

Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube has a droll sense of humour. He says he decided to name Zimbabwe's latest local currency the RTGS dollar so as not to confuse the public! (See: <https://zwnews.com/we-called-our-local-currency-rtgs-as-not-to-confuse-citizens-ncube/>.)

Of course, even those in remote rural areas know that RTGS stands for Real Time Gross Settlement dollars and simply love this method of payment using electronic money transfer systems.

Mr Ncube's new solution is not to be confused with the other local currency, the tired and discredited bond notes and coins. But the joke is on the people because everyone knows these two depreciating local currencies are just false creations and nothing like the almost unobtainable grubby old US dollars with which they were supposed to be equivalent.

But it is not a laughing matter, as the Americans recognise with their warning of rising crime and civil unrest in Zimbabwe as abject poverty drives people to desperation.

The general manager of Zimbabwe Pensions and Insurance Rights Trust, Martin Tarusenga, says people are losing billions of dollars as these alternative currencies lose value. In a coruscating article in the Zimbabwe Independent, he says life in Zimbabwe has reached new lows ( <https://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/unrestrained-govt-failures-may-trigger-public-anger/> ).

There is no shortage of pungent academic analysis of Zimbabwe's government failures. In an article in The Zimbabwean, Tamuka Chirimambowa of the University of Johannesburg says the government's 'open for business' mantra lacks policy and administrative action to make it a reality and turn around the fortunes of the country (see: <https://www.thezimbabwean.co/2019/05/zimbabwes-deceptive-road-to-non-reform/> )

On a lighter note we turn to a headline in Zimeye: 'Axe-wielding VP welcomes Chinese', a reference to Vice President Mohadi who recently threatened his wife with an axe. Some

welcome! (See: <https://www.zimeye.net/2019/05/17/axe-wielding-vp-mohadi-assures-chinese-t-hat-zimbabwe-is-a-safe-destination/> .)

## Other points

- Thanks to those who came early to help set up the front table and put up the banners: Patrick Hale, Josephine Jombe, Jonathan Kariwo, Heather Makawa, Joyce Mbairatsunga, Margaret Munenge, Fungisai Mupandira and Ephraim Tapa. Thanks to Josephine, Margaræt and Joyce for looking after the front table and to Heather and Jonathan 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:** 16 signed the register.

## EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR Reading branch outreach and general meeting.** Saturday 25th May. Community outreach from 11.30 am – 1.30pm. Venue: Broad Street, Reading. Awareness campaign on deteriorating human rights in Zimbabwe. General meeting from 2 -5 pm: Venue: The RISC 35-39 London Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 4PS. Contact: Nicodimus 07877386792, Josephine 07455166668, Shyllette 07828929806, Josh 07877246251.
- **ROHR general members' meeting.** Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June from 11.30 am. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, Belvedere Road SE1 8XX. Contact: Ephraim Tapa 07940793090, Patricia Masamba 07708116625.
- **ROHR fundraising dinner.** Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June from 6 pm till late. Venue: Zazas, 108 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1JE. Contact: Esther Munyira 07492058109, Fungisai Mupandira 07468504393, Siphon Ndlovu 07400566013, Patricia Masamba 07708116625, Simbarashe Jingo 07787870888, Pamela Chirimuta 07762737339, Sikhumbuzule Sibanda 07912210225, and Farai Muroiwa 07365431776.
- **ROHR sponsored walk.** Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July. Contact: Esther Munyira 07492058109, Siphon Ndlovu 07400566013, Patricia Masamba and Farai Muroiwa 07365431776. More information as plans progress.
- **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>

[w.rohrzimbabwe.org/](http://w.rohrzimbabwe.org/)

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

- **Petition to the Zimbabwe Ambassador in the UK.** Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May at 10.30 am. This is to call for a stop to asylum seeker interviews by Embassy personnel. Contact: Ephraim Tapa 07940793090, Fungisai Mupandira 07758958803.

- **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. 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/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>