

Stop the tanks – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 4th October 2014

Written by Administrator

Monday, 06 October 2014 17:55 - Last Updated Monday, 06 October 2014 17:55

Picture link: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/15253702567/sizes/m/>

Anyone who has seen pictures of the teeming crowds of pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong will be impressed by their determination and courage.

The Vigil is aware of the genocidal record of the Chinese Communist Party and the tanks sent to put down the protest in Tiananmen Square twenty-five years ago. A photograph of an unarmed student standing defiantly in the path of a tank has become an icon of courage.

China has changed in almost unimaginable ways since then (though Mugabe hasn't noticed). Economic reforms inspired by the West have lifted hundreds of millions from poverty. But the people of Hong Kong want more: they demand that the promise made to them of greater democracy must be honoured. So now they stand up in their masses and threaten civil disobedience.

This week completes the Vigil's twelfth year standing outside the Embassy in London

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demonstrating against the failure to allow democracy in Zimbabwe. As election after election is stolen, as the country sinks into deepening poverty and despair, as more and more people 'take the gap' and abandon Zimbabwe, we are asked 'what are people doing about it?'

We explain the long sleeves / short sleeves, the burnt homes, all the brutalities of the fascist Zanu PF regime, but still we are asked: 'what about non-co-operation, passive resistance . . .?'

It is not for the diaspora in the safety in London to tell people to go out and be beaten but our sister organisation Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe, responding to the feeling of desperation, has decided they must publicly stand with the people of Chitungwiza and Epworth, whose houses are being demolished in a new Murambatsvina (see: <http://www.rohrzimbabwe.org/rohr-condemns-demolition-housing-chitungwiza/>).

And whatever the reservations about Tsvangirai's leadership, we at the Vigil applaud his decision to exercise his constitutional right and take to the streets to protest about the cataclysmic failure of the Zanu PF regime. Will he be the man to stop the tanks?

Other points

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We are informed that the EU Embassy in Harare has a detailed dossier on the seizure of white farmer David Conolly's Centenary Farm at Figtree by Dr Ray Ndhlukula, who is the point man for the government when it comes to foreign direct investment. The Vigil's source says the Embassy gives each would-be investor from the EU a copy of this dossier before they go off to meet Dr Ndhlukula. 'It is suggested that he is losing his sense of humour having to explain the contradictions between his complete disregard for the law and property rights and trying to inveigle investors into sinking their hard earned money into such an investment unfriendly environment.'

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Industry and Commerce Minister Mike Bimha says Zimbabwe's poor image has a negative effect on the economy and he has come to the conclusion that re-branding is the answer. The Vigil wonders how you re-brand theft and lawlessness? (See: <http://www.herald.co.zw/zim-need-to-re-brand-to-attract-investment/>).

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Full marks to Finance Minister Chinamasa for telling South Africa where to get off. If they don't give us loans at concessionary rates we just won't pay them back. That'll teach them a lesson.

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The Vigil was graced by the presence of Dr Mugabe in her splendid new academic robes. Don't tell anyone but she was played by Deborah Harry and carried posters such as 'Let me lead you to the promised Guccis'.

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Thanks to Deborah, Joseph Chivayo, Thobile Gwebu, Marlon Nyamakaiga, Jessie Kawaliza, Nigel Mbohwa and Fungayi Mabhunu for arriving early to help set up in the first rain we have had for the past month.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 20 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

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‘Educating the Youth in Zimbabwe – Building for a Better Future’. Wednesday 8th October at 6.30 pm

Venue:

Free Word Centre

, 60 Farringdon Road, EC1R 3GA (0207 3242570).

The Budiro Trust p

resents a talk by David Coltart, former Zimbabwean

Minister of Education w

ith refreshments and discussion with David Coltart and members of the Trust. Entry free but please register at:

www.freewordcentre.com/events/detail/a-talk-by-david-coltart

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Zimbabwe Vigil’s Twelfth Anniversary. Saturday 11th October.

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Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF). Saturday 11th October from 6.15 pm. This forum will be marking the 12th anniversary of the Vigil.

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 Central London Branch general meeting. Saturday 18th October from 12 noon.
Venue: The Theodore Bullfrog, 26-30 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL.

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Next Swaziland Vigil. Saturday 18th October from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.

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Zimbabwe Yes We Can meeting. Saturday 25th October at 12 noon. Venue: The Theodore Bullfrog, 26-30 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL.

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'Hope for Zimbabwe'. Tuesday 4th November from 7 – 9 pm. Venue: the Royal Geographical Society, London. Hosted by the Mike Campbell Foundation with Ben Freeth, MBE, Christina Lamb, OBE, Dame Linda Dobbs (Chair). Tickets: £15. For more information, check:

<http://www.mikecampbellfoundation.com/page/events-2014>

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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 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>