

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 06 July 2014 15:43 -

The Home Office has apologised to the Vigil for comments made by an official in a letter turning down an asylum request by a Vigil supporter. The official alleged that anyone could get a letter from the Vigil in support of their asylum claim on payment of a charge so the Vigil letter would be disregarded.

We wrote to the Home Office complaining about this libellous accusation, which derived from a malicious web article about the Vigil, pointing out that the Home Office had admitted it was unfounded three years ago.

Now, in an official letter, a Home Office manager writes 'I apologise for the offence this has caused, and I appreciate that this is not the first time that we have had to apologise for use of this article by our decision makers. We have a proud history of granting asylum to those who need it and we consider every claim on its individual merits. Please be assured that our decision makers do not take a cut-and-paste approach to considering individual claims for asylum.'

The letter goes on to say: 'We recognise the Zimbabwe Vigil as a UK-based pressure group representing the Zimbabwean diaspora.' It adds that the allegations made in the web article 'are unfounded and should not be considered as reliable information.' The letter says officials have been reminded that they should disregard the article in assessing what weight to give to letters written by the Zimbabwe Vigil.

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For the full text of the letter see our campaigns page: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/599-letter-from-uk-visas-and-immigration--30062014>

A meeting of the bi-monthly Zimbabwe Action Forum after the Vigil passed the following motion: *The Vigil thanks the Home Office for its reassuring letter. We would, nevertheless, welcome a meeting with the Home Office to discuss its handling of issues to do with Zimbabwean refugees in the UK. One of the reasons we would like such a meeting is to express our anxiety at the growing presence of Zanu PF people in the UK who seem to have been emboldened to emerge into the daylight by the EU's eagerness to reengage with Mugabe's illegal regime. We would point out, for instance, that Zanu PF and Mashonaland West boss Temba Mliswa, a notorious crook, apparently has his parents safely in the UK (see: Exiled businessman threatens to take Mliswa to the ICC, http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit_w_exiled-businessman-threatens-to-take-mliswa-to-icc-the-zimbabwean/). One of the comments on the article, by 'Dave', says that of the six people who kicked him off his farm at gunpoint four are now in the UK.*

Other points

The Vigil was interested to see that the Zimbabwean all-white pro-Mugabe group has welcomed the EU's conciliatory policy to Zimbabwe. We wonder how they regard Mugabe's latest racist rant demanding that no white person should ever farm in Zimbabwe again, even working for a black boss (see: Whites anti-sanctions group backs Zimbabwe – http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit_m_whites-anti-sanctions-group-backs-eu-2/).

Thanks to Helen Rukambiro, Deborah Harry and Cecilia Tandi for arriving early to help set up today and to Mary Muteyerwa and David Kudzutu who helped set up last week. Apologies for

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not mentioning them then.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwewigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website.

FOR THE RECORD: 29 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

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Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF). Saturday 19th July from 6.15 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. 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 sign at street level. It's between a newsagent and Pizza Express. Nearest underground: Temple (District and Circle lines) and Holborn.

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ROHR Central London general meeting. Saturday 19th July from 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.

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Zimbabwe Yes We Can meeting. Saturday 26th July at 12 noon. Venue: The Theodore Bullfrog, 26-30 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL.

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ROHR Executive Committee meeting. Saturday 2nd August from 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.

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ROHR Reading Branch Fundraiser. Saturday 9th August from 5 – 11 pm. Venue: Pakistani Community Centre, Park Hall, London Road, Reading RG1 2PA. Tickets: £6.50 or £10 for two. Drinks, BBQ, Disco. Contact: Eric 07532 021 348. For flyer, check:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/90023465@N03/sets/72157645522190494/>

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Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2013 can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/560-vigil-highlights-2013>
. Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2013 Highlights page.

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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.

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Zimbabwe Yes We Can Movement holds monthly meetings in London as the political face of ROHR and the Vigil.

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The Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF) meets twice a month after the Vigil to discuss ways to help those back in Zimbabwe to fight oppression and achieve true democracy

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For the Zimbabwean Diary check: <http://www.thezimbabwean.co/entertainment/film-and-theatre/71964/welcome-to-whats-on.html>

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Facebook pages:

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Vigil: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8157345519&ref=ts>

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

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ROHR: <https://www.facebook.co/pages/ROHR-Zimbabwe-Restoration-of-Human-Rights/301811392835>