

The Vigil was glad to hear from Kate Hoey MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Zimbabwe, that she is planning to attend our all-stakeholders' conference on the future of Zimbabwe. Kate welcomed this initiative, agreeing there was general despair at the situation following the stolen elections. She said nothing seems to be happening.

Well, something is happening. We have been sending out invitations to people and groups who we think might be interested in sharing their views on how Zimbabweans can work through this despair to a better future. Here are our plans for the Restore Zimbabwe Conference:

1. It will take place from 9 am to 4.30 pm on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October at the Theatre, Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2 6HG.
2. The conference is being hosted by the Vigil and its sister organisations Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR) and the Zimbabwe Yes We Can Movement with the support of the Zimbabwe Association.
3. The purpose of the meeting is to agree a common platform and strategy for diaspora action on the Zimbabwe crisis following the fraudulent July elections.
4. How will the conference be managed? The programme is still under discussion but the favoured timetable is as follows:

- 9 – 10 am: registration of participants.
  
- 10 – 11 am: introductions by the Chair and brief addresses by invited speakers such as Kate Hoey.
  
- 11 am – 12.30 pm: discussion to identify key themes. It would be helpful if people submit ideas to us beforehand.
  
- 12.30 – 1.30 pm: Lunch – Zimbabwean food will be available.
  
- 1.30 – 2.30 pm: participants will divide into groups to develop key themes identified.
  
- 2.30 – 3.30 pm: the leader of each group will present their group's findings to the conference.
  
- 3.30 – 4.30 pm: sum up and adoption of resolutions.

At a meeting of the Zimbabwe Action Forum on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September

the following ideas were put forward for discussion:

- Scrapping indigenisation and encouraging foreign direct investment.
  
- Giving bankable title to farmers to enable them to finance their operations (economists say this would at a stroke stimulate agriculture).
  
- Nationalising the diamond mines.
  
- Privatising the parastatals.
  
- Stem corruption and require senior elected and non-elected leaders to disclose their assets.
  
- Replacing the judiciary and reforming the police and armed forces.

## **Other points**

· Last week we reported that Zanu-PF in the UK was claiming that the British Minister for Africa Mark Simmonds was now allowing the party to operate in the UK. We asked the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for clarification and this is their reply: 'I can reassure you that the response from Mr Simmonds' office to the representatives of Zanu-PF was not a change in policy. As you set out, there was never a ban on them operating in the UK, and any organisation that operates within the law can do so – which the response was clear on. Mr Simmonds' offered up an official level meeting with the party, which is consistent with what we do/have done with other groups, as you know. Officials in Harare also meet with members of Zanu-PF as part of their work. I hope that provides the clarity you were looking for.'

· Please sign the Zimbabwean's petition: 'All Zimbabwe Election 2013 records must be unsealed and seen – NOW.'  
[https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/All the records about the Zimbabwe 2013 election must be unsealed and seen NOW/?copy](https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/All_the_records_about_the_Zimbabwe_2013_election_must_be_unsealed_and_seen_NOW/?copy).

· Some of our supporters through their church helped the Zimbabwe Victims' Support Fund raise money for a Matabeleland pastor who runs a programme to feed the destitute in the Bulawayo area. Just how crucial a difference this makes was dramatically illustrated recently when a banking problem delayed funds for the purchase of maize meal. The charity reports: 'In Mazwi, near Bulawayo, nearly half the community who rely on that small monthly provision of maize meal resorted to scavenging for food on the municipal rubbish dump, which is a major health hazard. A 34-year-old father of three suffered severe food poisoning and our volunteer partner, Pastor Albert, rushed him to hospital.'

However he later died because his body, so weakened by malnutrition, was not able to resist the infection.

Such is the thin line that separates so many from starvation.'

- Thanks to Eunice Mhlanga and Helen Rukambiro for arriving early to help set up the Vigil.

For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimbabwевigil/> .  
Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website.

**FOR THE RECORD:** 29 signed the register.

**EVENTS AND NOTICES:**

- **ROHR Executive Meeting:** Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October from 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA. The Strand is the same road as the Vigil. From the Vigil it's about a 10 minute walk, in the direction away from Trafalgar Square. The Strand Continental is situated on the south side of the Strand between the turn off onto Waterloo Bridge and Somerset House. The entrance is marked by a big sign above and a sign for its famous Indian restaurant at street level. It's next to a newsagent. Nearest underground: Temple (District and Circle lines) and Holborn.
  
- **Zimbabwe Vigil's 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.** Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October.
  
- **ROHR Central London Branch Meeting.** Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October from 12 noon. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.
  
- **Zimbabwe Action Forum (ZAF) / Vigil Anniversary Social.** Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October from 6.30 – 9.30 pm. Venue: Strand Continental Hotel (first floor lounge), 143 Strand, London WC2R 1JA.
  
- **'Restore Zimbabwe': Zimbabwe Diaspora All-Stakeholders' Conference** . Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October from 9 am – 4.30 pm. Venue: the Theatre, Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2 6HG.
  
- **Zimbabwe Vigil Highlights 2012** can be viewed on this link: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/the-vigil-diary/467-vigil-highlights-2012>

. Links to previous years' highlights are listed on 2012 Highlights page.

· **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 the views and opinions of ROHR.

· **Facebook pages:**

· Vigil: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8157345519&ref=ts>

· ZAF: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>

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

· **Useful website:** [www.ipaidabribe.org.zw](http://www.ipaidabribe.org.zw) where people can report corruption in Zimbabwe.

## Restore Zimbabwe Conference – Zimbabwe Vigil Diary: 28th September 2013

Written by Administrator

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