

## **Statement from the Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai on the progress of the Transitional Government**

Members of the Diplomatic Corps and the Press, Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow Zimbabweans;

Today, I want to take this opportunity to highlight developments within the Transitional Government a mere two weeks after my inauguration as Prime Minister of Zimbabwe.

Firstly, I would like to commend the Ministers for the work they have been doing in the very short time that they have been in office.

They have managed to begin to address some of the many issues facing the country and I am encouraged by the open and constructive debates within Cabinet and the Council of Ministers.

In particular, I would like to recognise the efforts of the Ministries of Health, Education and Finance. The latter has mobilised funds that have enabled this government to pay the first round of allowances to the civil service, particularly the army, police and teachers.

Not only did this allow these valuable members of our community to put food on their tables and travel to work, but has also served as a vital stimulus to our ailing economy. Those who have not yet received their allowance will do so in the near future.

In addition I have kept the SADC Chairman, President Motlanthe, apprised of developments and today our ministers are meeting with SADC ministers concerning the Zimbabwe recovery programme.

However, it is also my responsibility to bring to your attention a number of outstanding issues that continue to act as an impediment to our progress as a Government and our ability to truly resolve the issues facing our country.

These are:

- The Appointment of Senior Government Officials, such as Permanent Secretaries and Ambassadors
- The Appointment of the Governor of the Reserve Bank and the Attorney General
- The Appointment of Provincial Governors

Yesterday's announcement of the appointment of Permanent Secretaries is in contravention of both the Global Political Agreement and the Constitution of Zimbabwe which is very clear with regard to Senior Government Appointments.

It states in article 20.1.7 of the Eighth Schedule that:

"The Parties agree that with respect to occupants of senior Government Positions, such as Permanent Secretaries and Ambassadors, the leadership in Government, comprising the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers, will consult and agree on such prior to their appointment."

No civil servant has the authority to make such appointments or announcements, therefore the announcement of the Permanent Secretaries has no force of law and is therefore null and void. The Permanent Secretaries who were in position as of September 15th will remain in post in an acting capacity until the matter is resolved.

This government will not allow a parallel force within its structures or any unconstitutional or unilateral actions which serve to impede progress.

It is also important that the appointments of the Governor of the Reserve Bank, Gideon Gono and the Attorney General, Johannes Tomana are dealt with and resolved immediately.

This is in line with the SADC communiqué issued in Pretoria on the 27th of January 2009, which states that “the appointments of the Reserve Bank Governor and the Attorney General will be dealt with by the Inclusive Government after its formation;” Similarly the appointment of Provincial Governors is an issue that must be resolved forthwith.

As long as these matters remain unresolved, it will be impossible for the transitional government to move forward with the reforms that this country so desperately needs. Most significantly, the rule of law continues to be flouted by some sectors of the community and this must stop immediately. In particular, a new wave of disruptions of farming operations, in contravention of the Memorandum of Understanding, is undermining our ability to revive our agricultural sector and restore investor confidence.

I have tasked the Ministers of Home Affairs, Giles Mutsekwa and Kembo Mohadi, to bring the full weight of the law down on the perpetrators who continue to act within a culture of impunity and entitlement. No person in Zimbabwe is above the law.

With respect to detainees, the Principals to the Global Political Agreement, namely myself, President Mugabe and Deputy Prime Minister Mutambara, last week agreed that all political detainees who have been formally charged with a crime should be released on bail and those that have not been charged should be released unconditionally. This has not yet happened.

Indeed, rather than allowing the judicial process to take its course with regard to the granting of bail, the Attorney General’s office is wilfully obstructing the release of all detainees by abusing the appeal process and this must stop forthwith.

There have also been disputes over the mandates of various ministries.

While this is natural in a new transitional arrangement such as this, issues of overlap and duplication will be resolved by my office.

With respect to the Ministry of Media, Information and Publicity and the Ministry of Information, Communication Technology, the functions of the former Department of Communication within the Ministry of Transport and Communications shall be the responsibility of the new Ministry of Information, Communication Technology.

Therefore, for avoidance of doubt, Telecommunications falls under this ministry.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there is only one government running Zimbabwe - one government, with one vision and one agenda – democratisation and stabilisation. There is no room for residual parallel structures that attempt to manipulate the process and procedures of government for personal or political gain.

I urge all members of the civil service to undertake their duties in a professional and patriotic manner and in the spirit of the Global Political Agreement and to the letter of the Constitution.

As a nation we still have a long way to travel until we are truly free, democratic and prosperous. I am confident that by working together we will achieve this goal.

The vast majority of members of the civil service and Cabinet are eager to work together and I am encouraged by the momentum that this government is developing towards finding solutions to the problems facing the country.

I thank you.