

London Protest at Zimbabwe Repression

Written by Administrator

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Zimbabwe Vigil press release – 17th January 2019

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Britain has condemned the brutal repression of anti-government protesters in Zimbabwe and called for restraint by security forces.

The Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin said the use of live ammunition was ‘deeply concerning and disproportionate’. She added that the Zimbabwean government must learn lessons from the post-election violence last year and implement the recommendations of the subsequent commission of inquiry.

Zimbabwean exiles are to demonstrate outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London on Saturday, 19th January, in protest at the violence during a three-day work stayaway following an announcement by President Mnangagwa last weekend that fuel prices were being more than doubled.

Details of the widespread violence have leaked out despite internet and social media accounts being blocked. Zimbabwe’s largest telecommunications company Econet told customers it had shut off internet access at the government’s request.

Amnesty International said eight civilians are believed to have been shot dead in clashes with the security forces and a doctors’ group said it had treated 68 people for gunshot wounds and many others for injuries from beatings.

The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights said hundreds of people had been arrested, including Pastor Evan Mawarire, leader of the #ThisFlag movement, who was accused of inciting violence.

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The MDC said Zanu PF supporters had thrown petrol bombs at its Harare headquarters. In Bulawayo the Mthwakazi Republic Party said that its secretary was in a critical condition after being shot in the head in front of his children after accusing security officials of heavy-handedness in the protests.

For his part, President Mnangagwa, who is continuing another tour overseas trying to raise money, said: 'What we have witnessed is violence and vandalism instead of peaceful protests'.

Africa Minister Baldwin expressed her concern to the Zimbabwean Ambassador and said Britain would continue to put pressure on Zimbabwe to uphold the rule of law and human rights.

Zimbabwe Vigil activists will be outside the Embassy from 12 noon to 6 pm in solidarity with victims of violence and to draw attention to the worsening situation in Zimbabwe.

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