

A new onslaught – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 19th November 2016

Written by Administrator

Monday, 21 November 2016 23:26 - Last Updated Monday, 21 November 2016 23:26

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/30750699100/sizes/m/>

The ruthless crushing of the latest anti-government demonstration in Harare, combined with news that the army is recruiting thousands more soldiers, suggest that Zanu PF's strategy for stealing elections has not changed.

The scenario is confirmed by the announcement that the diaspora will only be allowed to vote in 2018 if they return home to register and stay on or return again for the ballot – despite the lauded 2013 constitution giving every Zimbabwean the right to vote.

The Zimbabwean diaspora is believed to number some 4 million – the overwhelmingly majority of voting age. The registered electorate at home is put at around 6.6 million, so the diaspora would have a decisive say.

Rita Makarau, chair of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, said that the electoral laws had not yet been aligned with the new constitution. The Vigil thinks that this is a step that Zanu PF is never likely to take, making our wonderful constitution a hollow mockery.

The Vigil is not surprised that six activists were shot at and beaten up ahead of Friday's planned demonstration against the introduction of 'bond notes'. Ishmail Kauzani, who was driving one of the two cars containing the activists when they were blocked by unmarked pick-up trucks, said he managed to escape into the night under a hail of gunfire. 'They were firing on us when we were still driving - many, many shots. It was like a war zone, a barrage of bullets', he said. (see: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-zimbabwe-beatings-idUSKBN13D1SM>).

Although the Vigil was not surprised by the regime's ambush we were surprised at the lack of wider support for the demonstration given the opposition's promises to confront Mugabe on the streets.

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We were even more surprised to see Mugabe making his way down the long red carpet in Marrakech for the UN climate change convention. Not surprised by his futile attendance at yet another back-slapping event but that he could walk unassisted (see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTbmGs0Pqck>)

It seems that it's the opposition which needs help. If it is to win in 2018 it must insist that the constitution is fully implemented well before the election or it will be just another waste of time. If there's no level playing field the opposition this time must refuse to take part in Zanu PF's charade.

Other points

- Ephraim Tapa, President of ROHR and founder member of the Vigil, spoke to us of the need to confront elements trying to hijack the Vigil and ROHR for their own purposes.
- Thanks to those who arrived early to help set up: Yvonne Bonde, Mercy Chapepa, Mavis Chisvo, Joseph Chivayo, Enniah Dube, Nomusa Dube, Phillip Mahlahla, Edna Mdoka, Zimazile Mguni, Gladys Muduve, Roseline Mukucha, Alfredy Mukuvare, Tracy Mupeti, Cathrine Musa, Mduduzi Ndlovu, Siphon Ndlovu, Chipso Parirenyatwa, Tawanda Rusape and Maxmus Savanhu. Thanks to Cathrine, Gladys and Esther Munyira for looking after the front table, to Chipso, Enniah and Nomusa for handing out flyers and selling 'Mugabe must go / has gone' wristbands and to Phillip, Alfredy, Mduduzi, Maxmus, Siphon, Peter Gonera, Honest Madondo, Raymond Gundula and Joshua Kahari for putting up the banners.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/> . Please note: Vigil photo can only be downloaded from our Flickr website. The facebook page for our sister organisation Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR) (<https://www.facebook.com/ROHR-Zimbabwe-Restoration-of-Human-Rights-301811392835>) has been hijacked by destructive elements from a group calling itself ZHRO Zimbabwean HR Charity. Please be advised that any postings on this page are not posted by ROHR.

FOR THE RECORD: 55 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

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- **Monthly Prayer Vigil.** Saturday 26th November from 2 – 6 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy. Contact Beverley Mutandiro (07412053415) with names of Zimbabwean pastors and prayer groups who might want to participate. The MDC-T UK and Ireland Youth Assembly will be joining us for the last hour for a candlelit vigil in remembrance of fallen comrades, those who have suffered and continue to be persecuted under Mugabe's Zanu PF regime and the many who perished during Gukurahundi. Please bring spare glass jars for the candles. MDC-T organisers: Sharon Moyo, Youth Province Organising Secretary, 07877224113 and Simbarashe Mutero. MDC-T UK & Ireland SE District Youth Chair, 07543 611638.

- **ROHR Central London branch meeting.** Saturday 26th November from 11.30 am – 1.45 pm. Venue: The Royal Festival Hall SE1 8XX. Phone Ephraim Tapa 07940793090 or Cephas Moswaswa 07931999174 for exact location.

- **ROHR Birmingham branch meeting.** Saturday 26th November from 10.30 am – 1 pm. Venue: Strathallan Hotel, 225 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 9RJ. Contact: Chair Gladys Muduve 07956430115, Info & Publicity Tecla Bandawe 074 50507650.

- **ROHR Reading branch Christmas dinner party.** Saturday 26th November from 7.30 – 11 pm. Venue: Spice Oven Buffet Restaurant, 2- 4 Church Street, Reading RG4 8AT. Admission: £20 eat all you can. Contact Charles 07964731721, Deborah 07578894896, Sihle 07985712749, Alice 07450323439.

- **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.

- **Swaziland Vigil.** Saturday 26th November from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.

- **Monthly Itai Dzamara protest** Saturday 10th December. From 2 – 6 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy. The protest is to mark twenty-one months since Itai's abduction by intelligence agents.

- **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.

- **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>