

There is mounting hysteria in Zanu PF over South Africa's attempt to help Zimbabwe resolve its economic and political crisis. President Mnangagwa seems more and more like a crocodile on helium – the experiment that was awarded the Ig Nobel prize this week (see: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-54197198>).

South African's ruling African National Congress maintains that it will soon send a delegation back to Zimbabwe to meet the opposition and civil society stakeholders in an attempt to initiate dialogue between them and Zanu PF. It said it was 'excited' about the position on this taken by Zanu PF's Secretary for Administration Obert Mpfu at their recent meeting in Harare (see: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2020/09/we-are-coming-back-anc/>).

On the return home of the ANC delegation there was talk that 'Zimbabwe is burning'. Blade Dzimande, the South African higher education minister, said that denying that Zimbabwe was in a political crisis was tantamount to denying self-evident truth. But Zanu PF seems to have performed a helium somersault. President Mnangagwa has now made it clear that he doesn't want a South African delegation to meet the opposition. And Zanu PF's director of publicity and information, Tafadzwa Mugwadi, accused the ANC of acting in bad faith in 'forcing' it to meet the opposition and civil society groups

After a politburo meeting, Zanu PF's acting spokesperson Patrick Chinamasa called on the ANC to 'rein in its errant elements who are communicating unfairly on our nation'. Chinamasa said that the politburo had agreed that the opposition's 'happiness in creating drama and faking abductions . . . should be ignored.' He added that Zanu PF was instead setting its sights on

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winning the 2023 elections (see:

<https://www.newsday.co.zw/2020/09/ed-slams-door-on-ramaphosa/>

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What did Mnangagwa, still buoyed by his crocodile nickname from the Gukurahundi massacres, have to say on that? 'With 2023 elections in sight and our resounding and landslide victory imminent, let us remain unwavering in our revolutionary course by consistently strengthening and increasing our party membership base'

(see: [https://www.timeslive.c](https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/2020-09-16-zanu-pf-accuses-anc-envoys-of-meddling-in-zimbabwes-affairs/)

[o.za/news/africa/2020-09-16-zanu-pf-accuses-anc-envoys-of-meddling-in-zimbabwes-affairs/](https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/2020-09-16-zanu-pf-accuses-anc-envoys-of-meddling-in-zimbabwes-affairs/)

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The Vigil can only agree that Zanu PF victory is inevitable. With the electoral commission, the judiciary, the army and the police in his pocket how could the outcome possibly be different from the rigged elections of the past two decades?

MDC Alliance Vice-President Tendai Biti is more positive. The Zanu PF statements are all false bravado he said. 'They are facing a crisis of legitimacy and delivery. A solution will be found.' But perhaps he's on helium too . . . ?

Other Points:

- The Zimbabwe Working Group – comprising mainly American diplomats and academics – has welcomed South Africa’s efforts to address the Zimbabwe crisis and said the African Union should support these instead of providing a whitewash for Zanu PF. The list of signatories is short of former British ambassadors to Zimbabwe. Perhaps they were swallowed by the crocodile . . . (see: <https://www.zimlive.com/2020/09/17/zimbabwe-working-group-statement-act-now-to-stop-zimbabwe-abuses/>).
- Former Botswanan President Ian Khama says there is a crisis in Zimbabwe and not just challenges. Zimbabweans had shown tremendous resilience in the face of a brutal regime (see: <https://www.enca.com/news/ian-khama-zimbabwean-lives-matter>).
- President Mnangagwa has now confirmed our suspicion that the land settlement deal he announced recently is pie in the sky, In effect, the commercial farmers whose land was seized will have to pay their own compensation. Mnangagwa said no taxpayers’ funds will be used and the money would be sourced externally. ‘We have set up a committee to go Europe where they will raise the money’. No doubt they will be looking for people on helium (see: <https://www.sundaymail.co.zw/president-clears-air-on-land-sa-envoys>).
- Because of the coronavirus we can no longer physically meet outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London, so we have a virtual Vigil while the restrictions continue. 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.
- 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 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

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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/zimbabwевigil>

ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/Restoration-of-Human-Rights-ROHR-Zimbabwe-International-370825706588551/>

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