

Embassy challenged again – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 28th March 2015

Written by Administrator

Monday, 30 March 2015 08:17 - Last Updated Monday, 30 March 2015 08:17

Feelings continue to run high among Zimbabweans in the UK over the abduction of the Occupy Africa Unity Square activist Itai Dzamara three weeks ago. For the second week in a row people in the diaspora staged a protest inside the London Embassy on Friday 27th March. The Occupy Africa Unity Square protest seems to have become the Occupy Zimbabwe Embassies protest.

Ten people got into the Embassy and sang protest songs in the reception area, brandishing placards such as 'Bring back Itai Dzamara', 'Enough is enough' and 'Robert Mugabe and Zanu PF government must go'.

Scared Embassy staff retreated and summoned the police. The demonstrators explained that they were protesting at violations of human rights in Zimbabwe. They were asked to continue their protest outside. One demonstrator observed 'The police were very polite and some seemed to dance to the music'.

The demonstrators went on to the nearby South African High Commission, where they demanded that Mugabe should be replaced as chair of the AU and SADC.

Martin Chinyanga of 'Diaspora feels it', who organised the previous protest, said the demonstrators accused President Zuma of responsibility for the Zimbabwean crisis. He added that he had received messages applauding the UK Embassy invasions from Botswana, Canada, United States and South Africa, where they had staged their own sit-in at the Zimbabwe Consulate in Cape Town yesterday and were preparing to do the same at the Embassy in Pretoria on Tuesday 31st March. It seems we may be witnessing a wave of pop-in protests.

Friday's London protest was organised by Christopher Maphosa of Zapu-UK, who was accompanied by his wife. Others there were Zapu's Arthur Molife, Martin Chinyanga, and members of Zimbabwe Yes We Can and the Vigil: David Kadzutu, Mary Muteyerwa, Roda Majoni, Hilda Gwesele, Danny Kadiki and Peter Sidindi.

The Vigil has no illusions about the possible fate of Itai Dzamara. Human rights lawyer Jestina Mukoko was held and tortured for several weeks in 2008 while the government protested they did not know her whereabouts. Those responsible have never been charged. 'I hope that he does not come out of a police cell the same way I did', she commented.

Others abducted by state security agents were never released. Tonderai Ndira of the MDC was also abducted in 2008. His body was found a month later with multiple stab wounds, his eyes gouged out, his tongue cut off and his neck, skull, jaw and knuckles broken. Many other human rights activists have simply disappeared, perhaps into the acid baths.

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A Vigil spokesman Fungayi Mabhunu, said the western world had been outraged by Itai Dzamara's abduction. It showed that the Zanu PF regime whatever they said would stop at nothing to stay in power.

'Zimbabwe is collapsing and Mugabe is now begging for help but the West has made it clear that Zimbabwe must observe the new constitution and respect the rule of law if relations are to be normalised', he said. 'Only this week a top German diplomat Georg Schmidt visiting Zimbabwe said foreign investors would look at the rule of law before deciding on investing'.

Fungayi added 'As far as the Vigil is concerned we will seize every opportunity to remind the world of what happens to brave and principled people in Zimbabwe who oppose Mugabe and Zanu PF. Every Zimbabwean representative coming here must face the question: Where is Itai Dzamara?'

Other points

Everybody at the Vigil signed a letter which will be delivered to the Zimbabwe Ambassador in London in the near future: *Dear Ambassador, We would like to discuss with you the abduction of the human rights activist Itai Dzamara who was seen being taken away in an unmarked car by five armed men on Monday 9*

March. We fear that he is the latest victim of the Central Intelligence Organisation which has been responsible for the disappearance of thousands of opponents of the Mugabe regime. Zimbabwe Vigil fears that the unbridled criminal behaviour by the Mugabe regime is stoking a fire which could consume our people. Because the Embassy has no letterbox we will deliver this letter in person. We assure you that we come with peaceful intentions and intend at all times to obey the law which recognises our rights as Zimbabweans to approach our Embassy.

Thanks to those who came early to help set up another vibrant Vigil: Piyo Choga, Eunice Mucherechedzo, Nichodimus Nicholas Moyo, Danny Kadiki, Peter Chareka and Fungayi Mabhunu.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 33 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

ROHR Executive Meeting: Saturday 4th April 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. For directions see below.

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 us.

Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF). Saturday 4th April 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.

Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF) meets regularly after the Vigil to discuss ways to help those back in Zimbabwe to fight oppression and achieve true democracy.

Next Swaziland Vigil. Saturday 4th April from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.

ROHR Reading Branch general meeting and outreach. Saturday 11th April. Outreach from 11 am – 2 pm followed by a meeting from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: RISC 35-39 London Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 4PS. For further enquiries contact: Eric Eluwasi- 07888310582, Nicodimus Muganhu – 07877386792 and Shylette Chipangura -0782892980.

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

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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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Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2014 can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/642-zimbabwe-vigil-highlights-2014> . Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2014 Highlights page.

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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>

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SW Radio Africa's website and sound archive is being hosted on www.archive.org . Go to the site and type in swradioafrica which will link you to snapshots of their site over the years and at the top of that page a link to their website where, under podcasts, you will find the audio.