

Written by Administrator

Monday, 06 June 2016 09:53 - Last Updated Monday, 06 June 2016 09:53

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Check <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-rgLB-sAuw&feature=youtu.be> for video taken at the vigil expressing solidarity with #ThisFlag campaign.

The Vigil salutes the activists who are staging a sixteen-day round-the-clock protest in Harare's Africa Unity Square against Zimbabwe's worsening economic and political situation.

The protest was launched on Wednesday when eleven people from the Zimbabwe Activist Alliance and other civil society organisations bedded down in the square. They said they wanted to raise a number of issues for public debate. Lynette Mudehwe, coordinator of the Activist Alliance, called for the rejection of the bond notes to be introduced by the Reserve Bank in October and said people should also not accept bank withdrawals being limited to only \$50 a day.

**Lynda Masarira, leader of Zimbabwe Women in Politics Alliance, said the government had shown it did not care for the needs of the people especially women. She complained of 'black oppression'. The Secretary-General of the National Students' Union, Makomborero Haruzivishe, also joined the protest, saying they were tired of watching while**

**the fruits of Zimbabwe's independence were being squandered by just a few individuals. (see: [Camping Zimbabwe Protesters Vow to Push for Social, Economic Reform – http://www.voazimbabwe.com/a/zimbabwe-activists-16-days-of-activism/3359085.html](http://www.voazimbabwe.com/a/zimbabwe-activists-16-days-of-activism/3359085.html)**

).

The Occupy Africa Unity Square facebook page today said they had come under attack early on Saturday morning by fourteen men. It said Lynette was grabbed and her ID taken out of her wallet. After inspecting it, they wiped their fingerprints off and returned it, holding it with what they had wiped it with, clearly indicating that they were trained. One disabled woman, Naspar Manyau, was indecently assaulted and tipped from her wheelchair towards the stove at which she had been warming her feet. The men grabbed blankets and other possessions and several activists were attacked and injured. Patson Dzamara, brother of the missing activist Itai, who was sleeping nearby managed to recover the blankets (see:

<https://www.facebook.com/Occupy-Africa-Unity-Square-386483044833537/>

and for a video of the activists outlining their concerns / demands, see:

<https://youtu.be/4vEOwCzBzMk>

).

A meeting of the Zimbabwe Action Forum after the Vigil passed a resolution of solidarity with the demonstrators: *'The Zimbabwe Action Forum salutes the activists taking part in the sixteen-day round-the-clock protest in Africa Unity Square in Harare. We have demonstrated outside Zimbabwe House in London for fourteen years in support of human rights and free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. Only by reclaiming our human rights as guaranteed by the constitution can we achieve change and rebuild our country. Your action encourages us to continue the struggle for justice, equality and a better future for our children.'*

Patson Dzamara on Monday released a photograph of what looked like his brother with his hands tied behind his back and a bandage around his head. He told a news conference: ‘Some individuals from within the evil establishment volunteered information regarding who abducted Itai Dzamara, why and where he was kept. The heinous act was executed by state security agents, in particular the military intelligence.’ He went on: ‘We can’t allow Mr Mugabe’s Mafia to continue abusing us like this. This is abnormal and we are not going to normalise the abnormal.’ (see: <http://nehandaradio.com/2016/05/30/first-ever-picture-itai-dzamara-custody/> ).

Even Zanu PF’s Minister of Higher Education, Professor Jonathan Moyo, has changed his tune and now admits that Dzamara was abducted. But he says he hasn’t a clue who did it . . . Clearly the professor is not as bright as he thinks he is!

**The revived Occupy Africa Unity Square protest, together with Pastor Evan Mawawire’s #ThisFlag campaign with its ‘hatichada, hadichatya’ slogan, reflects widening unrest at the government’s failure to turn around the economy. Some fifty civic organisations under the banner of the Zimbabwe National Agreement Platform have also urged the public to reject bond notes. Spokesman Bishop Ancelimo Magaya said that following the illegitimate 2013 elections Zanu PF wanted to reintroduce the Zimbabwe dollar to fund their 2018 election campaign. ‘The decision to print bond notes will not help anyone but the political leaders. There is no positive to bond notes and we are certain they are externalising their money. They are making massive withdrawals to relocate their wealth outside the**

country.' See:

<http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit-m-reject-bond-notes-civil-society-groups/>

).

