

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 15 July 2018 15:30 -

Times like this are most anxious for the diaspora, especially those like us far away from home: a time of swirling rumours and wild assertions. Nowadays it is perhaps worse than ever at election time because we are in instant contact with family and friends in Zimbabwe and constantly assailed by fake news on social media.

What was clearly not fake was the big support for the MDC demonstration in Harare on Wednesday against what the opposition alliance sees as chicanery by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC). Pictures captured it all: before our eyes we could see thousands of people peacefully demanding change.

The opposition demonstration was in sharp contrast to the Mnangagwa rally last Sunday in Bindura, where soldiers and Zanu PF youths were filmed desperately trying to stop people leaving in droves.

Reports of army activities in the rural areas are disquieting, along with suggestions of a quarter of a million ghost voters. It came as no surprise to see that the UK Times newspaper headlined its report on Zimbabwe on Friday: 'Voter aged 141 casts shadow on Zimbabwe poll' (see: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/951-voter-aged-141-casts-shadow-on-zimbabw-e-polls>).

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The Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition is the latest civil society organization to say that it doesn't trust ZEC (see: <https://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zec-cannot-be-entrusted-to-preside-over-free-fair-and-credible-polls/>). But, in Britain, the 'Zimbabwe expert', Professor Stephen Chan of the School of Oriental and African Studies says he believes Mnangagwa will win without needing to cheat. He speaks in the latest SOAS blog of 'Mugabe's winning legacy' – perhaps no surprise given that Chan was among the academics in the UK who proclaimed Zanu PF's 2013 election victory as legitimate (see: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/blogs/study/zimbabwe-elections-chan/>).

MDC leader Nelson Chamisa, for his part, speaks of Russian experts being recruited to fix the results, apparently instead of the previous Israeli Nikuv operatives (see: <https://www.zimbabwe-situation.com/news/nelson-chamisa-piles-pressure-on-mnangagwa/>).

Well, the Russians are past masters in fixing elections.

Other points

- **Advance notice: The Zimbabwe Vigil will be marking Zimbabwe's election day with a mock poll. We will be outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London from early to late on Monday 30th July. Please come and join us to cast your vote.**
- Thanks to Soneni Sibanda and Ephraim Tapa who came early to set up by putting up the banners and posters and helped throughout by looking after the front table. Thanks to Abigail Chidavayenzi who spent most of the day trying to get to us by coach and arrived in time to help us pack up.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/> . Please note: Vigil

photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **Protest against enforced returns of Zimbabweans from the UK.** Wednesday 18th July from 10 am. Venue: Parliament Square SW1P 3BD.

- **ROHR Central London branch meeting.** Saturday 21st July from 11.30 am – 1.30 pm. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, Contact: Daizy Fabian 07708653640, Maxmus Savanhu 07397809056, Sipho Ndlovu 07400566013.

- **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 Vigil's Mock Election.** Monday 30th July from early to late outside the Embassy.

- **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.

- **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/>

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ZAF: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/4902570510275>

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