

The Zimbabwe government has made it clear that the much vaunted new constitution counts for nothing. The MDC fulfilled the legal requirement to inform the police before Friday's demonstration in Harare but the government nevertheless banned it at the last minute.

As usual, peaceful people were beaten and tear-gassed by the police for their temerity in protesting against the government. Among them were women singing protest songs. One helpless protester was repeatedly kicked. But they escaped comparatively lightly considering that half a dozen human rights activists had earlier been abducted and tortured.

Interestingly, the government blamed the abductions on CIO agents loyal to Mugabe – just as they blamed the Harare killings by soldiers in January on people who had 'stolen' military uniforms.

This time the MDC was forewarned by wild police allegations that the opposition was planning violence and they finally called off the protest to save unnecessary bloodshed.

But the damage to the government's reputation is inestimable. The UN human rights office said the government should heed the people's legitimate grievances over the economic situation and stop cracking down on protesters.

Who is going to take seriously Zimbabwe's 'open for business' message when the constitutional rights of the people are trampled underfoot like this? Even Mugabe is so disaffected that he says he doesn't want to be buried in Heroes' Acre, prompting Mnangagwa to immediately send a delegation to Singapore to warn Mugabe that he had no option but to accept the badge of shame.

Heroes' Acre badly needs Mugabe – and, for that matter, Mnangagwa and the rest of the Zanu PF leadership. As it is, hardly anyone bothered to go to the annual ceremony there on Monday.

Like Disneyland, it needs some new attractions. Fill up Heroes' Acre as soon as possible.

## Other points

- A large group of Zimbabweans including Vigil activists joined an MDC demonstration outside the Embassy on Friday.
- More congratulations to those who raised funds from their sponsors for the fundraising walk on 27 July: Abigail Chidavaenzi £483, Simbarashe Jingo £100, Alice Majola £10, Tatenda Mandiki £65 (in addition to £64 he has already contributed), Dambudzo Marimira £245, Patricia Masamba £110, Tarisai Matambanadzo £10, Esther Munyira £100 and Sikhumbuzule Sibanda £100. A special thank you to Esther Munyira for her hard work in collecting and accounting for all the contributions.
- Thanks to those who helped set up the front table and put up the banners today: Nathan Chiyanja, Beulah Gore, Alice Majola, Netsayi Makarichi, Tatenda Mandiki, Dambudzo Marimira, Nyarai Masvosva, Joyce Mbairatsunga, Mary Muteyerwa, Farai Mutumburi, Tsitsi Nyirongo, Hazvinei Saili and Ephraim Tapa. Thanks to Margaret Munenge and Joice for looking after the front table, to Farai, Nyarai, Hazvinei and Netsayi for handing out flyers, to Mary for drumming and to Tatenda, Netsayi and Tapiwa Muskwe for photos.
- For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimb88abwevigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website.

**FOR THE RECORD:** 20 signed the register.

## EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR Beach Barbecue.** Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August. Venue: Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 9DN. Tickets: adults £20, Kids £10. Contact: Patricia Masamba 07708116625, Heather Makawa 07716391800, Esther Munyira 07492058109 and Daizy Fabian 07708653640.

- **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>