

Dozens of African leaders are attending the UK-Africa Investment Summit hosted by Prime Minister Boris Johnson in London this week. It is bringing together businesses, governments and international institutions to 'showcase and promote the breadth and quality of investment opportunities across Africa'.

The British government hopes the Summit 'will mobilise new and substantial investment to create jobs and boost mutual prosperity' – just what Zimbabwe needs.

The leaders of Africa's economic power houses such as South Africa's Ramaphosa, Nigeria's Buhari and Kenya's Kenyatta will be there, along with Egypt's Sisi – but President Mnangagwa has not been invited.

His spokesman George Charamba snorted: 'Methinks the UK uses false diplomacy to steady nerves arising from Brexit'. He continued in full rhetorical mode: 'The UK is no longer an investing global power; it long ceased to be thus'.

Apparently playing one of Shakespeare's fools, he further declaimed that the Commonwealth was 'not a veritable economic grouping but just an emotional get-together', completely forgetting the last scene in this play in which Zimbabwe declared that it wanted nothing more than to rejoin this apparently moribund old boys' club.

The UK may perhaps be only the fifth or sixth biggest economy in the world but it aims to be the biggest G7 investor in Africa by 2022. Abracadabra Charamba should come clean on why Zimbabwe was not invited. The Vigil suggests it was because Zanu PF has not met its promises on reform, on dialogue, on tackling corruption . . . (see: <https://www.zimlive.com/2020/01/14/zimbabwe-plays-down-snob-at-uk-africa-summit-claims-uk-economically-diminished/>).

The Chinese can confirm this: Foreign Minister Wang Yi made it clear on his recent visit to Harare that China would finance infrastructural projects but would not give the government any budgetary support. The message was, according to the Zimbabwe Independent, that 'Harare needed to roll out a comprehensive economic reform agenda and tackle rampant corruption'.

(See: <https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2020/01/17/no-bailout-china-tells-zim-govt/> .)

This message was underlined by the EU Ambassador to Zimbabwe Timo Olkkonen, who said corruption and mismanagement of the agricultural sector were mainly responsible for food shortages. 'Large areas are lying fallow', he observed (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2020/01/corruption-fuels-zim-hunger/>).

For its part, the African Development Bank complains that Zimbabwe is 'very behind' in clearing its \$700 million arrears to the bank. The local manager in Zimbabwe said tactfully 'maybe this is something that the government needs to improve on (see: <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/world/africa/2020-01-12-zimbabwe-far-behind-in-repaying-debt-says-african-development-bank/>)

What a good idea. But perhaps he hasn't noticed that the government doesn't believe in paying its bills. It has other ways of conducting business – as Vice President General Dr Chiwenga's divorce case has revealed, unveiling a world of juju, witchcraft and spells (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2020/01/chiwenga-divorce-opens-can-of-worms/>).

Watch out China. We gather you are given to this sort of thing yourselves . . .

Other points

- Despite the state of the economy the elite in Zimbabwe seem to be living in another world. A relative of Chiwenga's wife, Genius Kadungure (also known as Ginimbi) is suing the revenue authority which seized his brand new Bentley Continental GT which he is accused of importing without paying duty.

- Thanks to those who came early to help set up the front table and put up the banners: Marvellous Chinguwa, Rosemary Maponga, Washington Mugari, Tapiwa Muskwe, Ephraim Tapa and Kevin Wheeldon. Thanks to Rosemary and Marvellous for looking after the front table, to Kevin for handing out flyers, to Mary Muteyerwa for drumming, to Kevin and Esther for photos and to Rosemary who brought hot drinks and cakes.

- Thanks to further generous activists who have contributed to ROHR's Mtoko Irrigation Project: Rangarirai Chivaviro and Esther Munyira.

- 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: 17 signed the register

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR general members' meeting.** Saturday 25th 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 07492058107.

- **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/>

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