

Nothing allowed – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 15th October 2016

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 16 October 2016 13:59 - Last Updated Sunday, 16 October 2016 13:59

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/30049040310/sizes/m/>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/30345573425/sizes/m/>

On the eve of a visit to London, the human rights activist Patson Dzamara was arrested for – as he put it – ‘sitting in a public park’. Patson – brother of abducted Itai Dzamara – was chatting in Harare Gardens with a few others wearing the Endgame t-shirts. One of the others was Linda Masarira of ROHR, mother of five, only recently released from jail for taking part in protests.

They were all bundled into a truck by police officers. When they demanded to know the charge, the police were apparently clueless saying only that it was an ‘instruction from above’. Patson messaged later: ‘For sitting in a public park we have been charged with disorderly conduct and are spending the night in cells. We are not going to cower until we get our country back.’ Latest word was that the group of six were released on bail on Saturday to stand trial on Monday. Prosecutors accused them of abusing and insulting some law enforcement agents by likening them to dogs and puppets.

Vigil supporters in the UK who have received invitations to attend a meeting in the UK Parliament on Wednesday to be addressed by Patson wonder whether this is a clumsy effort to stop him travelling to London. Or is it just routine intimidation? The Mugabe regime is now so paranoid that it has given up any pretence of observing the constitution. Waving the flag or even wearing clothes in the national colours is an offence.

But when it comes to brazen corruption by the elite the police are suddenly powerless. An attempt to arrest higher education minister Jonathan Moyo for stealing public funds was halted by Mugabe himself. So much for the fight against corruption . . .

In the UK we are disappointed by the refusal of the government here to recognise how bad things are in Zimbabwe. The UK government seems to be determined to send home several of our supporters who are failed asylum seekers. Latest news is that Humphrey Dube was only saved because the plane had problems and couldn't take off.

The ‘country guidance’ for Zimbabwe used by the Home Office is based on the last years of the

government of national unity. The situation has now worsened and the Vigil supports the following petition: *'The country guidance for Zimbabwe last updated in 2013 currently being used by Home Office to determine asylum cases is outdated. The case law that states that Zimbabwe is a safe destination for failed asylum seekers needs to be revisited as recent atrocities tell a different story.'*

To sign the petition, visit: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/168401>

Other points

- Vigil supporters brought two magnificent cakes to mark the fourteenth anniversary of the Vigil. Thanks to Chipo Parirenyatwa, Deborah Harry and Cephas Maswoswa for the cakes and to Rashiwe Bayisayi for her banana bread. We put all the goodies on the front table and everyone gathered round holding posters reading: 'Zimbabwe Vigil Fourteenth Anniversary', 'Fourteen years campaigning for human rights in Zimbabwe' and 'Fourteen years campaigning for democracy in Zimbabwe'.

- Twenty or so members from our sister organisation ROHR walked 11.5 miles from East Croydon to the Vigil to raise funds. Highlights were singing outside Brixton market and the Odeon cinema at Streatham Common.

- We ended the Vigil in pouring rain and were approached by the Who is Hussain? Muslim charity which runs, in the space outside the Embassy, a weekly food handout for the homeless immediately the Vigil ends. They asked if we could leave our tarpaulin up for them to which we agreed. They returned the tarpaulin and supporting rope to the home of the Vigil co-ordinator later in the evening. We are glad to have come to an arrangement that will help them on wet evenings.

- Thanks to those who arrived early to help set up: Isaac Chawasarira, Benjamin Chigamba, Deborah Harry, Josephine Jombe, Jonathan Kariwo, Prosper Karuru, Emmanuel Magarira, Marian Mangani, Shaillet Manyange, Sharon Moyo, Tracy Mupeti, Douglas Tavengwa, Maureen Tavengwa and Elector Zvorwadza. Thanks to Sharon, Josephine, Roseline Mukucha and Cathrine Musa for looking after the front table, to Benjamin, Isaac, Prosper, Deborah, Maureen, Douglas, Tracey and Shaillet for putting up the banners and to Phillip Mahlahla and Alfredy Mukuvare for putting up the tarpaulin later in the afternoon, to Isaac, Leslyn Kamba and Marian for handing out flyers, to Chipo Parirenyatwa for selling 'Mugabe must go / has gone' wristbands and to Elector for providing teabags, milk and sugar for tea to go with the cake.

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: 57 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **Zimbabwe's New Citizen Activism: Where from here?** Wednesday 19th October from 1 – 2.30 pm. Venue Committee Room 14, House of Commons, Westminster, SW1A 0AA. It is chaired by Lord Oates and speakers include Evan Mawarire and hopefully Patson Dzamara. To book:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/zimbabwes-new-citizen-activism-where-from-here-tickets-28599316325>

- **Evan Mawarire: The Significance of Social Media for Public Protest in Zimbabwe.**

Wednesday 19

th

October from 5 – 6 pm. Venue: Chatham House, 10 St James Square, London SW1Y 4LE. To register to attend the event visit:

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/event/significance-social-media-public-protest-zimbabwe>

- **Mike Campbell Foundation Fifth anniversary: Taking Effective Steps to Fight Dictatorship – Restoring Justice, Restoring People.** Wednesday 26th October at 6.30 pm. Venue: the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR. For tickets:

<https://event.bookingito.com/8186/mike-campbell-foundation-5-year-anniversary-event/>

- **Special Prayer Vigil.** Saturday 29th October from 2 – 6 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy.

- **Swaziland Vigil.** Saturday 29th October from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.

- **ROHR National Executive meeting.** Saturday 5th November from 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 5th November 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

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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.

- **Monthly Itai Dzamara protest** Saturday 12th November. From 2 – 6 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London. The protest is to mark twenty months since Dzamara's abduction by intelligence agents.

- **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>