

An extraordinary day which saw Morgan Tsvangirai stomping out of a diaspora assembly in Southwark Cathedral in south London when his speech was booed.

The Vigil was there to greet his convoy when it arrived. Displaying our banners 'No to Mugabe, No to Starvation' and 'End Murder, Rape and Torture in Zimbabwe', we danced and drummed and sang 'To save Zimbabwe, Mugabe must go'.

The Prime Minister could not have failed to see our posters 'Protect Human Rights Activists', 'Restore the Rule of Law' and 'End Farm Invasions'.

Our purpose was to welcome Tsvangirai but also to remind him of what people in the diaspora think needs to be done if Zimbabwe is to win the confidence of donors and investors and be a welcoming place for returning exiles.

Tsvangirai was given a big ovation when he emerged in the cathedral after prayers and a reading from the Acts of the Apostles by Vigil management team member Gugu Tutani – 'I have surely seen the mistreatment of my people'.

But he was jeered by the audience when he called on them to return home. As far as they were concerned he was telling them to go back to a place with no jobs or rule of law and continuing human rights abuses.

There were chants of 'Mugabe must go'. The much-heralded meeting ended abruptly because of the challenging atmosphere. (see link: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/8110939.stm>).

Despite this distraction, the Vigil outside the Embassy took place as normal. We were not surprised that Tsvangirai did not stop by on his way to a £75 a head dinner for exiled Zimbabweans.

Some comments from the many disappointed and angry Zimbabweans who came on from the Cathedral to the Vigil, many of them first-timers:

Zimbabwe Vigil Diary – 20th June 2009

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 21 June 2009 15:16 - Last Updated Monday, 29 June 2009 22:52

- 'When Morgan said "the schools have re-opened" everybody cheered. When Morgan said "the hospitals have re-opened" everybody was silent. When he said "there is peace in Zimbabwe" everyone heckled and booed and you could taste the anger in the air. One lady asked the question "if there are goods in the shops and the schools have re-opened where will everyone get money to buy food and send their children to school" – this was not answered.'
- 'He was speaking like Mugabe. He is saying everything is now ok.'
- 'The MDC expects everyone to agree or they are treated as an enemy'. 'We have been betrayed by Tsvangirai'.
- 'Today Tsvangirai was shot down in flames by Zimbabweans in the UK diaspora.'
- 'How can Tsvangirai encourage people to go home when all his children are in the diaspora.'

Thanks to:

- Fungayi Mabhunu for leaving the cathedral meeting early to make sure he was on time to open the Vigil.
- Jenatry Muranganwa for his impassioned leading of the singing and dancing in the Vigil demonstration outside the cathedral.
- Arnold Kuwewa for single-handedly looked after the merchandise and register until joined by others who had attended the Tsvangirai meeting.

It was good to welcome back Geraldine Takundwa who has been seriously ill for a long time.

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

FOR THE RECORD: about 300 signed the register.

FOR YOUR DIARY:

· **Service of solidarity with the torture survivors of Zimbabwe.** Friday 26th June from 7 – 8 pm. Venue: Southwark Cathedral. This is the 8th year the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum has marked UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. For more information, visit:

<http://www.hrforumzim.com>

- **Zimbabwe Vigil Forum.** Saturday 27th June at 6.30 pm. Upstairs at the Theodore Bullfrog, John Adam Street, Lo

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· **ROHR Leeds general meeting.** Saturday 27th June from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: Dock Green Inn, Leeds LS9 7AB. Contact: Wonder M Mubaiwa 07958758568, Donna Mugoni 07533 259373 or B Sikosana 07940181761.

· **ROHR Chelmsford general meeting.** Saturday 27th June from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: Springfield Parish Hall (centre), Chelmsford, CM1 6GX

Transport from train station to the venue provided. Contact: Faith Benesi 07958650670, Tobokwa Malikongwa 07533660621, Richard Mupunga 07540807347, Christina Zanji 07535791464 or Nyasha Muzambi 07908429361 or Paradzai Mapfumo 07915926323/07932216070

· **ROHR Bedford general meeting.** Saturday 4th July from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: 64 Magnolia Close, Kempstone, Bedford, MK42 7NR. ROHR President, executive and a well known Immigration lawyer present. Special Guest the MP for Bedford

. Contact: Daniel Manyanga 07939184723, Sifelani Dziva 07936551476, Allen Gapara 07834231749, R Mwandira 07903434431 or Paradzai Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **ROHR Hatfield general meeting.** Saturday 11th July from 1.30 – 6 pm. Venue: Lord William Cecil Memorial Hall, 1 French Horn Lane, Hatfield, Herts AL10 8AQ. Present ROHR President, Executive, a well known lawyer: Special guests Hatfield & Welwyn MP Mr Grant Shapp and Mr Geoffrey Van Orden, Europe MP. A substantive committee to be elected. Contact:

Paradzai Mapfumo on 07915926323 / 07932216070, Clarkson Shumbanhete 07958550506, Mary Muradzikwa 07920170620, Rewai Chikungwa 07862246960 or Emilia Muradzikwa 07861712566

· **Zimbabwe Vigil Forum.** Saturday 25th July at 6.30 pm. Upstairs at the Theodore Bullfrog, John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HL.

· **Zimbabwe Association's Women's Weekly Drop-in Centre.** Fridays 10.30 am – 4 pm. Venue: The Fire Station Community and ICT Centre, 84 Mayton Street

, London

N7 6QT, Tel: 020 7607 9764. Nearest underground: Finsbury

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. For more information contact the Zimbabwe Association 020 7549 0355 (open Tuesdays and Thursdays).