**UNREVISED HANSARD**

**MINI PLENARY - NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THURSDAY, 13 MAY 2021**

**VOTE NO 29 – AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

***PROCEEDINGS OF MINIPLENARY SESSION – NATIONAL ASSEMBLY***

Members of the mini-plenary session met on the virtual platform at 16:29.

Mr F D Xasa, as Chairperson, took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

The CHAIRPERSON (Mr F D Xasa): Hon members, before we proceed I would like to remind you that this virtual mini-plenary is deemed to be in the precinct of Parliament and for debating purposes we will be guided by the Rules as we know them. In addition to the Rules of virtual sittings, the Rules of Parliament would apply. Members enjoy the same powers and privileges that they enjoy in the House. Anything said on this virtual platform may be ruled on. Members are asked to mute unless recognised to speak and members may make use of the icons on the bar at the bottom of their screens to put up

their hands or to raise any points of order, but we would, as much as is possible, discourage that. We shall now proceed to the Order, which is the debate on Vote No 29 — Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. I now recognise the hon Minister.

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

Debate on Vote No 29 – Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL

DEVELOPMENT: Chairperson, hon members, Deputy Ministers Skwatsha and Dlamini, Ministers and Deputy Ministers present, chairperson and members of the portfolio committee, members of our statutory bodies and councils, farmers’ organisations and chief executive officers of commodity organisations, farmers and farm workers, senior officials, ladies and gentlemen, this year we honour and celebrate the life of me Charlotte Mannya- Maxeke. Through her life, we can learn how she confronted the challenges that faced her society during her time. Charlotte was both a social and political activist. In examining her life through the lenses of those who have done research and

who documented her life, it is clear that she continuously fought for political freedoms that were denied to many of her people. She mobilised women through campaigns on issues that affected them such as pass laws and land issues. The quest for gender equality and women's emancipation formed part of her daily struggles. Speaking at the memorial service of the great Xhosa prophet Ntsikana in Johannesburg, Maxeke said we want men to protect the women of their nation, not men who hurt and endanger women when they become aware of their rights:

We want men who are the salvation of the young girls of their nation who can depend on their presence; we need men who will humble themselves, so that the nation may lift them up to be the stars of Africa for future generations. That is what Africa wants. That is what the women of Africa are weeping and praying for.

These words spoken in 1922 by Charlotte Maxeke are still relevant to this day. It is for this reason that our government today, working with women's organisations and civil society, continues to fight against gender-based violence. To change behaviour we need to unlearn the practices and customs that oppress women. We need to learn to uplift conflict

resolution as an important tool in dealing with conflict in the homes and elsewhere. In addition, we need to mainstream gender equality in our policies and programmatic interventions. Women's empowerment cannot be an afterthought nor an add-on, but it ought to be integral in our policy, legal framework and our socioeconomic development plans.

You must have noted that even on land allocation policies and processes, we have made a deliberate targeting so that 50% of land allocation will go to women; 40% to youth; and 6% to people with disabilities. The land is an asset that can liberate women, not only in terms of ownership but also in the productive use of this asset for economic participation and livelihood.

Last year, President Ramaphosa announced that government will release 700 000 hectares of state land for agricultural purposes. These land parcels included communities that have been utilising state land for many years. It also included farmers whose leases had either expired or lapsed or ... some of them never even had such. We outlined a process that will ensure that we affirm the tenure rights of those who have been utilising the land following the land enquiry process.

To date, we have managed to allocate 436 563 hectares of the 700 000 hectares. To date, the department has actually allocated about 436 563 hectares to those who have been allocated ... and we have met the criteria.

A total of 53 880 hectares comprising of 78 farms were allocated to 211 women; 14 251 hectares comprising of 18 farms were allocated to 131 youth; 842 hectares comprising of 1 farm were allocated to a person with disabilities. We are still continuing with that process and I hope the statistics in terms of gender dimension will also improve. There are

116 farms totalling 127 743 hectares which are occupied by communities. Given the nature of how this land has been utilised, we have maybe not achieved the 50% allocation that we had set for ourselves.

With regard to the other forms of land redistribution through proactive land acquisition, labour tenants and the Transformation of Certain Rural Areas Act, Trancraa, the Deputy Minister of Land Reform, Deputy Minister Skwatsha, will detail how we have performed on this issue.

With regard to labour tenants, I wish to report that Prof Levin was appointed by the Land Claims Court as the special master for labour tenants in order to work with the department in resolving the remaining 9 033 claims out of the 20 000 that were lodged. The special master, working with the department, has tabled the execution plan in the Land Claims Court on how in the five years these claims will be resolved. I need to indicate to this House that the labour tenants plan has been informed by the provincial visits that the special master undertook in order to familiarise himself, with his team, on the extent of the labour tenancy challenges in our country.

