

With people desperate and starving, the government has agreed to opposition demands smoothing the way to meeting its promise that Zimbabwe will be ‘a middle-income country’ by the end of this decade.

The sticking point was, as ever, money. The fringe parties taking part in the theatrically-named Political Actors’ Dialogue (Polad) may only have gained 2% of the vote in the 2018 elections but it was an important 2% because it meant that Mnangagwa could pretend to the outside world that he was engaged in a real dialogue with the opposition when all he was doing was fishing. Then the combined forces of 2% of the opposition came out with their demands for expenses to attend these vitally unimportant discussions when they were shown around Mnangagwa’s farm and how generously he feeds his fish.

Mnangagwa has magnanimously recognized their legitimate demands: cars, housing, wives, immunity from prosecution – all the accoutrements of signing up with Zanu PF. After all, it would help meet his promise about producing a ‘middle-income country’ – even if it is only for Zanu PF bigwigs and their acolytes.

Chamisa, who has refused to take part in the charade, has welcomed the intervention by former South African President Thabo Mbeki to try and resolve the dispute between him and Mnangagwa. But has he missed the boat? Mbeki we mean. He said he would be back in Zimbabwe by the end of the year . . . Perhaps he has been told that Mnangagwa would be too busy feeding his fish to meet him – or perhaps he realizes the boat is the Titanic. □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Other points

- The EU has withdrawn its offer of 16 million euros in aid for the development of infrastructure to protect wildlife in the Save Valley Conservancy over the government’s reluctance to end land invasions and protect property rights. Some properties in the Conservancy are owned by investors from EU countries. The government has turned a blind eye to bilateral agreements protecting these properties.
- The British Times newspaper reports that ‘Africa’s richest woman’, the daughter of Angola’s former president dos Santos, has had her assets frozen by the new president. She is said to have corruptly amassed a fortune of more than \$2 billion.
- Another article in the Times says Mugabe’s friend President Obiang, ‘the world’s longest

serving president', is now also in a pickle. His family has run through Equatorial Guinea's oil wealth and now wants a \$283 million loan from the International Monetary Fund after a fall in oil prices. The Times says 'the value of the IMF package equates to what Teodorin Obiang, the Vice-President, one of the President's 42 children, spent between 2000 and 2011'.

- Thanks to those who came early to help set up the front table and put up the banners: Rosemary Maponga, Charles Mararirakwenda, Dambudzo Marimira, Benjamin Molife, Esther Munyira, Molly Ngavaimbe, Hazvinei Sali, Ephraim Tapa and Kevin.Wheeldon. Thanks to Rosemary and Hazvinei for looking after the front table, to Kevin, Molly, Rosemary and Deborah Harry for handing out flyers, to Delice for drumming and to Hazvinei for photos. Thanks also to those who brought refreshments: to Rosemary for bringing a thermos flask of hot water with milk for tea and coffee and to Molly for cakes.

- 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: 14 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR general members' meeting.** Saturday 11th January from 11.30 am. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, Belvedere Road SE1 8XX. Contact: Ephraim Tapa 07940793090, Patricia Masamba 07708116625, Esther Munyira 07492058109.

- **ROHR Valentine's fundraising dinner dance.** Saturday 15th February from 7 pm till late. Venue: to be advised.

- **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/>

Fringe parties bought off – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 4th January 2020

Written by Administrator

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ZAF:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>