A different picture was not surprisingly given by the Chief Secretary to the President Dr Misheck Sibanda who said the country was on the verge of economic recovery ( <http://www.herald.co.zw/economy-on-the-mend-says-govt-2/>

). The Vigil notes that his optimism flies in the face of all evidence, including indications from China that it will suspend the so-called megadeals involving energy and infrastructure investment in protest at the booting out of the Chinese from the Chiadza diamond fields. The Chinese have taken the government to court over the matter and have complained of a lack of respect for property rights (see:

<http://www.theindependent.co.zw/2016/06/03/china-zim-clash-diamonds/>

).

## Other points

· The Zimbabwe Action Forum decided to present our current petition to the Botswana High Commission in London at 11 am on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June. The petition reads: ***'To the Chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), President Ian Khama of Botswana***

We

*wish to alert you to alarming threats by the military in Zimbabwe to employ violence against people opposed to the Zanu PF regime. The threats come amid worsening splits in the party and rising popular outrage at the demolition of the homes of the poor and the imposition of pre-paid water meters for an unreliable supply. The Commander of the Presidential Guard Brigadier-General Anselem Sanyatwe has threatened force to stop ousted Vice-President Joice Mujuru from opposing Mugabe. He told his troops 'Professionalism is over . . . Zanu PF should rule forever'. The national army commander Lieutenant-General Phillip Sibanda later warned that 'the Zanu PF axe' could be wielded again. You will be aware that Zimbabwe has recently been judged the worst governed country in SADC. Bad governance has destroyed the*

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*economy, reducing people to desperation while the ruling elite drive past in their luxury cars from their mansions to the expensive restaurants. There is growing resentment. Provocative moves by the military could cause an explosion of anger. We call on SADC to prepare to intervene to stop a meltdown.'*

· Thanks to those who came early to help set up: Fungayi Mabhunu, Phillip Mahlahla, Cephas Maswoswa, Eletha Mpofo, Roseline Mukucha and Mduduzi Ndlovu. Thanks to Roseline, Eletha and Nancy for looking after the front table. Thanks to Phillip, Cephas and Mduduzi for putting up the banners. Once again delicious food was cooked by members of ROHR Central London Branch: Elector Zvorwadza and Mavis Chisvo. The food was served by Mavis and Eletha. Cephas provided paper plates and serviettes and Elector brought spoons.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website. For videos of Vigils and other events, check the ROHR facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/www.rohrzimbabwe.org/videos?fref=photo>

**FOR THE RECORD:** 27 signed the register.

### EVENTS AND NOTICES:

· **Monthly Itai Dzamara protest** Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June from 2 – 6 pm outside the Zimbabwe

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Embassy in London. The protest is to mark fifteen months since Dzamara's abduction by intelligence agents.

- **Swaziland Vigil.** Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.
- **ROHR National Executive meeting.** Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July from 11 am to 1.30 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. For directions see below.
- **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 us.
- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF).** Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 a shop. Nearest underground: Temple (District and Circle lines) and Holborn.
- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF)** meets regularly after the Vigil to discuss ways to help those back in Zimbabwe to fight oppression and achieve true democracy.
- **Protest at Zimbabwe Conference 2016 'Rebooting and Rebuilding'.** Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July from 8 am onwards. Venue: outside DLA Piper UK LLP, 3 Noble Street, London EC2V 7EE. More information as our plans firm up.

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

- **Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2015** can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/746-zimbabwe-vigil-highlights-2015>

- Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2015 Highlights page.

- **Facebook pages:**

Vigil: <https://www.facebook.com/zimbabwevigil>

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

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