During these visits, the special master met with labour tenants, civil society, as well as farmers. On 17 May 2021, which is next Monday, we will be having a workshop in Paulpietersburg**,** where all the stakeholders will participate in coming up with ideas and plans that will make this plan succeed. This will include development support for the labour tenants who will receive the land as a result of the resolution of their claims.

Land restitution continues to be a matter of concern. We indicated our commitment to accelerating the resolution of

old-order claims. In the past financial year, we have settled

240 claims, which covered both rural and urban claims. The District Six development, which is another area that has been topical, is continuing and though we were disturbed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are committed to ensuring that by June this year, we allocate about 108 housing units in phase 3 to the qualifying beneficiaries, prioritising the elderly in that regard.

The management of farm land leases has caused concern among farmers, financial institutions, would-be investors and members of this very House. The Rakgase, Cloete and Zigana matter, though resolved, have amplified the need for a complete overhaul of our system of property management, as a department.

We have also noted that some of the farms in Rust De Winter, here in Gauteng, which are under claim, have actually created concern among farmers. Noting these challenges brought by the development of the farms, particularly as a result of restitution, government will ensure that farmers with valid leases in this area will continue to farm and we will allocate to them land that is not encumbered. The department would look

at how we can support these farmers going forward because for many years they have actually been successful. The deeds registry will also ensure that farm leases that we now issue going forward are going to be registered so that they can give comfort to our financial institutions and interested investors.

Land delivery is vital in reversing land inequality in our country. However, the productive use of the land is an important function. In the past year, agricultural activity was critical in providing food security for the nation as well as our region. The performance of the sector remains positive throughout the year. In tabling this budget, it is essential to give an agricultural outlook.

In 2021, the outlook on agriculture remains positive and we expect the sector to show strong growth figures and create employment. This optimism is supported by good weather, expansion in the area of planting and improving business confidence in the agriculture and agribusiness sectors.

Effective public-private partnerships and transparency in policy-making**,** partly underpinned by positive business confidence in the sector, is necessary.

Today, we have the Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation Policy, as well as the Land Donations Policy. These policies emanate from the presidential panel's recommendations on land and agriculture, and aim to bring fairness and effectiveness in land reform.

Yesterday, Cabinet also approved the Phytosanitary Bill and the Agricultural Products Standards Amendment Bill for tabling in Parliament. These Bills are critical in strengthening the regulatory environment within the sector. As a department, we will also increase our capacity for animal health at a national level to support our regulatory environment in the provinces.

Animal and plant health is important for food security and agricultural trade. The current outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza affecting about six commercial farms in the country is being attended to by our veterinary services in the provinces, supported by national. Containment measures have been put in place in the affected farms. We continue with our surveillance so that we manage the spread. We have noted the setback that this has had in our regional markets.

Although there may be these setbacks in the poultry industry, the following agricultural commodities have and will continue to do well, even in this current year. The citrus industry has increased its volumes and has broken into new markets. This year, we could see another record citrus export. Moreover, the grain and oilseed industry has also done well during the year 2020-21 and we would like to thank Grain SA and the citrus industry for this good work. The current harvesting season is currently underway and farmers are reporting record yields in various crops.

The contribution of black commercial farmers in our country's agricultural economy is still very low, though they are steadily growing at 11% in the livestock sector. The low levels of inclusion call for serious intervention from both the government and other stakeholders in driving inclusive growth. I wish to locate our interventions on the pillars of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan which are as follows: Massive roll-outs of infrastructure; massive increase in local production; employment stimulus to create jobs and livelihoods; and rapid expansion of our generation capacity.

With regard to the employment stimulus to create jobs and livelihoods, our department was allocated R1 billion to support subsistence farmers. Currently, 53 000 subsistence farmers have been approved. About 1 434 unemployed graduates and National Rural Youth Service Corps, Narysec, youth were enrolled to assist in the verification of applications. A total of 1 209 of these young people will continue to do monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

The issue of agriculture infrastructure remains important, in particular infrastructure that supports local production.

Together with the MEC of Agriculture in the Western Cape, we will unveil the irrigation infrastructure in Ebenhaezer that will assist the emerging farmers who have benefited from the land claim. We will continue with the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure and consider new irrigation systems that will expand land under irrigation. In areas where water challenges remain a challenge, we will ensure that we support farmers with boreholes and other means of water harvesting.

