

The news leaked out quickly despite the security clampdown. It always does. After all, it was not unexpected. The old tyrant had been felled by a stroke: probably dead, but anyway finished.

It had been a long time coming. No one was sure what would happen next. Who would take over? There were several obvious candidates but which one would move first?

Fresh in the memory was the sudden death of Malawi's President Mutharika in 2012. As the Vigil recorded at the time, his corpse was flown to South Africa, ostensibly for medical treatment but really just to buy time for his inner circle to work out what to do.

This tyrant left a difficult legacy. Long decades of brutal oppression to elevate him to the status of a near deity. There was talk of opponents being boiled. The country was ruined.

Well at last he is gone. The official announcement when it came was brief. President Karimov is dead, the only President Uzbekistan has had since independence.

The Uzbek government described him as a great statesman who had brought 'peace, stability, prosperity and progress'. Will we soon be hearing similar nonsense about Mugabe?

### Other points

- After a week of frenzied police violence against demonstrators and passers-by in Harare, the Zimbabwe Action Forum met after the Vigil to discuss the worsening situation. Ephraim Tapa, who has just returned from a clandestine visit, spoke of the worsening corruption he found. He said he had been told that euthanasia was being practiced in hospitals on those too poor to pay for life-saving treatment.

- The meeting explored ideas for a transitional authority to take over bankrupt Zimbabwe and prepare for free and fair elections. There was discussion about whether this body should include politicians as well as members of civil society. People were asked to come up with ideas to discuss further at another meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

- The Vigil contributed generously to a collection for Vigil Co-ordinator Rose Benton whose

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sister Cathy has died suddenly in Zimbabwe. Rose was visibly moved and said the money, 'the Cathy Memorial Fund', would go to the joint ROHR Leicester / ROHR Hwange project which is feeding and paying for school fees for children in Hwange.

- Thanks to those who came early to help set up: Teclar Bandawe, Elizabeth Chakachaka, Rosemary Guveya, Fungayi Mabhunu, Phillip Mahlahla, Edna Mdoka, Eletha Mpofo, Natash Mubaiwa, Alfredy Mukuvare, Tracy Mupeti, Mandifusa Mushambadope, Mduduzi Ndlovu, Jennipher Sabe, Alice Shimika, Michael Sirewu and Nathan Tanyanyiwa. Thanks to Eletha, Mandifusa and Cathrine Musa for looking after the front table and to Phillip, Alfredy, Mduduzi and Michael for putting up the banners and the tarpaulin.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . 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>

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**FOR THE RECORD:** 49 signed the register.

### EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **Monthly Itai Dzamara protest** Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September From 2 – 6 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London. The protest is to mark eighteen months since Dzamara's abduction by intelligence agents.

- **ROHR Leicester branch meeting**. Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September from 2 – 4 pm. Venue: the Salvation Army, Kildare Street, Leicester LE1 3FY. Directions: Opposite Peking Chinese Restaurant, City Centre. Contact: Enniah Dube 07403439707, Yvonne Makombe 07453909247 and Moline Nyabonda 07961250525.

- **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 organisation 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.

- **Solidarity demonstration with protest at the UN in New York**. Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September from 2 – 6 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy. Zimbabweans in the USA (MDC-USA together with #thisflag and #tajamuka) are planning a big protest to coincide with Mugabe's planned visit to the UN General Assembly. They are lobbying the UN to ensure

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comprehensive electoral reforms are implemented before the 2018 elections.

- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF)**. Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> 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 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.

- **ROHR Central London branch meeting**. Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September from 12 noon – 2 pm. Venue: The Theodore Bullfrog, 26-30 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL. Contact: Fungayi Mabhunu 07907089899, Mavis Chisvo 07944612944.

- **ROHR Reading branch general meeting, summer BBQ and foodbank donation**.

Saturday 17

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September from 12 noon to 9 pm. Venue: Pakistani Community Hall, London Road, Reading, RG1 3PA. For further enquiries contact: Nicodimus Muganhu 07877386792, Charles Mararirakwenda 07964731721, Joshua Kahari 07877246251, Saziso Zulu 07780067899, Deborah Harry 07578894896, Sihle Sibanda 07985712749.

- **Swaziland Vigil**. Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.

- **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>