

## BIOGRAPHY



### **Ben Freeth MBE – Executive Director, Mike Campbell Foundation**

Ben Freeth MBE, is the Executive Director of the Mike Campbell Foundation. He was involved with the extensive agricultural enterprises on Mount Carmel farm in central Zimbabwe prior to its takeover by a senior ZANU PF politburo member. He studied at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester and worked on farms in New Zealand, Tasmania and subsequently Zimbabwe where he was appointed the first regional executive officer for the Commercial Farmers' Union in 1996.

Together with his late father-in-law, Mike Campbell, the owner of Mount Carmel farm, he rose to international prominence in 2007 when they took President Mugabe's government to court in the Southern African Development Community's regional court, the SADC Tribunal. This was due to the regime's ongoing attempts to unlawfully seize Mr Campbell's farm; for violating the SADC Treaty by denying access to the courts; and for engaging in racial discrimination and violence against white commercial farmers and their farm workers. Mike, his wife Angela and Ben were abducted and badly tortured in 2008 and later had their homes, with everything in them, destroyed by fire.

Mike and Ben's lawsuit was chronicled in the award-winning 2009 documentary film *Mugabe and the White African*. Ben subsequently wrote two books, the first titled *Mugabe and the White African*, and the second, *When Governments Stumble: Lessons from Zimbabwe's Past and Hope in Africa's Future*.

Through the Mike Campbell Foundation, Ben's main focus is on restoring justice, the rule of law, property rights and human rights in Zimbabwe. Since 2011, Ben has been involved in initiatives to restore the SADC Tribunal after it was suspended and then unilaterally shut down by the SADC Heads of State, thus denying individual citizens access to the human rights court.

A committed Christian, Ben assists dispossessed and destitute farmers and farm workers. He works closely with Foundations for Farming, an organization that provides training in conservation agriculture and teaches impoverished farm workers and others how to feed their families.

Ben Freeth – Executive Director

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