

As we gathered for our weekly Vigil on the hottest day of the year so far (30 degrees) one of the management team was on the phone to his mother in Mbare who told us businesses were being closed and people forced by Chipangano thugs to attend a Zanu PF rally – ‘or you know what will happen to you’. Other Vigil supporters also heard what was going on: such is the ease of communications today.

With only a couple of weeks before the elections, one would have hoped that SADC observers would be there on the ground to see this. But our hopes are not raised by a surreal Voice of America interview with SADC’s Director of Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation, a former Lesotho military officer, the appropriately named Tanki Mothae, who we note gloomily was a SADC observer at the stolen 2008 elections.

He said some SADC observers are in Zimbabwe but ‘the bulk of other observers will be in Zimbabwe, as soon as member states are ready, which is what we are waiting on now. The SADC Secretariat is busy trying to put \_\_\_\_\_ together a team that will go to Zimbabwe as the SADC poll observer mission.’ Let’s hope they will make it on time!

Mothae added ‘We are convinced that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is ready. The referendum was a test case, which they managed very well, and I think everybody was happy to see that under these illegal sanctions that Zimbabwe has been put under, they managed to pull through and the referendum was very a well-managed process’ (see: SADC Working With Zimbabwe Ahead of Election –

<http://www.voanews.com/content/sadc-working-with-zimbabwe-ahead-of-election/1700149.htm>

! ).

So the problem for SADC is 'illegal' sanctions? Not the SADC election requirement that observers should be in place three months before the polls . . . ?

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum accuses Mugabe of trying to intimidate SADC by threatening to withdraw from the organisation (see: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/507-a-democratic-promise-in-peril>

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**A democratic promise in peril?) Judging from Mothae's comments we don't believe intimidation is necessary . . .**

Either way, the Vigil believes the real problem is the stuffing of ballot boxes by Zanu PF and we were joined by Mugabe himself (in the form of Fungayi Mabhunu in our Mugabe mask) who showed us how to carry out this clever Israeli trick.

**Vigil supporters have written to President Zuma in the hope of putting some spine into SADC. Here's our letter:**

*'Dear President Zuma*

*On behalf of our fellow countrymen we apologise for the discourteous and ungrateful comments on South Africa's mediation efforts made recently by President Mugabe. We can assure you that his views do not represent those of the majority of Zimbabweans who, on the contrary, welcome particularly your concern for free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.*

*President Mugabe has made it clear that he will not respect the requirements of the recent SADC meeting in Maputo and has continued to obstruct any attempt to implement the reforms he undertook to make under the Global Political Agreement. Furthermore, there is clear evidence that the elections on 31<sup>st</sup> July are already being systematically rigged.*

*The Zimbabwe Vigil, which has been protesting outside Zimbabwe House in London every Saturday for the past 11 years in support of free and fair elections, urges you not to recognise the results of disputed elections.*

*The Vigil also wishes to record our total opposition to any attempt to form a new Government of National Unity if real power again rests with the atavistic Zanu PF party under Mugabe.*

*If President Mugabe carries out his threat to withdraw Zimbabwe from SADC it is a price we Zimbabweans are prepared to pay as we believe it will deprive the Mugabe mafia regime of the support which has enabled it to survive for so long.'*

As the Vigil ended we discussed whether the MDC could win the elections. Sadly nobody thought they could because of rigging. We believe SADC must now choose between standing by its obligations to the desperate people of Zimbabwe or continuing to prop up a geriatric genocidaire.

### Other points

- A large group of ROHR activists presented a petition calling for free and fair elections to the Zimbabwe Electoral Offices in Harare and the Home Affairs ministry on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July. For a full report see:  
<http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/504-rohr-zimbabwe-demonstrates-in-harare-for-the-right-to-vote>

- The Vigil is to join Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) in a 'Demonstration for Democracy' outside the Zimbabwe Embassy on election day 31<sup>st</sup> July. More details to follow.

- Following the Vigil's joint action with ACTSA to mark the fifth anniversary of the Presidential run-off, the following entry has been posted on Southwark Cathedral's website. *Following a Vigil recently outside the Zimbabwean Embassy in London a Tree of Hope was created. The Tree is now in Southwark Cathedral to focus our prayer for the people of*

## SADC: stand up to Mugabe – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 13th July 2013

Written by Administrator

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*Zimbabwe until the time of the Election. Tree of Hope is covered in red paper roses, with people's messages of hope for free and fair elections. Roses are used by the women's movement in Zimbabwe as a symbol of peace. The Bishop of Southwark is calling on the parishes of the Diocese to observe a pre-Election Act of Prayer for Zimbabwe on Sunday 28 July. There will be special events at Southwark Cathedral that day.'*

ACTSA

informs us that other churches in the Southwark diocese are also creating trees of hope for Zimbabwe.

- Vigil management team member Fungayi Mabhunu was interviewed about the forthcoming elections on Arise TV. To watch the broadcast, check: <http://www.arise.tv/arise-news-show/arise-news-09-07-2436>
- Fungayi's interview is about 35 minutes into the broadcast.

· Thanks to Sihle Sibanda, Egenia Mushonga, Lorrein Gumise, and June, Ashley and Thomas Pedzeni who were at the Embassy at the start of the Vigil to help set up.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website – they cannot be downloaded from the slideshow on the front page of the Zimvigil website.

FOR THE RECORD: 30 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR Central London branch meeting.** Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July from 11 am – 1 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA (see forum notice for directions).
  
- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF).** Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July from 6.30 – 9.30 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. The Strand is the same road as the Vigil. From the Vigil it's about a 10 minute walk, in the direction away from Trafalgar Square. The Strand Continental is situated on the south side of the Strand between Somerset House and the turn off onto Waterloo Bridge. The entrance is marked by a big sign high above and a sign for its famous Indian restaurant at street level. It's next to a newsagent. Nearest underground: Temple (District and Circle lines) and Holborn.
  
- **ROHR North East Region Zimbabwe Day Fundraising Event.** Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July from 1 – 8 pm. Venue: Benton Community Centre, 17 Edenbridge Crescent, Benton, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE12 8EP. Food, drink & entertainment. Contact Givemore Chitengu 07912747744, Kennedy Makonese 07979914429, Tapiwa Semwayo 07412236229, Collet Dube 07951516566.
  
- **Demonstration for Democracy.** Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July. The Vigil is to join Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) in a protest outside the Zimbabwe Embassy on election day. More details to follow.
  
- **Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2012** can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/the-vigil-diary/467-vigil-highlights-2012>  
· Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2012 Highlights page.
  
- **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 the views and opinions of ROHR.

- **Facebook pages:**
  
- Vigil: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8157345519&ref=ts>
  
- ZAF: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>
  
- ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/ROHR-Zimbabwe-Restoration-of-Human-Rights/301811392835>
  
- **Vigil Myspace page:** <http://www.myspace.com/zimbabwевigil>.
  
- **Useful websites:** [www.zanupfcrime.com](http://www.zanupfcrime.com) which reports on Zanu PF abuses and [www.ipaidabribe.org.zw](http://www.ipaidabribe.org.zw) where people can report corruption in Zimbabwe