

Tsvangirai calls for urgency to address food crisis

Harare: Prime Minister-designate Morgan Tsvangirai says Zimbabwe faces "disastrous consequences" if it does not speed up the formation of a new power-sharing government to deal with the deepening food crisis in the country.

Tsvangirai said Zimbabwe required about 800,000 tonnes of cereal to avert hunger between now and the next harvests around April 2009.

The government's grain utility, the Grain Marketing Board, did not have capacity to import such huge quantities of food hence the need to speed up formation of the new government to deal with the looming humanitarian disaster, said Tsvangirai.

He said the deadlock over the sharing of key cabinet posts had stalled the formation of the new government. However he said this would be resolved in the next few days.

Tsvangirai expected to meet President Robert Mugabe to end the stalemate over cabinet posts once the president returned from abroad.

Tsvangirai, who was speaking after meeting farmers, food security experts and food manufacturers to assess food security, said: "I am sad to report that my preliminary findings in this exercise show a state of emergency in the area of food security with disastrous consequences if we take too long to attend to the crisis.

"We need to respond to this crisis with utmost urgency. It is therefore imperative that a government be formed in the next few days and begins to implement plans to insure that our people have food and do not die of starvation."

Mugabe, Tsvangirai and another opposition leader, Arthur Mutambara signed an agreement two weeks ago to form a power-sharing government to tackle Zimbabwe's long running political and economic crisis.

However, the three leaders have failed to agree on how to share key posts in the new government, stocking up scepticism over whether the power-sharing deal clinched after seven weeks of tortuous negotiations could stand the strain given deep seated mistrust, especially between Mugabe and Tsvangirai.

However, Tsvangirai sounded highly optimistic that the deadlock would be resolved soon.

"I'm sure there are no problems in the outline of the agreement that are not surmountable. If there are political problems, that's why we have a leadership forum to resolve those issues," he said.

Meanwhile, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has called on former South African President Thabo Mbeki to continue his mediation efforts.

Mbeki was a key role-player in getting the three parties to sign the power-sharing deal.

Article published courtesy of [BuaNews](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>