The Deputy Minister will have detailed information on infrastructure development under rural development. I’m also pleased that the Ministry of Water affairs has actually developed a mechanism on how to support smallholder farmers

and we hope that this intervention by the Department of Water affairs will put us in good stead to actually grow and commercialise black farmers.

A massive increase in local production remains necessary. In agriculture, this will require a combination of interventions as well as different support systems. Some of these interventions are:

Firstly, increasing land under production. This will mean cultivating land that has been given to individuals and communities through a varied number of our land reform programmes and those in communal areas;

Secondly, it will also mean strengthening our extension and advisory services. The importance of extension services in agricultural development cannot be underplayed. In the seminars that I concluded in the nine provinces since April to now, I was able to meet over 2 000 farmers online, as well as agribusiness people, and in all of these seminars there was an emphasis on the importance of agricultural extension services;

Thirdly, it would also require us to collaborate with the private sector and individuals who are willing to be mentors as well as able to give offtake agreements to those who are producing. Such partnerships can work if structured well. This morning I was with Tiger Brands in Nigel, Gauteng, where they have been working with Khumo Ea Tsabo in supporting the commercialisation of black farmers. About five of these farmers who are participating in this programme have received a 30-year lease from our department. In total, there are

10 farmers that are involved in this programme of Tiger Brands, known as Aggregate Propeller. An investment that has been made by Tiger Brands in this programme is about

R40 million and today they committed to being willing to partner with us in supporting 100 new black farmers who will actually work with them, together with us as government, in the commercialisation process. There are a couple of other private-sector companies and individuals such as Lusanda Moletsane of Khumo Ea Tsabo and many others that are in the space, that are willing to work with government in order to leverage our resources in the development of black farmers, while ensuring that we give meaningful support to those who are beneficiaries of land reform;

Fourthly, it is also important to strengthen our agricultural financial services to support production. The Land Bank remains an important institution in supporting the agricultural sector and we will do anything possible to secure its future. My department is working closely with National Treasury to work out a sustainable financial model that will ensure that the bank continues to fulfil its mandate. The finalisation of the department’s partnership with our banking sector on the blended finance facility is actually on course. The department relaunched the blended finance scheme in March this year, to leverage the private sector to support investments that will unlock and enhance agricultural production, agroprocessing and comprehensive land acquisition by black producers through deliberate, targeted and well- defined financial and nonfinancial interventions. This approach will enable the department to collaborate with development financial institutions, private-sector financial institutions and commodity organisations to mainstream the participation of black producers along the agricultural value chain;

Fifthly, agricultural research is important. The International Food Policy Research Institute conducted a study and found that:

Extensive empirical evidence demonstrates that investments in agricultural research and development have greatly contributed to economic growth, agricultural development and poverty reduction in developing regions over the past five decades.

The Agricultural Research Council, ARC, will utilise the parliamentary grant to focus on the development of scientific solutions, inclusive of the development of new technologies and crop varieties; enhancing the quantity and quality of agricultural produce; devising climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies; increasing sustainability; and reducing consumer food prices. The ARC will also be training at least 600 Narysec participants and continue to train young scientists through the professional development programme to attain higher degrees such as PhD and Masters degrees to applicable agriculture sector-related careers;

Sixthly, in strengthening our climate change response and biosecurity challenges, the impact of climate change and human migration affects the outbreak of pests and diseases. Of late, South Africa had outbreaks of brown locusts, exotic fruit flies, African swine fever and foot and mouth disease, FMD. Putting up early warning systems, rapid response mechanisms and control measures are important for our country to protect production, the environment and trade. With regard to FMD, the ARC has now approved the implementation plan for the design, construction and commissioning of the new FMD vaccine production facility. Very soon we will be breaking ground, upon obtaining the necessary municipal approvals. Upon completion, this facility will provide the country with an important tool to combat the outbreak of FMD and accelerate livestock production for adequate market access and trade. We, therefore, urge the ARC to accelerate the process towards construction. The Onderstepoort Biological Products will also, as part of improving its services offered in animal health solutions, work towards concluding the construction of their *Good Manufacturing Practices,* GMP, facility.

I must say that in order for us to have a template of our interventions, the master plan serves as a mechanism for

collaborative planning between the private sector, government and farmers. Of importance is the agreement on the vision as well as targets to achieve such a vision.

After recognising the different challenges constraining the growth and development of commercial and emerging farmers in the country, we actually agreed to develop an agriculture and agroprocessing master plan. We have worked together with the industry as well as farm workers and farmers and agreed on what is our vision statement, which we call the theory of change. This theory advocates for a coexistence of commercial and emerging farmers to promote the agricultural and food sectors on a new growth trajectory that can ultimately contribute to taking South Africa’s economy out of the middle income trap. The conceptual framework for this master plan has been concluded and we have agreed with the social partners.

