

Brilliant sunshine blessed our last Vigil of the winter – certainly the coldest winter of our nine years demonstrating outside the Embassy. Last December was one of the worst months on record for general snow, ice and freezing temperatures. It has been tough turning out every Saturday in such conditions. But the Vigil is encouraged by the tsunami of unrest from North Africa and believes it will sweep away Zanu PF before too long.

We were arrested by the words used by Tsvangirai this week that ‘dark and sinister forces’ are at work in Zimbabwe. They sounded an echo: as we noted in last week’s diary a British minister Lord Howell spoke of ‘highly sinister’ developments in a parliamentary debate on Zimbabwe.

What can this mean? The Vigil believes both men are acknowledging that the security services – in the form of the Joint Operations Command – have taken control and are relentlessly closing down all the remaining democratic space in preparation for a Burmese / North Korean gangster state.

The Vigil is encouraged that the African bloc has repudiated Gaddafi by their votes in the United Nations Security Council and is confident that the continent is swinging against dictators. Zimbabweans should consider adopting a strategy of political defiance on the lines suggested by Gene Sharpe in his book ‘From Dictatorship to Democracy’ which has been so influential in the North African revolutions. You can download the short book from this link: [http://www.aeins tein.org/organizations/org/FDTD.pdf](http://www.aeins.tein.org/organizations/org/FDTD.pdf)

Sharpe says there are times for defiant public demonstrations and that ‘abandonment and control of fear is a key element in destroying the power of the dictators over the general population’. The Vigil believes that Tsvangirai by threatening to go ahead with his star rally in Harare in defiance of the police and then chickening out at the last moment is not setting a good example.

Other points

- Jeff Sango of the MDC UK came and told us of a London demonstration the party is holding on Monday against the increasing violence in Zimbabwe and against the possibility that Zimbabwean failed asylum seekers in the UK will be sent home (see Events and Notices Section for details).

- Vigil team member Patson Mazuwa, who is a leading figure in the Zimbabwe Association (ZA), said that Zimbabweans in the UK should not be too alarmed by the new legal development. Patson said failed asylum seekers who were worried about their position should contact the ZA. For details of the legal position check comments by solicitors Yvonne Gwashawanhu and Taffy Nyawanza (<http://newzimbabwe-yg.notlong.com/> and <http://newzimbabwe-tn.notlong.com/>).
- Because of a computer error by the diary team, last week's diary didn't appear in the Zimbabwean newspaper. Instead we sent by accident a very interesting article by Jon Swain (http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/mar13_2011.html#Z2) which we had saved for research purposes. We apologise to the Zimbabwean and its readers.
- Following French fashion week there has been a big demand for Vigil designer hats knitted by Josephine Zhuga. On another fashion note it appears the privations of living in the UK have slimmed Zimbabweans down judging by the drop in sales of XXL Vigil t-shirts.
- Thanks to Brenda Chavundura for her help today especially in selling the Zimbabwean newspaper.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . For the latest ZimVigil TV programme check <http://www.zimvigilTV.com/>

FOR THE RECORD: 162 signed the register.

EVENTS AND 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.
- **MDC UK Demonstration against violence in Zimbabwe and threatened deportations from the UK.** Monday 21st March from 12 – 4 pm. Meet at the Zimbabwe Embassy at 12 noon. Protesters will move on to demonstrate outside the nearby South African High Commission.
- **ROHR Manchester Vigil.** Saturday 26th March from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: Cathedral Gardens, Manchester City Centre (subject to change to Piccadilly Gardens). Contact: Delina Tafadzwa Mutyambizi 07775313637, Chamunorwa Chihota 07799446404, Panyika Karimanzira 07551062161, Artwell Pfende 07886839353, Charles Nenguke 07925146757, P Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070 or P Chibanguza 07908406069. Future demonstrations: 30

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April, 28

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May. Same time and venue.

- **ROHR Wolverhampton general meeting.** Saturday 2nd April. Venue: Heath Town Community Centre, 208 Chevril Rise, Wolverhampton WV10 0HP. Contact Tsvakai Marambi 07915065171, Florence Munemo 07901733634, Flora Nyahuma 07900036702, P Chibanguza 07908406069
- **ROHR Woking general meeting.** Saturday 2nd April from 2 – 6 pm. Venue: Woking Homes, Oriental Road, Woking GU22 7BE. Contact, Isaac Mudzamiri 07774044873, Sithokozile Hlokana 07886203113, Saziso Zulu 07861028280 or P.Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070
- **ROHR Manchester meetings.** Saturday 16th April: (committee meeting from 11 am – 1 pm, general meeting from 2 – 5 pm). Venue: The Salvation Army Citadel, 71 Grosvenor Road, Manchester M13 9UB.
Contact: Delina Tafadzwa Mutyambizi 07775313637, Chamunorwa Chihota 07799446404, Panyika Karimanzira 07551062161, Artwell Pfende 07886839353, Charles Nenguke 07925146757, P Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070 or P Chibanguza 07908406069. Future meeting: 14

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May. Same times and venue.

- **Vigil Facebook page:** <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8157345519&ref=ts> .
- **Vigil Myspace page:** <http://www.myspace.com/zimbabwevigil> .
- **‘Through the Darkness’**, Judith Todd’s acclaimed account of the rise of Mugabe. To receive a copy by post in the UK please email confirmation of your order and postal address to ngwenyasr@yahoo.co.uk and send a cheque for £10 payable to “Budiro Trust” to Emily Chadburn, 15 Burners Close, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 0QA. All proceeds go to the Budiro Trust which provides bursaries to needy A Level students in Zimbabwe
- **Workshops aiming to engage African men on HIV testing and other sexual health issue** s. Organised by the Terrence Higgins Trust (www.tht.org.uk). Please contact the co-ordinator Takudzwa Mukiwa (takudzwa.mukiwa@tht.org.uk) if you are interested in taking part.