

## Zhing Zhong Elections – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 17th August 2013

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 22 August 2013 08:26 - Last Updated Thursday, 22 August 2013 08:26

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Supporters of the Vigil and associated groups have agreed to arrange an all-stakeholder meeting in London in October to give the diaspora an opportunity to discuss ways of working together to reclaim Zimbabwe.

The decision was made at the Zimbabwe Action Forum held after the regular Saturday Vigil outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London.

The Forum was addressed by Dewa Mavhinga, Senior Researcher for Africa with Human Rights Watch and a former regional co-ordinator for Southern Africa of the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition. He was in Zimbabwe for the elections and gave us a firsthand account of how they were rigged. Mr Mavhinga, who has had meetings with the leadership of most SADC countries, said they had made it clear that, as long as the violence of 2008 was avoided, they would rubberstamp the election outcome.

The MDC, he said, had invested too much hope in SADC. 'Zimbabweans must liberate themselves. You can't sub-contract it. If you expect action from regional bodies you need action in Zimbabwe.'

Ephraim Tapa, head of ROHR Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Yes We Can Movement, said he's been approached by several groups keen to join forces behind a diaspora initiative. It was

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hoped the all-stakeholder conference would create a broad-based movement with agreed values.

A co-ordinating team was set up to work on the logistics of the planned conference consisting of: Patrick Musami, Fungayi Mabhunu, Charles Dumisani Ndlovu, Nkosikona Tshabangu, Jonathan Kariwoh and David Kadzutu.

The meeting applauded the response by the poet Chenjerai Hove to an article congratulating Botswana for rejecting the results of the elections. Mr Hove said: 'Botswana is giving a great example in order to reject the notion that we have something called 'free and fair elections by African standards.' Why should Africans allow such a stupid claim which suggests that 'African standards' are okay for 'these savages' if they kill two hundred people instead of one million. We are not sub-humans who should be given a different set of electoral rules and justice. We cannot allow ourselves to be treated as 'savages' who don't have to comply with simple and reasonable ideas of justice. If we accept to treat ourselves as sub-human, the rest of the world will treat us as rubbish. When are we going to demand the highest quality of everything as a people? Our governments allow the importation of Chinese zhing zhongs, cheap products which should be in the garbage dump because we treat ourselves as sub-standard human beings who are doomed to eat even rotten food.'

The forum agreed that the Vigil would deliver a letter to the Botswana High Commission in London next Saturday thanking President Khama for his brave and lonely support for credible, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

The meeting also challenged the MDC to refuse to take up their seats in Parliament – although there was a feeling that the more likely outcome would be that the MDC would throw in its lot with another Zanu PF-dominated GNU.

The meeting also urged the British government not to recognise the election results and, if necessary, suspend diplomatic relations and the UK's aid of about £100 million a year.

During the Vigil, activist Martin Chinyanga laid flowers on the Embassy doorstep in tribute to 29-year-old Rebecca Mafukeni, an MDC activist who was arrested along with about 30 others over the alleged murder of a policeman and died recently in prison. He posted the following notice on the Embassy wall. 'RIP Rebecca Mafukeni. May her soul rest in eternal peace. Arrested for a crime she never committed. Remanded in prison for two years as the state fails to determine her and her co-accused's fate. In their innocence they lost out nearly three years of their freedom. Is this what the people of Zimbabwe voted for? Is this what the people of Zimbabwe deserve? We are deeply pained by the young people whose hopes, dreams and aspirations are dashed because old people do not want to give the way to the young to also learn and grow in wisdom, knowledge and experience. Your fight, Rebecca, remains our fight.' Ephraim Tapa commented that this death was the fault of the whole of the inclusive government.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/> . 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 a video of today's vigil check:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9aR-tCMY2U&feature=youtu.be>

FOR THE RECORD: 57 signed the register.

### EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR Executive meeting.** Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September at 11 am. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.
- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF).** Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September 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.
- **Zimbabwe Yes We Can meeting.** Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September from 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.
- **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,

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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