

International Crisis Group
16 December 2008

Overview:

The inter-party negotiations that have sought to end Zimbabwe's political, economic and now full-blown humanitarian crisis following the fraudulent June 2008 presidential election run-off are hopelessly deadlocked. ()

No new power-sharing formula premised on Mugabe remaining president and Tsvangirai becoming prime minister seems likely to produce a workable outcome. Nor does it seem realistic to contemplate any non-negotiated solution to the deadlock. Additional sanctions and other forms of external pressure could be applied but seem unlikely to be productive in the absence of a new approach. Despite the calls increasingly being made for outright military intervention to resolve the crisis, this seems a wholly unrealistic option, not least because regional resistance to any such course remains intense.

There is a possible negotiated way forward that could avoid Zimbabwe's complete collapse. But it will need a radical shift in negotiating objectives by the country's leaders and regional states, and the standing aside of Thabo Mbeki as mediator in favour of someone perceived as more neutral. The core idea is to establish a transitional administration, run by non-partisan experts, in which neither Mugabe nor Tsvangirai would have any position. ()

Overview: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=5822>

Full Report: http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/southern_africa/b56_ending_zimbabwe_nightmare_a_possible_way_forward.pdf