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TITRE: Moroccan forum gives pro-democracy award to Zimbabwe's Tsvangirai

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TANGIERS, Morocco (AFP) — Zimbabwe's opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai Wednesday won a pro-democracy award at a Moroccan political-economic forum in the Mediterranean, known as MEDays.

"The 2008 MEDays prize for political dialogue has been awarded to the head of Zimbabwe's opposition for his efforts to promote democracy in his country," said the vice-president of the Moroccan think-tank that organised the forum.

Mekki Lahlou, of the Amadeus Institute, said Tsvangirai had planned to receive his award in person Wednesday, but had to travel to South Africa instead for a new round of negotiations on Zimbabwe's political crisis.

Tsvangirai won a first round presidential election in March, but pulled out of a run-off accusing President Robert Mugabe's party of coordinating deadly attacks against his supporters.

In September the leader of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) signed a deal with Mugabe to form a power-sharing government and become premier, but negotiations have stalled over the allocation of ministerial posts.

Guests at the two-day forum in Tangiers that ends Friday include Spanish, French and Moroccan ministers. They are expected to discuss economic development, the environment and peace in the Mediterranean.