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Prime Minister Tsvangirai of Zimbabwe to lecture at UNU

EVENT: Lecture by Zimbabwe Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai on democratization in Africa

DATE: Friday, 20 July 2012, 11:00 AM – 12.30 PM

VENUE: United Nations University Headquarters, Tokyo

ORGANIZERS: United Nations University (UNU) and the Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe

- Prime Minister Tsvangirai will focus on the occasion of this public lecture on democratization processes on the African continent. Speaking from the perspective and experience of a political leader who has experienced robust political situations, Prime Minister Tsvangirai will elaborate on the choices and decisions that can be made to support the return to political and social stability in times of turmoil and uncertainty. Bringing to the forefront the recent events in Northern Africa, as well as in Mali, among others, the Prime Minister will also shed some light on the forthcoming elections in Zimbabwe, which are to be held in 2013 after the adoption by referendum of a new constitution.
- The lecture by Prime Minister Tsvangirai will be followed by a question and answer session with the public.
- Simultaneous English–Japanese interpretation will be provided. For those unable to attend, the symposium will be webcast live (and archived) at <http://videoportal.unu.edu/event/258>.
- Prime Minister Tsvangirai joins a long series of world leaders and eminent thinkers to address the United Nations University. For more information, please visit our website at <http://unu.edu/events>.

Media representatives are cordially invited to attend; please send e-mail to media@unu.edu.

About the speaker

Prime Minister Tsvangirai was born the son of a bricklayer, the eldest of nine children. After leaving school early to support his family, he started working in Zimbabwe mines where he soon became an active member of trade unions. He played an ever-increasing role before being elected in 1988 as Secretary General of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), an umbrella organization for the Country's trade unions. In 1999, the ZCTU convened a National Working People's Convention, which in one of its post-convention meeting saw the birth of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

Morgan Tsvangirai ascended to leadership within the MDC. He stood as the MDC's candidate in the presidential elections in 2002 and 2008. The elections in 2008 were severely contested; the resulting tense political situation triggered the intervention of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and then-president of South Africa Thabo Mbeki, which succeeded in facilitating a political agreement that led to the formation of a "Government of Unity" with the three main parties represented. On 15 September 2008, several SADC leaders witnessed the signing in Harare of the power-sharing agreement known as the "Global Political Agreement", which led to the formation of Zimbabwe's current transitional government.