

Zhing-zhong deal – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 23rd August 2014

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 02 September 2014 18:04 - Last Updated Tuesday, 02 September 2014 18:04

As Mugabe and top ministers converged on Beijing in a desperate appeal for a financial bailout, the Vigil was alerted to indications that an illegal deal was being negotiated to rescue Zimbabwe from its economic torpor and pay the government's pressing running bills.

Like everyone else, China has been put off from lending to Zimbabwe because of its reliable failure to repay loans. It has become clear to everyone that the Zanu PF regime has no conception that a loan involves repayments. As the Vigil noted last week, a leading Chinese insurance company has now refused to cover investments in Zimbabwe.

Another big deterrent has been the insatiable appetite for corruption of Zimbabwean ministers and officials who openly compete with each other to see how much they can screw out of any deal – even at the cost of the deal collapsing. Well, they think, there will be another one along soon. Last month Zanu PF had to cancel a \$1 billion tender awarded to a dicey Chinese company for the expansion of Hwange thermal power station when it turned out that the company had no money.

Added to these obstacles are the policy inconsistencies, the frailty of the legal system and the immunity enjoyed by political insiders to do what they want.

Zanu PF's golden grail is \$27 billion to fund the fatuous Zim Asset programme for economic development which formed the centrepiece of its 2013 election campaign but – a year on – has failed to get off the ground because only a crook or a lunatic will invest in it. The key problem is seen as the State Procurement Board which is in the lucrative position of awarding all state tenders and was described recently by finance minister Chinamasa as 'the capital city of

corruption’.

According to the Mail and Guardian, the Zanu PF mafia has now offered to award infrastructure projects to Chinese state companies without going through the Board or even putting the contracts out to tender (see: Zim govt 'sells out' to China – <http://mg.co.za/article/2014-08-21-zim-govt-sells-out-to-china>). Chinese state companies would be given the nod to fund, build and run power, water and other projects until they recover their investment.

The Vigil believes this arrangement will be as satisfactory to both sides as the Marange diamond deal: the Chinese will get an equal opportunity to share in the corruption with Zimbabwean officials with no questions asked. Whether the public will be happy with the arrangement is another matter. But the deal will apparently be sweetened by a four billion dollar cash rescue package to cheer up Zanu PF in the run-up to the party’s December conference when Mugabe will be re-elected to lead the country into the zhing-zhong future.

Other points

· The EU’s ambassador to Zimbabwe Aldo Dell’Ariccia is reported by the Herald to have left for home at the end of his tour of duty. It quotes the EU envoy as paying tribute to the government for its co-operation which he said ‘has turned 360 degrees in social sectors, culture, trade and even sports and gender’.

While the Herald said he headed back to Brussels we think that, judging by his dubious grasp of maths, he could be spinning like a top in Harare (see

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http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit_m_dellariccia-completes-zim-mission-the-heral

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Thanks to Bridget Zhakata and Patricia Masamba for being there at the start to help set up the Vigil and to Patricia and Fungisai Mupandira for bringing sadza to fundraise for ROHR Slough branch.

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: 24 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

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Zimbabwe Yes We Can meeting.

Saturday 30th August at 12 noon. Venue: The Theodore Bullfrog, 26-30 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL.

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ROHR Middlesbrough general members meeting. Saturday 30th August from 2 – 4 pm. For more information please contact Masimba Musodza (Chairman) 07581887359, Xoliso Sithole (Treasurer) 07449005447, Ndumiso Ncube (Organising Secretary) 07448522328, Helen Sibanda (Secretary) 07799574994, Paula Nyoni (member) 07460221950.

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

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Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF). Saturday 13th September from 6.15 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. 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.

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ROHR Executive Committee meeting. Saturday 13th September from 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.

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ROHR Central London Branch general meeting. Saturday 20th September from 12 noon. Venue: The Theodore Bullfrog, 26-30 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL.

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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.

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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

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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.

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Zimbabwe Yes We Can Movement holds monthly meetings in London as the political face of ROHR and the Vigil.

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The Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF) meets twice a month after the Vigil to discuss ways to help those back in Zimbabwe to fight oppression and achieve true democracy

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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.co/pages/ROHR-Zimbabwe-Restoration-of-Human-Rights/301811392835>