



BIOGRAPHY – BEN FREETH, ZIMBABWE

Ben Freeth MBE, the Executive Director of the Mike Campbell Foundation (MCF), is from the farming district of Chegutu in central Zimbabwe. He studied at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester (UK) and worked on farms in New Zealand, Tasmania, and Zimbabwe where he was appointed the first regional executive officer for the Commercial Farmers' Union in 1996.

In 2007, Ben and his late father-in-law, Mike Campbell, owner of the highly productive Mount Carmel farming enterprise, took President Mugabe's government to the Southern African Development Community's regional human rights court, the SADC Tribunal. Charges were that the government attempted to unlawfully seize their farm, violated the SADC Treaty by denying access to the courts, and engaged in racial discrimination and violence against white commercial farmers and their farm workers. This resulted in the abduction and brutal torture of Ben, Mike and Mike's wife, Angela to force their withdrawal from the landmark court case. In 2009, both of their homes on Mount Carmel farm were destroyed by arson. The lawsuit was chronicled in the award-winning 2009 documentary film, [Mugabe and the White African](#).

Ben has authored two books: *Mugabe and the White African*, and *When Governments Stumble: Lessons from Zimbabwe's Past - Hope in Africa's Future*.

Ben's main focus is on restoring justice, the rule of law, property rights and human rights in Zimbabwe.

A committed Christian, he assists dispossessed and destitute farmers and farm workers. He works closely with *Foundations for Farming*, an organization that provides training in practical conservation agriculture (CA) methods. This initiative teaches impoverished farm workers and others in their communities how to feed their families for a year on just one sixteenth of a hectare using CA principles, i.e. no till and extensive mulching to protect the soil and retain moisture.

Ben has presented white papers at the Christian Economic Forum (CEF)'s annual conferences since 2015. The Forum comprises marketplace leaders dedicated to improving the world through the advancement of ideas that work, with a focus on God's economic principles.

As a fundraiser for the Mike Campbell Foundation in 2017, Ben, his close friend and fellow adventurer, James Egremont Lee, and their three sons climbed the challenging Mount Aconcagua in Argentina.

Ben's previous expeditions with James include the first successful navigation by canoe of the Rufiji River in Tanzania, a six-week trip through the remote Selous Game Reserve. In 2015, Ben and his two sons summited Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, known as the "Roof of Africa".

Long Ride for Justice – Ben's latest challenge

The aim of Ben's current challenge, his "Long Ride for Justice", is to raise awareness of the closure of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)'s regional court of justice, the SADC Tribunal, which was located in Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, and to campaign for its reinstatement.

Ben embarked on this epic two-stage, 800km/500 miles journey across western Zimbabwe on 28 November 2023, the fifteenth anniversary of the SADC Tribunal judgment on Mugabe's violent farm confiscation programme.

He began stage two on February 2, 2024 from Ngoma Bridge border post in Namibia's eastern Caprivi Strip and is riding - initially a mule and now a horse - and walking all the way to Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. By 22 February 2024 he had completed 400km of stage 2, a journey of more than 1,300km. He anticipates arriving in Windhoek mid March 2024.

Submitted by:

Mrs Glyn Hunter
Public Relations, South Africa
The Mike Campbell Foundation
Mobile: +27 82 774 2284
E-mail: ghunter@iafrica.com / press@pressmcf.com

Ben Freeth
Executive Director, Zimbabwe
Mobile/Whatsapp: +44 7539 070 122 (this is a UK number)
E-mail: benfreeth7@gmail.com

Head office (UK):
Claire Freeth, chairman
Mobile: +44 775 600 1400
E-mail: claire@mikecampbellfoundation.com
Website: www.mikecampbellfoundation.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MikeCampbellFoundation/>

MBE: Mr Freeth was awarded an MBE (Member of the British Empire) by Queen Elizabeth in 2010. The citation on the British Government's Diplomatic Service and Overseas list reads: "Benjamin John Freeth: for services to the farming community in Zimbabwe".

February 2024