

Vigil supporters were surprised that no celebrations appear to have been arranged for President , Head of State and Government, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Forces, Terror of Mankind Robert Mugabe's 86th birthday on 21st February. So the Vigil has arranged a party for him next Saturday.

People at home might take for granted the visionary leader who has done so much for so long to create a new Zimbabwe. But we in the diaspora continue to marvel at his achievements: poverty, murder, disease, starvation, torture, violence, ignorance, corruption . . . In short blighting the lives of millions.

On another bitterly cold day, with a biting wind from Siberia, alleviated only by the occasional snowflake, supporters broke off from their singing and dancing to sign birthday cards for Mugabe. They will be handed to him when he visits the Vigil on 20th February (in the form of Fungayi Mabhunu wearing our Mugabe mask, who will be accompanied by Josephine Zhuga playing the role of first lady Grace).

We are still waiting to hear whether Mugabe will be given the expected present from the EU in the form of an easing of sanctions. There has been pressure to lift some of them in the naïve belief that appeasing Mugabe will achieve change. The Vigil would have thought that the Indigenisation Bill to take over white-owned companies and reported moves to stop NGOs from feeding the starving (see: <http://www.manicapost.com/inside.aspx?sectid=234&cat=1>) would have been enough to have alerted credulous EU members to the impossibility of working with Mugabe.

The Vigil was pleased to be sent a consignment of materials from friends in South Africa to be distributed to supporters. One item was a 2010 calendar labelled 'hit him where it hurts the most . . . in the ballot box', urging Zimbabweans to register to vote.

For our part the Vigil wants to remind Zimbabweans in the UK that they have a right to vote in the British general elections expected in May. Provided you register on the voters' roll you qualify for the vote as a citizen of the Commonwealth. (Yes we know Zimbabwe walked out of the Commonwealth in 2003, but apparently the British government hasn't

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changed the relevant law yet: see:

[http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/who can register to vote.aspx](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/who_can_register_to_vote.aspx)

). So turn out and vote for the party you think will best help

Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwean Ambassador is expected to vote for the British National Party on the grounds that it is closest to Zanu (PF) and wants to get rid of all immigrants.

Some other points:

- We now have dates for President Zuma's state visit to the UK. He will be here from 3rd – 5th March accompanied by his newest wife, Mrs Thobeka Madiba Zuma

. See:

<http://www.royal.gov.uk/LatestNewsandDiary/Pressreleases/2010/AnnouncementofaStateVisitfromSouthAfrica.aspx>

. We will give more details next week of our plans to welcome Zuma.

- Several of our supporters again went to take part in the Swazi Vigil and they say it is causing quite a stir. See: www.swazilandvigil.co.uk .

- Our Iranian friends in London have created a poster showing Mugabe and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad shaking hands. You can see it on our Flickr photo website. Pictures of the Iran Solidarity protest in London

on 11th February can be seen on:

<http://iransolidarity.blogspot.com/2010/02/22-bahman-protest-london.html>

- We were pleased to be joined by Preacher Beverley Mutandiro who said prayers with Vigil supporters.

- We celebrated with Jenatry Muranganwa and Lungile Ncube that they have now been given their papers to remain in the UK.

- People looking after the register wish to point out that the register closes every Saturday at 5.30.

- We were contacted by the former MDC MP Mike Auret this week. His book 'From Liberator to Dictator' is now available in UK

shops and also online via:

<http://www.waterstones.com/waterstonesweb/products/michael+auret/from+liberator+to+dictator/>
[or/](http://www.waterstones.com/waterstonesweb/products/michael+auret/from+liberator+to+dictator/)
[6533968/](http://www.waterstones.com/waterstonesweb/products/michael+auret/from+liberator+to+dictator/) .

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> .

FOR THE RECORD: 125 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

· **ROHR Liverpool demonstration.** Saturday 20th February from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: Church Street (Outside Primark) Liverpool City Centre. For

details please contact: Desire Chimuka
07917733711

, Anywhere Mungoyo

07939913688

, Patrick Kushonga

07900857605

, Trywell Migeri

07956083758.

· **ROHR Luton (Bedfordshire) launch meeting.** Saturday 20th February from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: Bury Park Community Resource Centre, 161 Dunstable Road

,
Luton

LU1 1BW

. Milton Keynes Branch in support. ROHR Executive members present and a chance to buy raffle tickets for Hayes fundraising do on 27th February. Contact Edson Kureva on 07767773949, Martha Jiya 07727016098 or P Mapfumo 0791596323 / 07932216070.

The

car park

at the back of the

community centre

in

Avondale Road

is available.

· **ROHR Leeds general meeting.** Saturday 20th February from 1.30 – 4 pm. Venue: Dock Green Inn, Leeds LS9 7AB. Contact: Wonder M Mubaiwa

07958758568

, Donna Mugoni (Chair

Wakefield

) 0

7748828913, Prosper Mudamvanji 07846621050, Beauty Sikosana 07940181761, David Munemo 07963708923 or P Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070

· **ROHR Hayes fundraising party.** Saturday 27th February from 3 pm till late. Venue:

Coronation Hall,

Stok

e Road

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, Water Eaton, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK2 3AB. Admission £7.50 including food (lots of traditional food: mazondo, maguru mubhoora and all). Fashion show. Zim Music. Raffle: tickets £10. Prizes include: computer, printer, mobile handset, DVD player. To be drawn at 10.30 pm.

Nearest station: Bletchley. Bus number 5 from central

M

ilton Keynes

or Bletchley. For more info contact Rodah Kuhlengisa 07958205544, Charity Nyamuzuwe 07898765091, Snodia Chihowa 07852921523, Martha Jiya 07727016098 or P Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070.

- **ROHR Stevenage & Hatfield (Hertfordshire) general meeting.** Saturday 6th March from 1.30 – 6 pm. Venue: Poplars Bandley Hill Community Centre, Magpie Crescent

,
Stevenage

SG2 9RZ

. ROHR executive present and respected guests. Contact: Kennedy Mashonganyika 079623838720, Jemtiasi Mare 07909338769, Bertha Mwatse 07404112684, Clarkson Shumbanhete 07958550506 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

- **ROHR Sheffield launch meeting.** Saturday 13th March. Venue: Ruby Lounge, 35 Carver Street, Sheffield, S1 4FS

. Come and share ideas on how we can tackle the human rights abuses of our fellow countrymen. ROHR President & Executive present together with some VIPs. Contact: Prosper Mudamvanji 07846621050, Raymond B Jonga 07729472879 or P Mapfumo 7915926323 / 07932216070.

- **Zimbabwe Association's Women's Weekly Drop-in Centre.** Fridays 10.30 am – 4 pm. Venue: The Fire Station Community and ICT Centre, 84 Mayton Street

,
London

N7 6QT, Tel: 020 7607 9764. Nearest underground:

Finsbury
Park

. For more information contact the Zimbabwe Association 020 7549 0355 (open Tuesdays and Thursdays).

- **Strategic Internship for Zimbabweans organised by Citizens for Sanctuary** which is trying to secure work placements for qualified Zimbabweans with refugee status or asylum seekers. For information:

<http://www.citizensforsanctuary.org.uk/pages/Strategic.html>

or contact:

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zimbabweinternship@cof.org.uk

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- **For Motherland ENT's videos of the Vigil** on 30/01/2010: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeI4veVo0H0> and the Vigil on /12/2009 26
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- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdPsBsief0s>
- and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nX6sv2T9gwk&feature=related>
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