

A diplomat was famously described as ‘an honest gentleman sent to lie abroad for the good of his country.’ Lieutenant-General S B Moyo, Zimbabwe’s chief diplomat as Minister of Foreign Affairs, fell somewhat short of meeting these requirements in London this week.

The Vigil does not think he is an honest man or that he is acting in what we regard as the real interests of Zimbabwe. But the general was certainly prepared to lay down his lies for his country.

Wherever he spoke he spouted the same Zanu PF fatuous deceit and self-delusion until the anger of the diaspora culminated in a rowdy scene outside the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House in London, where he had to be bundled into his car to escape after trying to persuade the world that Zimbabwe had reformed under Mnangagwa.

The tenor of General Moyo’s diplomatic abortion was set by an interview on BBC Radio’s top current affairs programme on Wednesday, ahead of a Global Media Freedom Conference arranged by the British Foreign Office.

He was asked by the BBC why Zimbabwe was listed 127<sup>th</sup> out 180 countries in the world press freedom index and why Reporters Without Borders say harassment and intimidation of journalists by the security apparatus is standard practice. Moyo blathered blithely that the new dispensation was ‘unlocking freedoms’ and said media houses had been allowed to set up and freely express themselves. No word about opening up television and radio to independent broadcasters or about the Zanu PF-controlled state press or about the closing of the internet and social media in the government clampdown on protestors in January.

Questioned about the violence by the security forces, Moyo said it was a matter for the police. Why had there been no prosecutions of soldiers who had gunned down unarmed people? ‘We’ve got a lot of cases under investigation’.

Asked about Mnangagwa’s remark that the January crackdown was a foretaste of things to come, Moyo insisted that the President had been misunderstood. The President was really saying the people had freedom unless they misbehaved.

The Minister assured his listeners that all that was needed was a little ‘rebranding’ of the police—the Zanu PF notion that just changing the name of something will make it different. You can listen to the interview from 1:35 to 1:43 hours into the programme on this link: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0006lr4>

Moyo’s assistant, Nick Mangwana, the Zanu PF Secretary for Information who accompanied the Minister said ‘It’s tragic that the sceptre of violence during protests we see in Zimbabwe forcing the security services to act has reared its ugly head in foreign land discrediting not the Government but the hoodlums themselves and embarrassing peace loving Zimbabweans.’ Zimbabweans in the UK know that the only sceptre here is held by the Queen and we do not believe she was outside Chatham House to protest against Moyo’s visit, welcome as she would have been (see: <https://www.herald.co.zw/just-in-gvt-condemns-uk-hooligans/> ).

Zimbabweans in the UK diaspora know Nick Mangwana well as a hypocritical asylum seeker who went on to lead Zanu PF UK and who has now gone on to his just reward as a flunky of the military regime.

### **Other points**

- Thanks to those who came early to help set up the front table today and put up the banners: Happy Chazuza, Abigail Chidavayenzi, Marvellous Chinguwa, Jonathan Kariwo, Tatenda Mandiki, Rosemary Maponga, Charles Mararirakwenda, Dambudzo Marimira, Patricia Masamba, Joyce Mbairatsunga, Esther Munyira, Mary Muteyerwa, Hazvinei Saili and Ephraim Tapa. Thanks to Rosemary and Dambudzo for looking after the front table, to Hazvinei, Joyce, Abigail and Mary for handing out flyers, to Mary for drumming and to Jonathan, Patricia Masamba and Heather Makawa for photos. Also a special thank you to Jonathan for printing Vigil flyers at his own expense.

- 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:** 24 signed the register.

### **EVENTS AND NOTICES:**

- **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.
  - **ROHR general members' meeting.** Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August from 11.30 am. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, Belvedere Road SE1 8XX. Contact: Ephraim Tapa 07940793090, Patricia Masamba 07708116625.
  - **ROHR Beach Barbecue.** Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August – Date tbc. Venue: Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 9DN. Contact: Patricia Masamba 07708116625 and Heather Makawa 07716391800.
  - **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 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>