

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 23 March 2014 14:38 -

The Vigil has made a new approach to the Home Office over the sending back of asylum seekers to Zimbabwe. Our latest letter to Home Secretary Theresa May came as thousands of people demonstrated in London against the UK's asylum policy. The letter was delivered to the Home Office by Fungayi Mabhunu.

Here's the text of our letter to Ms May: *We enclose a petition protesting at the proposed deportation of a committed Zimbabwean human rights activist Trymore Mahachi. It has been signed by people passing the Zimbabwe Vigil, which has been demonstrating outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London every Saturday for the past twelve years in support of free elections and human rights in Zimbabwe. As explained in the petition, Trymore has played a prominent role at the Vigil and it is believed that he could well be penalised for this if he is returned to Zimbabwe. We hope, in the light of this, you will reconsider his deportation. We are disappointed not to have received a reply to a letter we wrote to you on 21*

st

February objecting to Home Office case workers using libelous evidence against the Vigil. We enclose a copy of our letter and attachments and hope you will now respond to it.

The petition reads: '**Don't deport Trymore Mahachi:** *Try Mahachi is a committed activist against human rights abuses and for democracy in Zimbabwe. He has regularly attended the Zimbabwe Vigil and is a leader of our protest activities: singing of protest songs, praying for the suffering people in Zimbabwe, engaging with the public to keep them informed of events in Zimbabwe. All in all he is a high-profile activist who is likely to be known to the authorities in Zimbabwe. He is currently in Colnbrook Immigration Removal Centre and has been told he will be forcibly deported back to Zimbabwe on 27*

th

March. We appeal to the Home Secretary not to send him back to a country where he could face abuse for his opposition to Mugabe and the Zanu PF regime.'

□ □ □

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 23 March 2014 14:38 -

For details of the libel against the Vigil see our earlier letter to Ms May sent on 21st February – see: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/the-vigil-diary/569-tell-us-the-good-news--zimbabwe-vigil-diary-22nd-february-2014>

A number of Vigil supporters took part in the demonstration against the UK's asylum policy ending in a rally at Trafalgar Square, around the corner from the Vigil. Some of the demonstrators carried banners reading 'No human is illegal'.

We sympathise with their anxiety about asylum issues but the Vigil's view is more nuanced. While we oppose the deportation of those who have a just claim for asylum, we are equally opposed to the system being abused by people such as Zanu PF supporters, who seem to be busier than the MDC in setting up structures in the UK (see: Zanu-PF holds historic Birmingham UK conference – <http://www.zimeye.org/zanu-pf-holds-historic-birmingham-uk-conference/>). Why are they in the hated UK at all if they support the illegal regime in Harare? How can anyone defend their presence here – the very people that forced millions of Zimbabweans into exile?

In association with our sister organisation Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe, the Vigil is trying to track the treatment of returned Zimbabweans when they arrive home. We are particularly concerned, for instance, about a young man of 23 recently returned to Zimbabwe with no support network there after living in the UK for 5 years or more.

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 23 March 2014 14:38 -

Other points

-

The Vigil is still making enquiries about a possible protest in Brussels if Mugabe attends the EU / Africa Summit on 2nd / 3rd April. We are trying to get the necessary permission from the Belgian police and would welcome any help with this. A number of people have expressed their eagerness to take part, including Swazi friends opposing the presence at the Summit of King Mswati III.

-

The Vigil is grateful to the Rohr Reading Branch for their donation from their fundraiser held last week,

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: 51 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 23 March 2014 14:38 -

-

ROHR Executive Meeting. Saturday 5th April at 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. For directions see ZAF entry above. 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 sign at street level. It's between a newsagent and Pizza Express. Nearest underground: Temple (District and Circle lines) and Holborn.

-

Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF). Saturday 5th April from 6.15 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. For directions see entry above.

-

Next Swaziland Vigil. Saturday 5th April from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.

-

'The Rain that Washes' national tour: Fri 4 April – Seven Arts, 31A Harrogate Road, Leeds LS7 3PD; Sat 5 April – Selby Town Hall, York Street, Selby, North Yorkshire, YO8 4AJ; Sat 24, Sun 25 & Mon 26 May – Brighton Fringe Festival, Marlborough Theatre, 4 Princes Street, Brighton BN2 1RD. Booking details can be found at www.chickenshed.org.uk/whatsson

-

Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2013 can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/560-vigil-highlights-2013>

. Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2013 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

Vigil supports genuine asylum seekers – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 22nd March 2014

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 23 March 2014 14:38 -

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>