

Unhappy anniversary – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 3rd August 2019

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 04 August 2019 17:58 - Last Updated Sunday, 04 August 2019 17:58

August marks the first anniversary of the army massacre of six civilians in Harare during a protest over the delay in releasing the election results. At least 35 others were wounded. The Motlanthe Commission appointed by the government found that the use of live ammunition against fleeing civilians was 'clearly unjustified and disproportionate'. It called for prosecutions and compensation.

A year on not a single prosecution has taken place. Instead the government promoted the officer in charge of the Presidential Guard responsible for the shootings, Brigadier General Anselem Sanyatwe, and blamed the violence on the opposition which it said had 'unleashed mayhem'.

The government recently went so far as to name Sanyatwe as Zimbabwe's Ambassador-designate to Tanzania, only for the United States to place him under sanctions for 'gross violations of human rights'. The government's self-righteous protests that this was 'undermining Zimbabwe's sovereignty' has been met with laudable directness by the US Embassy: 'No one has been held responsible for these heinous acts. The people of Zimbabwe deserve better.'

Judge for yourself whether the Americans are correctly informed about Zimbabwean affairs by reading an article in the influential New York Times which describes the situation in Zimbabwe as a nightmare, pointing in particular at the water crisis, apart from the energy crisis and shortage of fuel and medicines.

The paper quotes the chief economist of the National Chamber of Commerce, Kipson Gundani, as saying: 'We had a window of opportunity when Mugabe left power but we missed that window'. (See: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/31/world/africa/zimbabwe-water-crisis.html>).

Next Saturday the Vigil will be devoted to a protest against the government's inaction over the army's killing of civilians last August and again in January.

Other points

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- Grace Mugabe heads a list of Zanu PF bigwigs accused of looting \$160 million from CBZ Bank. She is alleged to have irregularly obtained a loan of \$4.5 million without collateral. Number two in the looters' list is predictably Obert Mpopfu who owes \$2.5 million, followed by Gideon Gono, the former Governor of the Reserve Bank, with \$2 million. Vice President General Chiwenga's wife Jocelyn owes a mere \$900,000. The chastened bank has employed the law firm of former Finance Minister Tendai Biti to try to recover the money.

- Congratulations to those who raised funds from their sponsors for last week's walk: Hazvinei Saili £468.20 (in sterling and euros), Ephraim Tapa £225 (more to follow), Molly Ngavaimbe £92 and Miriam Gasho £60. We expect this list to expand as others are still collecting contributions from their sponsors. Esther Munyira's report on the walk can be seen here: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/1027-report-on-the-rohr-peace-walk-27th-july-2019>

- Thanks to those who helped set up the front table and put up the banners today: Happy Chazuza, Jane Kaphuwa, Lucia Mungwari, Richard Munyama, Casper Nyamakura, Hazvinei Saili and Ephraim Tapa. Thanks to Lucia, Margaret Munenge and Miriam Gasho for looking after the front table, to Hazvinei, Jane, Esther Munyira and Bigboy Sibanda for handing out flyers and to Casper and Jonathan Kariwo 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: 22 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR general members' meeting.** Saturday 10th August from 11.30 am. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, Belvedere Road SE1 8XX. Contact: Ephraim Tapa 07940793090, Patricia Masamba 07708116625.

- **Demonstration to mark anniversary of army's shooting of civilians.** Saturday 10th August from 2 – 5 pm outside the Zimbabwe Embassy.

Organised by

Esther Munyira 07492058109.

- **ROHR Beach Barbecue.** Sunday 25th 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>

w.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>