

Cyclone Idai drew world attention to our region at the sharp end of climate change with generous international aid pouring in to help the victims. Zimbabwe was again in the news.

There were many heart-warming and heartbreaking stories to be told. But the outside world should pay attention as well to other stories from Zimbabwe which offer an insight into a more complex problem than the consequences of the cyclone.

It appears to us at the Vigil that there has been a marked improvement in the quality of Zimbabwean journalism in the past decade. Of course, the state still controls the national television and radio services but many new online outlets have sprung up offering an alternative view.

Widespread access to the internet and social media through cell phones have eroded the government's control of information, enabling people even in remote rural areas to get a different picture to that offered by government propaganda.

They will read breath-taking stories of corruption at, for instance, the Zimbabwe national roads administration (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2019/04/parly-turns-heat-on-zinara-board-management/>) and the civil aviation authority (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2019/03/caaz-boss-chawota-suspended/>).

In another publication they will find the Minister of Mines allegedly implicated in shady dealings at the state-owned Hwange Colliery (<https://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/hwange-rotten-to-the-core-audit/>).

It's no surprise that the government is getting uneasy at news like this getting out. Police raided the offices of the news website 263 Chat after one of its journalists filmed them removing street vendors in Harare. Amnesty International described it as 'a blatant assault on the right to freedom of expression and media freedom and demanded that the authorities end its attack on the media.

Other points

- Thanks to those who came early to help set up the front table and put up the banners: Marvellous Chinguwa, Piyo Choga, Thomas Mahasoh, Alice Majola, Patricia Masamba, Collen Mupazviriho, Chipso Musodza and Maramura Nyirenda. Thanks to Alice, Chipso, Philip Maponga and Pamela Chirimuta for looking after the front table, to Marvellous, Thomas, Maramura, Pamela, Getrude Mudede, Chido Makawa and Tawanda Chitate for handing out flyers and to Patricia and Heather Makawa for photos.

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

FOR THE RECORD: 22 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR general members' meeting.** Saturday 13th April from 11 am. Venue: Royal Festival Hall. Contact: Ephraim Tapa 07940793090, Patricia Masamba 07708116625.

- **ROHR fundraising dinner.** Saturday 27th April from 6 – 11.30 pm. Venue Zazas, 108 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1JE. Contact: Siphso Hobane 07400566013, Esther Munyira 07492058109, Fungisai Mupandira 07468504393, Casper Nyamakura 0757766912, Margaret Munenge 0739211743, Bianca Mpawaenda 07400566013 and Patricia Masamba 07708116625.

- **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.

- **The Vigil's book 'Zimbabwe Emergency'** is based on our weekly diaries. It records how events in Zimbabwe have unfolded 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 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.

- **Facebook pages:**

Vigil: <https://www.facebook.com/zimbabwевigil> ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/Restoration-of-Human-Rights-ROHR-Zimbabwe-International-370825706588551/>

ZAF:

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