

The British campaigning organisation Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) has expressed fears that the outcome of the July elections are a foregone conclusion. ACTSA, formerly the Anti-Apartheid Movement, speaks of suspicion that what it calls the Zanu PF / military alliance will not allow Emmerson Mnangagwa to lose his first election.

ACTSA's report notes that the alliance is become increasingly sophisticated at manipulating state institutions and official processes and that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has refused to allow a comprehensive audit of the voters' roll by an independent body – adding 'some opposition politicians have noted a suspicious number of centenarians on it'

ACTSA says that, although ZEC is allowing parties to observe the printing of ballot papers, it will still not permit independent verification of their distribution. It goes on: 'For at least a year ACTSA's partners have said that Zanu PF activists in rural areas have been intimidating people, telling citizens that their vote will not be secret. Moreover, since the announcement of the elections, the government has reportedly deployed around 5000 (plain-clothed) soldiers in rural areas, and some traditional leaders aligned with Zanu PF have allegedly called on people to vote Zanu PF or face the threat of eviction from their homes.' (See: <https://actsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ACTSA-Key-Issues-Regarding-Zimbabwean-General-Election-2018.pdf> .)

Reports indicate that, despite the continuing big budget deficit shown by the latest economic figures and illustrated by the long queues at the banks, Zanu PF has still managed to find plenty of money to finance its election campaign, providing vehicles and campaign material to its supporters. This comes despite reports of deception by some Zanu PF ministers who are said to have wasted \$300,000 hiring a cargo plane from the dodgy Zimbabwe Airways to ferry campaign material from China, only to have it refused landing rights because of registration and regulatory issues (see: <https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2018/06/22/ministers-in-trouble-over-zanu-pf-funds/> ).

## **Other points**

- There has been a bizarre response from Mugabe's nephew and former minister Patrick Zhuwao to the accusation by President Mnangagwa in a BBC interview that Grace Mugabe's supporters were responsible for last week's bomb attack against him in Bulawayo. In an open letter to British Prime Minister Theresa May, Zhuwao said the bomb was an inside job and that

Mnangagwa would resort to violence to win the elections. He adds that Mnangagwa's opponents in Zanu PF will vote for MDC leader Nelson Chamisa (see: <http://www.newsdayzimbabwe.co.uk/2018/06/zhuwaos-open-letter-to-theresa-may.html>

).

- Thanks to those who arrived early to set up by putting up the banners and posters: Josephine Jombe, Marian Machekanyanga, Alice Majola, Rosemary Maponga, Eunice Mapunde, Patricia Masamba, Bianca Mpawaenda, Getrude Mudede, Fungisai Mupandira, Soneni Sibanda and Ephraim Tapa. Thanks to Josephine, Bianca and Soneni for looking after the front table and to Rosemary and Getrude for handing out flyers.

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

**FOR THE RECORD:** 19 signed the register.

#### **EVENTS AND NOTICES:**

- **MDC London Branch Meeting.** Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July from 12 noon – 2 pm. Venue: Royal Festival Hall. For more information contact Sharon Moyo 07877224113 and Clemence Munyukwi 07889 667686.

- **MDC UK and Ireland Youth Assembly BBQ fundraiser.** Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July from 2 pm till late. Venue: Billing Aquadrome, Crow Lane, Great Billing, Northampton NN3 9DA. The event is fundraising for the upcoming election to support MDC candidates in their campaigns. Contact: Sharon 07877224113, Vusi 07758 937280, Becky 07387 676697.

- **ROHR Central London branch meeting.** Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July from 11.30 am – 1.30 pm. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, Contact: Daizy Fabian 07708653640, Maxmus Savanhu 07397809056, Siphon Ndlovu 07400566013.

- **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.

- **Zimbabwe Vigil's Mock Election.** Monday 30<sup>th</sup> July from early to late.

- **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 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.

- **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>