What is left now is actually the development and agreement on the targets.

With regard to the cannabis and hemp master plan, the legalisation and commercialisation of cannabis has been at the forefront of public debate and on top of the agenda of policy- makers, not only in our country but globally. An

interdepartmental team comprising of representatives from various departments was established to guide the development of this National Cannabis Master Plan, with ourselves as the department being the convener. The National Cannabis Master Plan is being presented to the National Economic Development and Labour Council, Nedlac, before the end of May. As the department, working with the Department of Justice, we have agreed that by October 2021 we will begin issuing and monitoring permits for the production of hemp in South Africa as the first instance, and we hope that the Portfolio Committee on Justice will actually fast-track the removal of hemp from the drug trafficking master plan ... I mean legislation, so that we can indeed move with speed with the commercialisation of hemp as the first phase.

With regard to market access, the National Agricultural

Marketing Council, NAMC, is currently driving research intelligence, and trade and market policy advisories. These are used for market access processes. In the past 11 months, the NAMC has advised the International Trade Administration Commission on the optimal setting of tariffs, taking into account the impact on consumer prices and local production, particularly on poultry, sugar and wheat products. This year,

working with the departments of Trade, Industry and Competition and International Relations and Co-operation, we are devising measures to take full advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement and other multilateral and bilateral opportunities in the field of agricultural trade.

All of this will be supported by strengthening our governance and proper management of public resources. The process of strengthening governance in the department and state-owned entities is proceeding. The new boards at the ARC, Onderstepoort Biological Products and Perishable Products Export Control Board were put in place in 2020. Yesterday, Cabinet approved the appointment of the National Marketing Council. We wish to thank all those members who actually served in these various entities before, for the work they have done. The work of these councils are critical, and they remain so, in providing strategic direction on the work of the entities, as well as providing oversight on behalf of the shareholder.

As a department, we need to strengthen our administrative capacity, as hon members in our portfolio committee have been

urging us to do. We have started to advertise a number of posts in order to fill vacancies in the department, following the finalisation of the National Macro Organisation of the Government, NMOG, process. We have identified areas of weakness in the configuration of our newly formed department, which we will be addressing in developing the fit for purpose structure.

The matter of building the capacity of the state cannot be underestimated. We are examining the qualifications of our staff following the announcement that was made by the Minister of Public Service and Administration, particularly at a senior management service, SMS, level. The Minister of Public Service and Administration issued a circular that instructs all SMS members to populate Persal so that correct data of their qualifications can be properly accounted for. As of this weak, we have noted that within our department we actually have five members who are affected who do not meet these criteria as set out by our policies and legislative arrangements.

Building state capacity also means being able to implement consequence management where wrongdoing has occurred. We wish to assure members that we are acting and we will not hesitate

to act so that public resources are accounted for and that the conduct of our officials are not questionable to our citizens. We need to revive the ethos of Batho Pele once more in order to build a capable administrative system that is responsive to people’s needs.

The department has an allocation of R16,9 billion budget for the 2021-22 financial year. A sizeable portion of this budget is for transfers to provincial departments on a conditional grant. These allocations relate to Ilima/Letsema which will

get R597 126 million; the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme, Casp, which is about R1 billion; as well as extension services in order to employ the extension services at the provincial level as part of the 10 000 extension officers that was announced by Minister Mboweni. For this year we will be transferring about R310 million to the various provinces for this purpose. The commission of land restitution will receive a budget of R3,3 billion for this current year.

The other transfers are to our agricultural entities, as I mentioned.

The CHAIRPERSON (Mr F D Xasa): You have one minute remaining, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL

DEVELOPMENT: I wish to thank my Deputy Ministers Skwatsha and Dlamini in enabling us to actually give direction to the work of the department. I wish to thank all our officials in the national office, as well as in our provinces, for the work that they are doing.

Lastly, I cannot but thank our portfolio committee, from the chairperson and members, who have actually kept us on our toes all the time in terms of their role of oversight. But, more so, without the farmers we wouldn’t be where we are. Thank you very much.

Mr Z M D MANDELA: Hon Chairperson, hon Minister, Mama uThoko, the hon Deputy Minister, hon members and members of the media, ladies and gentlemen, we meet at a very difficult time when the third wave hands over us as an ever present reality. The world at large is still crippling with devastation of the global pandemic and signs of discovery still hang precariously in the balance. In our homes and social media over the past few days we have all been shocked devastated by the barbarity muted out to our brothers and sisters in Palestine.

