

The fruits of Obama's election to the US Presidency may be stranger than imagined. As we hastily set up the Vigil in anticipation of rain, one of our first visitors was an Afro-American political activist from Atlanta who showed great interest in our protest. He spoke to Fungayi Mabhunu of the Vigil management team about our demands for free and fair elections, restoration of the rule of law and liberty of the press and constitutional progress.

There has somehow been an expectation that Obama would side with the African elite. His visit to Ghana and the appointments to his African diplomatic team make clear, however, that he will be an even tougher proposition than Mr Bush for recidivists such as Mugabe.

He appears to be a man with genuine compassion for the suffering of ordinary people and the Vigil was happy when he refused to receive a minister from Zanu-PF who tried to insinuate himself into the White House on the back of Morgan Tsvangirai. We trust President Obama will put pressure on SADC to enforce the GPA which is now due for review.

Five months into the Unity Government the agreement has still not been observed: no free media, no rule of law, no end to the lies and now the military refusing to relinquish their bloody grip on the Marange diamonds.

And what do we get from our friends in South Africa? An old Zimbabwean woman – blind and deaf – is arrested in Johannesburg and thrown into jail for loitering. She was sleeping on the pavement.

God forgive you  
South Africa  
and your Home Affairs spokesman who blames  
Zimbabwe  
's problems on 'sanctions'.

We look to President Obama to see through these lies and special pleading and insist that all partners to the GPA – including SADC – live up to their obligations.

The management team met after the Vigil to discuss how we should send home the money we

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have collected for education in Zimbabwe. As many of you know we have received more than £800 raised by a sponsored run in the London Marathon by Steve Garvey, a teacher at the Dolphin

School

in South London, and other projects by his pupils. It was decided to spend the money on stationery and sports equipment for schools in Zimbabwe

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It was felt that the money would go further if equipment was purchased in the UK

. We will keep you informed of progress on this.

It was good to see a lot of old friends including Jennifer Hukura who has attended 33 times in the last year. We value her consistent support. Thanks also to Kelvin Kamupira for helping the team to manage the register and to Fungayi who went miles out his way to deliver the Vigil camera so pictures could be put on the internet.

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

**FOR THE RECORD:** 158 signed the register.

### FOR YOUR DIARY:

• **ROHR West Bromwich general meeting.** Saturday, 18th July from 1.30 – 5.30 pm. Venue: St Peters Church Hall, Whitehall

Road, West Bromwich B70 0HF. ROHR President, Executive and a well known lawyer present. Invited guest Cllr Simon Hackett. Contact Pamela Dunduru 07958386718, Diana Mtendereki 07768682961, Peter Nkomo 07817096594 or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

• **ROHR South East London general meeting.** Saturday, 18th July from 1.00 – 5.00 pm. Venue: 18 Sydenham Road, London SE

26 5QW

. Contact Priscilla Chitsinde 07804696328, Wellington

Rupere 07838153217 or Courage Chiromo 07894586005.

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

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· **ROHR Brighton general meeting.** Saturday, 25th July from 2.00 – 4.00 pm. Venue: The Community Base,  
Queens  
Road

,  
Brighton

. Contact Sinikiwe Dube  
07824668763  
, Sehlaphi Mpofu  
07786164808

,  
Wellington

Mamvura  
07956870547  
or Phylis Chibanguza  
07908406069

· **ROHR Stoke-On-Trent general meeting.** Saturday 1st August 2009 2 00 – 5 00 pm.  
Venue: Mandela

Club Restaurant, 66-68 Piccadilly Street

, Hanley,

Stoke-On-Trent

ST1 1HX. Contact: Pauline Mutema

07850462301

, Joana Zhira

07845896347

and Farirai Muchibwa

07746628397

· **ROHR Hayes and Northolt launch meeting.** Saturday 8th August from 1.30 – 5.30 pm.

Venue: Brookside Community Centre, Hayes UB4 0PL. ROHR President and a well known lawyer present. Contact Snodia Chihowa 07852921523, Juliet Musandiriri 07551319522, Rodah Kuhlengisa 07958205544

or P Mapfumo 07915926323 / 07932216070.

· **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

Park

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

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