

Deafening silence – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 9th May 2020

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 10 May 2020 14:35 - Last Updated Sunday, 10 May 2020 14:35

News from Zimbabwe this week was notable for what didn't happen rather than what did, in particular the government's refusal to comment on revelations that Finance Minister Ncube had admitted the country is facing economic collapse because of bad policies.

Ncube in essence confessed that the government had blatantly lied to the world and the people of Zimbabwe. There was no denial by the government and he wasn't sacked. All we got from Zanu PF was silence.

Opposition MP Tendai Biti, Finance Minister in the late Government of National Unity, said Ncube's unsuccessful begging letter to international financial institutions was 'the final surrender of any dignity of a corrupt regime'.

In the letter Ncube promised that in return for aid the government would undertake political and economic reforms. Biti dismissed this, saying the government had repeatedly promised to reform but they never would.

Biti also accused the government of declaring war on the opposition by allowing the recall of four MDC alliance parliamentarians. He said the move marked the end of normal politics. The party has suspended participation in all parliamentary proceedings (see: <https://www.newzimbabwe.com/watch-biti-says-mps-recall-a-declaration-of-war-by-mnangagwa/>)

).

Another surprise this week was the small number of reported cases of coronavirus infections in Zimbabwe. It appears that more Zimbabweans are dying of the virus in the UK than at home.

What was not surprising was a warning by Amnesty International that in some areas the authorities are tying food aid to the recipient's political affiliation. It says the problem is especially acute in rural areas, where people who don't belong to Zanu PF are being denied the means to survive (see: <https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/amnesty-zimbabwe-playing-politics-food-aid-distribution>).

Other points

- What was also not surprising was that China has agreed to go ahead with a US \$4.2 billion coal-fired power station at Lake Kariba – despite promising to shift support to green and low-carbon projects (see: <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/companies/mining/2020-05-07-as-others-shun-african-coal-projects-china-gets-4bn-zimbabwe-project-under-way/>).

- Because of the coronavirus we can no longer physically meet outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London, so we have started a virtual Vigil. We asked our activists to put on Vigil / ROHR / Zimbabwe regalia and take a photo of themselves holding an appropriate poster reflecting our protest against human rights abuses in Zimbabwe. The photos are uploaded on our Flickr site (see: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/albums/7215771423356>).

[1972](#)). Our virtual Vigil activist today was Esther Munyira who kindly contributed to Vigil funds.

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

NOTICES:

· **The Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR)** is the Vigil's partner organisation based in Zimbabwe. ROHR grew out of the need for the Vigil to have an organisation 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>

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