

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 23 July 2017 11:34 -

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You must hand it to the Mugabes – they know how to party. No expense spared. No distance too far to travel. No diamond ring too big. No guilt. No conscience. In fact, no hypocrisy because they don't understand the word. To them it's entitlement.

It was the sense of entitlement that reeked more than the smell of mbanje from the luxury apartment in the affluent Sandton area of Johannesburg from which Mugabe's party-loving sons Robert Jnr and Chatunga Bellamine were evicted after a late night brawl over women which left one of their guards with a broken leg and shattered arm and the apartment trashed with cigarette burns, whisky, champagne and red wine-soiled carpets.

One source quoted by the Zimbabwe Independent said the boys lived 'a carefree life of luxury, partying and over-indulgence. Their driver would wait dutifully on call in one of the luxury vehicles, often sleeping there, awaiting a command to drive them to wherever they wanted. It was rarely the case that Robert Jnr emerged for morning lectures which he was supposed to attend at the University of Johannesburg'.

Mugabe's non-stop party – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 22nd July 2017

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Money never seems to be a problem with the lucky Mugabe family. Zimbabwe may be rated poor by some misguided Western critics but for the Mugabes it has always been a land of milk and honey. The President himself, continuing his neurotic attempts to escape the country, spent \$4,588,990 on travel in January, \$ 4,250,630 in February and \$4,119,638 in March – \$13 million in the last 3 months for which data is available (see: <http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit-m-chefs-blow-14m-in-three-months/>)
. Not bad for a 93 year-old who can hardly walk.

Where does the money come from? One well-informed observer says the diaspora provides as much as a third of Zimbabwe's income, with minerals and tobacco providing the rest. So Mugabe and his grotesque family are basically having a non-stop party at the diaspora's expense.

The Constitutional Court's refusal this week to recognise the diaspora vote provided for in the yet-to-be implemented 2013 Constitution and the massive irregularities exposed in last week's Chiwundura by-election confront the diaspora with an uncomfortable challenge. Should we choke off what amounts to our funding of the regime?

As the Zimbabwean diaspora becomes acculturated in their new countries, bonds with home will inevitably weaken. One instance: it used to be routine at the Vigil to collect money to help pay for the repatriation of the bodies of Zimbabweans who had died in the UK. Now more and more people are being buried here instead – their new homeland, where their children are going to school.

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Another sign of change is the mounting impatience with the insatiable demands being made on the diaspora by their families back home. It's no longer just money for food, medicine and school fees: it's computers and high end telephones when most Zimbabweans in the diaspora work long hours just to survive themselves – perhaps giving a too positive view of their situation to loved ones back in Zimbabwe. And, as a pastor in the Bulawayo area tells us, there is widespread jealousy of people who receive support from abroad (see: <http://zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/870-interview-with-matabeleland-pastor>).

We at the Vigil expect Zanu PF to manipulate the elections next year and we expect the bogus results to be endorsed by Africa and the outside world as usual. So what do we do next: can we cut we cut off diaspora funding for Mugabe's non-stop party? What alternative is there if we are to save Zimbabwe from Zanu PF?

Thanks

Thanks to those who arrived early to help set up: Abigail Chidavayenzi, Flemming Diza, Sibongile Gumbo, Isabell Gwatidzo, Deborah Harry, Josephine Jombe, Jonathan Kariwo, Fungayi Mabhunu, Shiella Matiza, Erica Mukosha, Roseline Mukucha, Alfredy Mukuvare, Margaret Munenge, Richard Munyama, Charles Mupawose, Patience Muyeye and Benjamin Semwayo. Thanks to Roseline, Josephine and Patience for looking after the front table, to Abigail, Deborah and Bianca for handing out flyers and selling wristbands and to Alfredy, Jonathan, Charles, Flemming, Ndodana Maphosa and Fungayi for putting up the banners. Thanks also to Isabell Gwatidzo for selling tickets for the ROHR Slough branch fundraiser dinner in aid of ZimPAP.

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For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> . 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: 32 signed the register.

EVENTS AND NOTICES:

- **ROHR Slough branch fundraiser.** Saturday 29th July from 17.30 – 23.30. Come and share an all-you-can-eat buffet. Tickets: £25 adults, £10 children 5-12 yrs, £15 13-17 yrs. Venue: Zaza's Restaurant, 108A Whitechapel Rd, London E1 1JE. Contact Patricia Masamba (Chair) 07708116625, Casper Nyamakura (Fundraiser) 07577666912. Nkosinkona Tshabangu (Vice Chair) 07539658455 and Fungisai Mupandira (Organising Secretary) 07468504393
- **ROHR National Executive meeting.** Saturday 5th August 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 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.** Saturday 5th August from 6.30 pm. Venue: The Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX. We will move to the RFH at the end of the Vigil at 6 pm.
- **ZAF** meets regularly after the Vigil to discuss ways to help those back in Zimbabwe to fight oppression and achieve true democracy.
- **Swaziland Vigil.** Saturday 5th August from 10 am to 1 pm outside the Swaziland High Commission, 20 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB.

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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 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/zimbabwевigil>
 - ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/Restoration-of-Human-Rights-ROHR-Zimbabwe-International-370825706588551/>
 - ZAF: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>