

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/43210317872/sizes/m/>

Three weeks to the elections and the only thing that is clear is that Zanu PF still has no idea how to turn around the economy. The state media reports that billions of dollars of investments are pouring into the country and thousands of jobs are being created, but there is little sign of this on the ground.

According to the Herald everything is rosy. But the queues outside the banks continue. The dollar fetches \$1.70 in bond coins on the street. The budget deficit is ballooning. As the journalist Edmund Kudzayi says in a piece circulating on What'sApp: 'The economy is screaming.' (See: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/949-whatsapp-from-edmund-kudzayi-07072018> ).

The reality is that Zanu PF is congenitally unable to understand economics. To them economics equals money equals corruption. The result is there for everyone to see: no economy, no money but endemic corruption.

The corruption has contaminated even Zimbabwe's saintly civil society organisations. The United States has cut support to several of them, complaining that their bosses had colluded to plunder millions of dollars. (see: <https://www.newzimbabwe.com/trump-govt-pulls-plug-on-zimbabwes-pro-opposition-ngos-cites-gross-plunder-of-cash/> ).

The situation is so bad that the chair of the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority, Willia Bonyongwe, says corruption within and outside the organization had become so cancerous that it was destroying the fabric of society (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2018/07/lets-fight-corruption-zim-is-not-for-sale/> ).

The general disenchantment with the economy would suggest victory for the MDC in the elections, given a level playing field. But, after so many disappointments, the Vigil has little hope that the elections will not be rigged. We staged a demonstration in London on Saturday in support of an MDC protest on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July against the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC).

The MDC expects thousands of people to take part in a march from Africa Unity Square in Harare to the ZEC offices to press for changes to the electoral process. It is insisting on being provided with a complete biometric voters' roll and complains that it was not allowed to observe the ballot printing process.

MDC leader Nelson Chamisa said the party had serious concerns over the conduct of ZEC and believed that it was either incapable or unwilling to provide a verifiable, secure and transparent election.

### **Other points**

- Special thanks to Patience Muyeye for organising the demonstration against ZEC and providing the new placards.
- Thanks to those who arrived early to set up by putting up the banners and posters: Deborah Harry, Josephine Jombe, Marian Machekanyanga, Netsayi Makarichi, Rosemary Maponga, Patricia Masamba, Sharon Moyo, Getrude Mudede, Margaret Munenge, Esther Munyira and Patience Muyeye. Thanks to Josephine, Sharon and Deborah for looking after the front table and to Rosemary and Deborah for handing out flyers.

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:** 22 signed the register.

### **EVENTS AND NOTICES:**

- **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 to raise funds to support MDC candidates in their election campaigns. Contact: Sharon 07877224113, Vusi 07758 937280, Becky 07387 676697.
- **Protest against enforced returns of Zimbabweans from the UK.** Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July from 10 am. Venue: Parliament Square SW1P 3BD.
- **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, Sipho 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 outside the Embassy.

- **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>