

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/34203611685/sizes/m/>

'37 years of Zimbabwe Independence' read one poster. '37 years of Mugabe slavery' read another. Exiles in the UK marked Zimbabwe's national day with a mixture of anticipation and fear – the bitter fruits of 'liberation'.

The fear was that – despite news of reconciliation between Tsvangirai and Welshman Ncube – the opposition was facing an insurmountable obstacle posed by Zanu PF's control of the election process. 'The 2018 election results are already declared', said former Finance Minister Tendai Biti at a meeting in Parliament in London. He said he could not support Tsvangirai and was in favour of a transitional authority to rescue the wreckage of Zimbabwe and prepare for real elections. He insisted that Mnangagwa – the favourite of the West – could play no prominent role in Zimbabwe's future because of his bloodstained record.

The Vigil has already petitioned the UN to prepare for this to prevent chaos when Mugabe goes. But, as we expected, the UN has not responded. It seems gangster regimes can last forever. It is clear that until international television crews show emaciated bodies lying in the streets or slaughtered opposition members, the UN is content with how the Mugabe mafia is running the country. Indeed, they are prepared to prop it up with aid.

A snapshot of the situation in Zimbabwe was messaged to the Vigil today: *'Special Appeal Zimbabweans in the Diaspora. Just arrived back from Zim a day ago from attending a family funeral and wld like to let u know that the Cash situation home is really bad. Pliz if u can remember your families back home - it's heartbreaking. Most Banks are giving only \$20 a day as and when it's available. Everyone is encouraged to swipe their cards to pay for goods or fuel but there are instances when one needs cash where cards are not acceptable. Most people spend hours or days going back & forth to the bank and only to get nothing at the end of the day. I broke down in tears whilst doing last minute shopping in one Big Supermarket to bring back and at every corner or aisle within the shop pple were begging for money / cash to just catch a kombi to go home or to travel back to the rural areas. These were well suited working class Pple but reduced to be Beggars - No cash. I am sure every little u can send to your beloved wld help. Surprise someone and God will also surprise u with answers to your cries!! Try Western Union coz it still gives cash to its customers.'*

The Vigil's good news was the success of the Zimpap launch in Mashonaland East in which our sister organisation the Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe took a leading role. ROHR in the UK, which raised funds for the launch, received the following message from Zimbabwe: *'Today ROHR Zimbabwe and Mash East province made history in Zimbabwe and Africa at large by recruiting more than 500 civilian peace keepers in Mashonaland East (Goromonzi West). The ceremony was attended by hundreds of people across the political divide, including village heads, headman, councillors, business people, CBOs, pastors and soccer players. It was a colourful event and a unique program to Zimbabwe. We are launching ZimPAP in all the 10 provinces, and we are ready to see ROHR roaring in communities. Mashonaland East and ROHR Zimbabwe Chapter will forever be thankful. Thank you, maita tatenda, siyabonga. Zvirambe zvakadaro in all provinces, Together we can. ROHR for peace justice and freedom.'*

For stories about the launch, see:

<http://pamushana.co.zw/zimbabwe-peace-actors-platforms-launch-mash-east-rohr-zimbabwe-international/#sthash.OImpN751.dpbs>

and

<http://www.zimmetro.com/headman-vows-to-end-political-violence/>

. For photos, see:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/albums/72157679462919964>

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Other points

- The Vigil was pleased that Tendai Biti, at the meeting in Parliament, wore the Vigil cap which was given to him by Vigil co-ordinator Fungayi Mabhunu.
- It was good to welcome back Netsayi Makarichi who was released from detention.
- Particular thanks to Roseline Mukucha who, with others, stepped up, in the absence of one of the Vigil co-ordinators and to Daizy Fabian for making posters for our event to mark Zimbabwe's 37th 'non-independence' day.
- Thanks to those who arrived early to help set up: Mercy Bayipayi, Zodwa Bhebhe, Abigail Chidavayenzi, Daizy Fabian, Deborah Harry, Fungayi Mabhunu, Phillip Mahlahla, Alice Majola, Chido Makawa, Heather Makawa, Roseline Mukucha, Alfredy Mukuvare, Margaret Munenge, Patience Muyeye, Lydia Muzvidziwa, Nontokozo Ncube, Siphon Ndlovu, Tsitsi Ndoro, Rumbidzayi Sambana, Maxmus Savanhu, Ephraim Tapa and Portiah Tobaiwa. Thanks to Roseline, Patience and Cathrine Musa for looking after the front table, to Abigail and Nontokozo for handing out flyers and selling wristbands and to Phillip, Alfredy, Zodwa and Maxmus for putting up the banners. Thanks also to Deborah and Mercy Bayipayi for bringing sadza to raise funds for the Zimpap Project.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwevigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website. The facebook page for our sister organisation Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR) (

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

) has been hijacked by destructive elements from a group calling itself ZHRO. Please be advised that any postings on this page are not posted by ROHR.

FOR THE RECORD: 37 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **Swaziland Vigil.** Saturday 29th April from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.
 - **ROHR National Executive meeting.** Saturday 6th May from 11 am. Venue: The Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX.
 - **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 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. 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)** meets regularly after the Vigil to discuss ways to help those back in Zimbabwe to fight oppression and achieve true democracy.
 - **Zimbabwe Yes We Can Movement** holds meetings in London as the political face of ROHR and the Vigil.
 - **Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2016** can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/843-zimbabwe-vigil-highlights-2016>
 - . Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2016 Highlights page.
 - **Facebook pages:** Vigil: <https://www.facebook.com/zimbabwevigil> ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/Restoration-of-Human-Rights-ROHR-Zimbabwe-International-370825706588551/>
- ZAF:
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>