimbabwe Yes We Can meeting.** Saturday 16th November from 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.
- **Zimbabwe Association AGM.** Saturday 16th November. Guest speaker **McDonald Lewanika of Crisis in Zimbabwe.**
Venue: Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2 6HG.
Nearest station: Bethnal Green (Central line).
- **ROHR Reading Branch meeting.** Saturday 30th November from 1 – 5 pm. Venue: the Pakistan Community Centre, Park Hall, London Road, Reading RG1 3PA. Contact: Charles D.Ndlovu 07413879590, Eric Eluwasi 07531853066, Nicodimus Muganhu 07877386792.
- **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 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:**

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- 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>
- **Useful website:** www.ipaidabribe.org.zw where people can report corruption in Zimbabwe.