

## The turning point? – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 15th August 2020

Written by Administrator  
Sunday, 16 August 2020 10:22 -

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<https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/50231979057/sizes/z/>

When Nelson Mandela made his last official visit to London the Vigil threatened to campaign against his refusal to speak out against Mugabe. We were gratified when he then spoke of problems of governance in Zimbabwe and were able to join in the warm welcome for the hugely popular South African liberation hero.

But ties between his ANC and Mugabe's Zanu PF remained strong and only now, with his favoured successor Cyril Ramaphosa at last coming to power, are there real signs of a fracture between the two liberation movements, spurred by the influential Economic Freedom fighter leader Julius Malema, a supporter of Mugabe, who has turned against President Mnangagwa.

Ramaphosa on Monday sent special envoys to Harare. They had a meeting with Mnangagwa but returned home on Tuesday, cancelling a planned meeting with the MDC, leading to speculation that there had been no progress.

Darren Bergman, the opposition Democratic Alliance's Shadow Minister of International Development and Co-operation, said the Zimbabwean government had denied the envoys an opportunity to meet relevant stakeholders and get a balanced picture of the situation. Mnangagwa had told the envoys that there was no crisis in Zimbabwe and hence no need to

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meet the opposition or civil society.

Bergman said: 'Mr Mnangagwa's government has unleashed a reign of terror on defenceless citizens, arresting journalists and activists on trumped up charges. For him to claim that there is no crisis in Zimbabwe and ask the envoys sent by the AU Chair Ramaphosa to turn around and go back without meeting the opposition is a poor attempt at covering up the actions of his murderous regime.'

He said Ramaphosa will have to choose whether to stand with the people of Zimbabwe against the tyranny of Zanu PF or continue with the policy of 'quiet diplomacy'. (See: [https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/zimbabwean-tea-summit-a-total-failure-ramaphosa-himself-must-go-press-release-2020-08-11?mod=mw\\_more\\_headlines&tesla=y](https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/zimbabwean-tea-summit-a-total-failure-ramaphosa-himself-must-go-press-release-2020-08-11?mod=mw_more_headlines&tesla=y)).

Meanwhile the Chair of the ANC's International Relations Committee, Lindiwe Zulu, said it was time to be frank about the unrest in Zimbabwe. 'in the ANC's view, yes there is a political crisis in Zimbabwe', she said. (See: <https://www.enca.com/news/zulu-there-political-crisis-zimbabwe>).

The AU has also expressed concern at what it described as the disproportionate use of force by the security forces, urging restraint in the government's response to peaceful process and calling on Zanu PF to uphold the rule of law. (See: <https://www.newzimbabwe.com/au-speaks->

[on-zimbabwe-crisis-orders-mnangagwa-to-respect-rule-of-law/](#)

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Former Botswana President Ian Khama criticised SADC and the AU for failing to deal with the Zimbabwe crisis and said they should prioritise the plight of the Zimbabwe people. He said: 'People fought for freedom not to replace one oppressor by another'. (See: <https://www.newzimbabwe.com/ian-khama-slams-toothless-sadc-au-over-zim-crisis/>

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### Other Points:

- Annual inflation in Zimbabwe has now reached nearly 840% and the banks have been unable to pay out the US dollar allowances promised to civil servants.
  - Because of the coronavirus we can no longer physically meet outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London, so we have a virtual Vigil while the lockdown continues. We ask 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. The photos are uploaded on our Flickr site (see: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/albums/72157715505104521>
- ).
- Our virtual Vigil activist today was Deborah Harry 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.

### Events and Notices:

- **ROHR's Fundraising Walk for Freedom.** Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August. A 20 mile walk starting

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at Redbridge Station IG4 5DQ at 9 am and finishing at the Zimbabwe Embassy in London. For more information, contact: Esther Munyira 07492058107, Rangarirai Chivaviro 07378429599 and Benjamin Molife 07490909900.

- **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>