

After the last Vigil of the year we wish Zimbabweans a happy 2018 in the hope that the tsunami of corruption which has drowned our country will begin to recede with the departure of Mugabe.

President Mnangagwa has made promising noises of tough action against the main looters, but the culture of theft and deceit seems to have seeped into our DNA from the example set by our leaders and will be hard to eradicate.

No fewer than 75 political parties have apparently registered to contest the upcoming elections, though it's not clear what most of them really want. Mnangagwa has promised that the elections will be free and fair but unless he makes some convincing attempt to level the electoral playing field and agrees to allow in objective observers to monitor the polling he will not satisfy critics and get the Western financial support he needs to fund the promised economic turnaround.

The size of the task ahead is daunting. An analysis this month by the influential financial observers Forbes ranks Zimbabwe 145 out of 153 countries for doing business. On corruption it is ranked 139. Forbes complained about the lack of a clear plan for change including over land tenure, the repatriation of dividends and indigenization (see: <https://www.forbes.com/places/zimbabwe/>).

While parliament discusses providing psychological counselling for sacked ministers and MPS, what about the traumatised population at large? The plethora of political parties shows how divided we have become over where we want to be (see: <https://www.news24.com/Africa/Zimbabwe/ousted-zim-ministers-suffering-from-trauma-need-help-report-20171225>).

Thanks to Audrey Chihoho, Jonathan Kariwo, Junior Madzimore, Rosemary Maponga, Patricia Masamba, Margaret Munenge and Ephraim Tapa for being there at the start of a cold and windy Vigil to set up by putting up the banners and posters, for looking after the front table and handing out flyers during the Vigil and for staying to the end to 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. 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:

- **Swaziland Vigil.** Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.
- **ROHR Central London branch meeting.** Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January from 11.30 am – 1.30 pm. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX. Contact: Daisy Fabian 07708653640, Maxmus Savanhu 07397809056, Siphon Ndlovu 07400566013.

**ROHR Reading branch community outreach and general meeting.** Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Community outreach from 11:30am – 1.30 pm: Venue: Broad Street, Reading. Food bank donation and general meeting from 2 – 5 pm: Venue: The RISC 35-39 London Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 4PS. Contact: Sihle Sibanda (Deputy Chair) 07985712749, Shyllette Chipangura (Branch Secretary 07828929806) and Joshua Kahari (Information and Publicity) 07877246251

- **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.

- **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

Written by Administrator

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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.

- **Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2016** can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/843-zimbabwe-vigil-highlights-2016>

. Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2016 Highlights page.

- **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>