

Exiled Zimbabweans are to picket a conference in London on 5th July at which Zanu PF will try to persuade the world that it is reforming and should be bailed out with Western loans. The meeting comes as the bankrupt regime hopes to convince the International Monetary Fund that it is serious about implementing the constitution adopted in 2013.

The Zimbabwe Vigil will be outside the meeting to tell any prospective investors the real reasons why Zimbabwe has run out of money and why the world should be sceptical about any assurances given by the likes of Finance Minister Chinamasa, Minister of Macro Economic Planning and Investment Promotion Obert Mpfu (unaccountably one of the richest men in Zimbabwe) and Mike Bimha, Minister of Industry and Commerce. They are listed to speak at the conference along with Reserve Bank governor John Mangudya.

Strangely enough, although these four feature prominently on the programme (see: <http://africa-confidential-meetings.com/programme>

/) they are not on the list of confirmed speakers, suggesting their attendance is uncertain. In which case, the Vigil wonders whether people will be entitled to a refund of the fee for the one-day conference of more than £500.

The meeting has been organised by Africa Confidential, a fortnightly newsletter covering politics and economics in Africa. Explaining the conference, Africa Confidential says Zimbabwe 'is on the brink of finalising an historic deal which will end a decade and half of sanctions and unlock substantial new funds for economic growth and development'. This comment indicates from which perspective the organisers are coming (see: <http://africa-confidential-meetings.com/ratio>).

Contrary to Africa Confidential's assumption, the MDC T MP Eddie Cross says the sudden announcement that Zimbabwe is introducing a new local currency (bond notes) has exposed the real state of affairs and the IMF realises it has been deceived and the regime's liabilities are much greater than previously revealed.

As an indication of Zanu PF's intentions, Mr Cross cites a new bill tabled in Parliament this week to reinstate the powers that the new constitution had stripped from the Minister of Local Government to suspend and dismiss the elected leadership of local authorities. He says 'In preparation for the next election – expected in 2018, the Minister (who is also the Political Commissar of Zanu PF) has been instructed to cripple and even remove as many MDC controlled Councils as he can'.

Mr Cross continues: 'It clearly demonstrates that Zanu PF has no intention at all of implementing the new Constitution. Secondly, it shows that they know that they cannot win a free and fair election and are therefore strengthening their defenses against the MDC. The Voters Roll is still under Military control and is managed, not by the Electoral Commission as provided in the Constitution, but by a secretive company called NICOV from Israel. The Minister of Local Government has announced his intention of settling up to 250 000 members of the "Youth" wing of his Party in urban areas using Urban and State land and allocating these people small plots at virtually no cost to themselves.

'You do not need an imagination to understand that the programme of fear and coercion, and the control given by the fear of being removed from your allocated stands, is now being extended to all urban centers and the newly settled people will be used for political purposes and controlled violence against all opponents.'

Mr Cross concludes: 'What does this all indicate? Very clearly it says that the Leopard that has been courting the IMF and the International Community in the past three years; has not changed its spots in any way. The consequences for the country are disastrous. They are again taking money out of our accounts and replacing it with a worthless form of virtual money. Their economic policies are destroying what little is left of a once diversified and sophisticated economy. They are clearly not going to allow a democratic election any time soon and the wholesale theft of resources by a tiny, military and civilian clique is continuing.'

'I am afraid that the days of trying to whitewash this Leopard and to persuade it to change its ways are over. We have no choice but to take matters into our own hands and effect real change in our Country. The best solution would be an internationally supervised election without a voters roll as soon as possible. If this is not facilitated by the region, then the streets will have to make the required decisions. We the citizens of this country, really have no choice.' (See: <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/opinion/zanupf-the-leopard-has-not-changed-its-spots>)

Other points

- Protest at Zimbabwe Conference 2016 'Rebooting and Rebuilding'. Tuesday 5th July from 8 am onwards. Venue: outside DLA Piper UK LLP, 3 Noble Street, London EC2V 7EE. For more information: <http://africa-confidential-meetings.com/>.

