

The British MP Kate Hoey, one of the observers at the Zimbabwe elections, says the international community should not accept the result. She said: ‘the UK government must take a lead to ensure that the Zimbabwean government is seen for what it is: a mark 2 Mugabe regime and one that deserves no support whatsoever.’

Ms Hoey’s voice carries extra weight because she is the long-time chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Committee on Zimbabwe.

She said elections in Zimbabwe since 2002 had been both violent and rigged. ‘Without doubt the election has been cleverly rigged but even worse is the fact that it is the military that is behind the regime and they are now unleashing a similar fear and terror campaign on leading opposition activists and curbing all protests by killing and arresting innocent Zimbabweans.’ (See: <http://www.allnetafrica.com/2018/08/11/u-k-not-recognise-zimbabwe-election-result-kate-hoey/>).

Ms Hoey’s comments will not be welcomed by the UK’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office which has been eviscerated by the Economist’s Africa editor Xan Smiley in an article in the weekly magazine the Spectator. He says Mnangagwa will almost certainly be given the benefit of the doubt by the British government (see: <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2018/08/britain-should-spend-more-on-diplomacy-in-africa-and-less-on-aid/>).

With the constitutional court due to hear the MDC’s rigging complaint on Wednesday, the Vigil can’t be optimistic. We share the mood eloquently captured by the Zimbabwean writer, Cathy Buckle who writes: ‘It was the words of the Southern African correspondent for the Financial Times, Joseph Cotterill, who best summed up the current, tragic irony of Zimbabwe when he tweeted on 3rd August: “On Wednesday I had a soldier raise his AK at me and threaten to shoot; on Friday a riot policeman moved to shove me with his shield. ...I’m sensing you’d be absolutely f***** crazy to come and invest here. It’s just a hunch.”’ (See: <https://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/selfies-with-soldiers-no-one-shot-at-us-then/>).

Zimbabwe, desperate for foreign investment, is facing a grave solvency crisis according to Newsday. It says the government had a budget deficit last year of \$2.6 billion – about 59% more

than it collected in revenue (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2018/08/govt-in-deep-sovereign-crisis/>).

Other points

- The Zimbabwean human rights campaigner Ben Freeth says the key to understanding why Zanu PF keep winning elections lies in the deep fear the party inspires in the rural areas (see: <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/opinion/zimbabwe-elections-why-zanupf-keeps-on-winning>).

- Thanks to those who came early to help set up the table and put up the banners: Viola Chihota, Josephine Jombe, Jonathan Kariwo, Alice Majola, Chido Makawa, Heather Makawa, Margaret Munenge, Beverley Mutandiro, Siphon Ndlovu, Jennifer Senzere and Ephraim Tapa. Thanks also to Josephine, Alice, Margaret and Chido for looking after the front table, to Heather and Viola for handing out flyers, to Jonathan and Heather for taking pictures and Beverley, Siphon and Chido for drumming and leading the singing.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/>. Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website.

FOR THE RECORD: 23 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR beach barbecue.** Monday, 27th August. Venue: Frinton Beach CO13 9DN. Food and transport provided. Bring your own drinks. Tickets: £20 adults, £5 children. For more information, contact: Daizy 07708653640, Max 07397809056 and Esther 07492058107.

- **ROHR National Executive meeting.** Saturday 1st September from 11 am. Venue: The Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX.

- **ROHR Central London branch meeting.** Saturday 15th September from 11.30 am – 1.30 pm. Venue: Royal Festival Hall. Contact: Daizy Fabian 07708653640, Maxmus Savanhu 07397809056, Siphon 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/>

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. Any other website claiming to be the official website of ROHR in no way represents us.

- **Mike Campbell Foundation – Zimbabwe: rising from the ruins?** Tuesday 9th October from 7 – 9 pm (doors open at 6 .30 pm). Venue:

Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR. Speakers include: Kate Hoey MP (Chair), Ben Freeth MBE, Fergal Keane OBE, Archbishop Sentamu, Chief Felix Ndiweni and Gift Konjana. To book, visit:

<https://event.bookitbee.com/18402/my-first-event-1347?preview=y>

- **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/>

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