

The Mugabes are aggrieved at their treatment by President Mnangagwa. Despite vast government resources devoted to their imperial upkeep, they are angry at being forced to step aside from ruling Zimbabwe. 'It's not fair', Mugabe told the AU. 'It's unconstitutional', calling on the organisation to intervene to reseat him on his presidential potty.

These are strange times in Zimbabwe. Apart from the Mugabes now completely detached from reality, this week a 'prophet' produced a 'goblin' in a Harare court. The 'prophet' was accused of demanding money from passengers on a bus from Binga to prevent a potentially fatal accident. He apparently scared off everyone but was arrested walking to the city centre with the 'goblin'. The 'prophet' unveiled the 'goblin' in court – a live tortoise draped in a hyena skin and beads, looking rather like Mr Mugabe, who has long had an interest in goblins and calabashes and such like. Perhaps the tortoise was on his way to see President Mnangagwa (see: <http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/prophet-presents-goblin-in-court/>)

The Vigil hopes that Mnangagwa will stop moving like a tortoise. Four months ago he insisted that the upcoming elections would be free, fair and credible. He has since repeated this mantra at every stop as he continues Mugabe's circus of never-ending travel. Now there are only 5 months left before the constitutional deadline to hold the elections.

President Mnangagwa has made a big thing of his willingness to allow EU observers into the country. This is seen as a major step forward because 'tame' observers from AU countries and 'friends' have shamelessly endorsed repeated election fraud in Zimbabwe. Court-ordered revelations in South Africa, for instance, have shown how damning criticism of election rigging in Zimbabwe was repressed by the Pretoria government.

But the EU takes things more seriously. It's already late to begin the lengthy process of getting observers from them. As the EU ambassador in Zimbabwe, Philippe Van Damme, explained: 'The first thing we need is a formal request by the government to invite what we call an exploratory mission which is a mission of experts who will speak to the different stakeholders of the electoral process and assess whether indeed these stakeholders consider these observation missions as useful. They will also assess the feasibility of electoral observation from a security and logistical point of view. And then they will advise us on whether or not an EU electoral observation should be deployed. And then, of course, the final decision will be taken once, based on that mission, the government confirms its willingness to deploy that mission or not.' (see: <https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2018/02/26/ed-govt-yet-to-formally-invite-us-for>

[-zim-poll-eu\)](#)

Apart from inviting the observation missions, there is clearly a lot of work still to be done. We have heard nothing, for instance, about the need to open state-controlled media to the opposition during the election campaign. Time is running out.

### Other points

- In a landmark ruling, the Pretoria High Court has said that former President Zuma had no power to close the SADC Tribunal in 2012. Mugabe persuaded Zuma to close the court because it had ruled against the seizure of white-owned farms in Zimbabwe.

- The Zimbabwe London Investment Forum 'Zimdaba London 2018' takes place on Thursday / Friday 15<sup>th</sup> / 16<sup>th</sup> March at the Royal Geographical Society. It is bringing together business leaders and investors from the UK and Europe together with a business and ministerial delegation from Zimbabwe, to discuss investment opportunities in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe Vigil and ROHR will be demonstrating outside the venue from 8.30 – 11 am on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March. We will be carrying posters and handing out flyers to the delegates with the message that no investment should take place until reforms to ensure democracy (free, fair and credible elections) and human rights have been implemented. For more information on the venue check 'Events and Notices'.

- After a week of heavy snow and sub-zero temperatures and transport disruption, few people made it to the Vigil. Thanks to the valiant few, especially Isabell Gwatidzo, Rosemary Maponga and Ephraim Tapa, who were there from the start to put up the banners and look after the front table. Thanks also to Racqueline Changunda who handed out flyers, Simon Nyanhi who helped pack up at the end and Rosemary for bringing tea.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos 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. Please be advised that any postings on this page are not posted by ROHR.

**FOR THE RECORD:** 7 signed the register.

## **EVENTS AND NOTICES:**

- **Mike Campbell Foundation ‘Zimbabwe after Mugabe’.** Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30 pm for 7 – 9 pm. Venue: the Princess Anne Theatre, 195 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LN. The event is free and tickets will be allocated on a first come first served basis, email:

[claire@mikecampbellfoundation.com](mailto:claire@mikecampbellfoundation.com)

- **Lecture: ‘Fall and Fallout: Robert Mugabe and Zimbabwe’.** Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March from 6:45 pm to 8:00 pm. Venue: Queen Mary Campus, University of London, ArtsTwo, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS. The lecturer is Dr Sue Onslow. For tickets and more information:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/fall-and-fallout-robert-mugabe-and-zimbabwe-dr-sue-onslow-tickets-43322220929?aff=efbeventtix>

- **Save the Zimbabwe elephants protest.** Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March from 2 – 5 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy. One of our activists Nomusa Dube is organising a protest about the export of baby elephants from Zimbabwe to China. She asked to join up with the Vigil on this protest.

- **Zimbabwe Investment Forum: Zimdaba 2018.** Thursday / Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> / 16<sup>th</sup> March. Venue: The Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR. A number of government ministers and businessmen from Zimbabwe will be attending. The Vigil will be demonstrating outside the venue from 8.30 – 11 am on Thursday 15

March. For more information on the event, check:

[www.zimdaba.com](http://www.zimdaba.com)

- **ROHR Central London branch meeting.** Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March from 11.30 am – 1.30 pm. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, Contact: Daisy Fabian 07708653640, Maxmus Savanhu 07397809056, Siphon Ndlovu 07400566013.

- **ROHR general members’ meeting.** Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March from 11 am – 1.45 pm. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX. Agenda: adoption of the ROHR 2018 programme of action and completion of appointments to the ROHR National Executive Committee. This meeting is rescheduled from the meeting on 3

March cancelled because of bad weather.

- **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 Protest.** Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April from 1-2 pm. Venue: outside the Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX. King Mswati III is likely to be in the UK for the Commonwealth Summit (19<sup>th</sup> April is Mswati’s 50

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birthday). It is an opportunity to protest about human rights problems in Swaziland and the Commonwealth's failings when it comes to dealing with the country. The protest is organized by Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) and they ask that members of the Zimbabwe and Swaziland Vigils join the protest.

- **The Vigil's book 'Zimbabwe Emergency'** is based on our weekly diaries. It records how events in Zimbabwe have unfolded over the past 15 years as seen by the diaspora in the UK. It chronicles the economic disintegration, violence, growing oppression and political manoeuvring – and the tragic human cost involved. It is available at the Vigil for £10. All proceeds will go to the Vigil and our sister organisation the Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe's work in Zimbabwe. The book is also available from Amazon.

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

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

- **Facebook pages:** Vigil: <https://www.facebook.com/zimbabwevigil> ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/Restoration-of-Human-Rights-ROHR-Zimbabwe-International-370825706588551/>

ZAF:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>