- Several activists from the Vigil and its sister organisation ROHR are planning to walk the 110 kms from Brighton to London to fundraise for our organisations. The walk 'Mourning the death of democracy and human rights in Zimbabwe' will start in Brighton on Friday 12th August and end at the Vigil at around 3 pm on Saturday. Walkers can do the whole walk or join it at various train stations along the route. If you wish to participate or sponsor the walkers contact info@zimrohr.org. More information to be provided as plans develop.

- Jets from the Royal Air Force aerobatics team the Red Arrows flew low over the Vigil leaving vapour trails in red, white and blue, marking the annual Gay Pride Parade which ended in nearby Trafalgar Square. A number of people from the parade signed our petition calling for Mugabe to be tried by the International Criminal Court for genocide.

- Thanks to those who arrived early to help set up: Rashiwe Bayisayi, Joseph Chivayo, Humphrey Dube, Sandra Kudenga, Fungayi Mabhunu, Phillip Mahlahla, Bonisile Manyatsi, Rosemary Maponga, Praisego Moyo, Paula Mukonwayasaka, Roseline Mukucha, Alfredy Mukuvare, Chipso Parirenyatwa and Eva Sanyahokwe. Thanks to: Roseline, Sandra and Praisego for looking after the front table, Humphrey for handing out flyers, Phillip, Alfredy and Humphrey for putting up the high banners and tarpaulin and to Chipso P for selling the Vigil wristbands. Lucia Mudzimu kindly brought toasted corn and peanuts for all to enjoy at the Vigil.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/>. Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website. For videos of Vigils and other events, check the ROHR facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/www.rohrzimbabwe.org/videos?fref=photo>

FOR THE RECORD: 32 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- ROHR National Executive meeting. Saturday 2nd July from 11 am to 1.30 pm. 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 2nd July 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 a shop. 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.

- Protest at Zimbabwe Conference 2016 'Rebooting and Rebuilding'. Tuesday 5th July from 8 am onwards. Venue: outside DLA Piper UK LLP, 3 Noble Street, London EC2V 7EE. See above.

- Zimbabwe Play: Workshop Negative by Cont Mhlanga. Wednesday 6th July to Saturday 9th July at 7.30 pm + 3 pm performance on Saturday. Venue: Gate Theatre, 11 Pembridge Road, Notting Hill, London W11 3HQ. The play is a response to the aftermath of Zimbabwean independence. Its comic and controversial approach led to it being banned by the Mugabe government in 1986, a challenge to artists' freedom of expression. For more information and tickets check: www.gatetheatre.co.uk/events/all-productions/tangle_presents_workshop_negative

- Monthly Itai Dzamara protest Saturday 9th July from 2 – 6 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London. The protest is to mark sixteen months since Dzamara's abduction by intelligence agents.

- Swaziland Vigil. Saturday 9th July from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.

- ROHR Reading branch summer national fundraiser. Saturday 30th July from 2 pm till late. Venue: Pakistani Community Hall, London Road, Reading RG1 3PA. Contact: Nicodimus Muganhu 07877386792, Charles Mararirakwenda 07964731721, Joshua Kahari 07877246251, Shyllette Chipangura 07828929806, Deborah Harry 07578894896, Sihle Sibanda 07985712749.

- Vigil and ROHR Brighton to London Walk. Friday 12th August to Saturday 13th August.

Written by Administrator

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The theme of our fundraising walk is 'Mourning the death of democracy and human rights in Zimbabwe'. The walk will end around 3 pm at the Vigil. If you wish to participate or sponsor the walkers contact info@zimrohr.org. More information to be provided as plans develop.

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

- Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2015 can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/746-zimbabwe-vigil-highlights-2015>

. Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2015 Highlights page.

- Facebook pages:
 - Vigil: <https://www.facebook.com/zimbabwevigil>
 - ZAF: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>
 - ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/ROHR-Zimbabwe-Restoration-of-Human-Rights-301811392835>