Images reminding us of our heroic recent past and strengthening our resolve and determination never and never again to countless such inhumanity, assault on dignity and gross violation of human rights that can only be described as a crime against humanity atlases and the worse manifestation of foreseeable land occupation.

We hang our heads in shame. In his state of the nation address earlier this year His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa reminded us of the words of our founding father of our nation democracy President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela historic public address in Cape Town on 11 February 1990 when he said, I quote:

Now is the time to intensify the struggle on all fronts. To relax our efforts now would be a mistake which generations to come will not be able to forgive.

Our consideration of this Budget Vote 29 must be seen as an important part of our determination to intensify the struggle on all fronts or as President Ramaphosa reminded us that, I quote:

In counting the great cost to our society over the past year, we may be tempted to lose faith. But we can get through this. Because we are a nation of heroes.

This year marks the 70th Anniversary since the passing of Dr Seme, one of the heroes of our struggles who pioneered the formation of the ANC and later became its President. Dr Seme also established the Native Farmers Association after having bought three farms and later started selling plots to black people for settlement around 1927.

In the spirit of Dr Seme, let me extend my gratitude to the Minister Thoko Didiza and the Deputy Minister and her team of officials in the department and also to thank the farming sector both commercial and small scale farmers for working hard to ensure the transformation of this sector and to further unlock the potential of this vital sector of our national economy.

Hon Minister, your department has a mammoth task. Despite the multiplicity of challenges, we are confidence that under your leadership we have made progress and advanced the aspirations of our people.

Hon Chairperson, we are in the sixth session of this democratic Parliament and have nearly passed the halfway mark of the current five years’ strategic framework period in which we have prioritised the acceleration of land reform catalysed rural development and improve agricultural production to stimulate economic development and food security. Each of this priority focus areas demonstrate good progress over what was achieved during the fifth session but we must yet do more a lot more for the expectation of our people are great and the consequences of failure regression non-delivery is inconceivable.

Over the past we have had the opportunity to engage the Minister, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and the leadership of its entities that presides within the department after considering the 2021 and 2022 Annual Performance Plan and the budget of the department and its entities under Budget Vote 29.

We made the following recommendations that the Minister should provide quarterly update on the finalisation of fit for purpose organisational structure of the department that’s dealing with duplication of functions and ensuring the

requisite skills and capacity, submit to Parliament and updated legislation and policy review programme with clear streamline existing support, to ensure the development of an action plan, to review streamline the existing support and conditional grant into an integrated producer support programme.

This action plan to be aligned with the department new mandate and farmer production support units to strengthen reporting guidelines and develop monitoring and evaluation frameworks for conditional grants fund transferred to entities and the Land Bank additionally to MLE frameworks, ensure that the department sign service science agreement with the Land Bank, the Industrial Development Co-operation, IDC, and other relevant commodity African Agricultural Development Programme, AAPD, organisation particularly for the implementation of the blended finance initiative, the Agri BEE fund and the land development support programme before such funds are transferred.

In the absence of the necessary accountability frameworks transfer of funds should be withheld.

To ensure that the department collaborates with Agricultural Research Council, ARC, to develop a strategy for sourcing support for the continuation of the National Red Meat Development Programme which was previously implemented by National Management Advisory Committee, Nemac**,** and play a crucial role in improving communal livestock farmers’ profits by linking them to markets. To strengthen the department contribution to the implementation of the national policy on food and nutrition security by streamlining food security initiatives and measuring impact of interventions.

Fast-track the participation of the agricultural sector in the trade agreement on African Continental Free Trade Area while ensuring protection of local producers for unfair imports and capacity building of small holder producers to enable their full participation in the agreement on the Africa Trade Free trade agreement. To make presentation before the committee on government financial support services to the agricultural and agro processing sector from the 2020-21 to 2021-22 financial years and the presentation to demonstrate co-ordination of these funds in order to prevent double dipping by some beneficiaries to ensure that the Chief Land Claims Commissioner submit comprehensive quarterly report to

Parliament on the roadmap to the autonomy of the commission and report on the finalisation of old order land claims and to ensure that the Ingonyama Trust Board and the Ingonyama Tust officially tabled its 2021-22 budget in Parliament to fast- track the finalisation work on the review of the Property Valuation Act and to ensure that the vacancy positions of the value general and the chief operating officer are filled. To enhance capacity to support Communal Property Association in line with the CPA Act.

In conclusion hon Chairperson, let me reiterate the words said by His Excellency President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela when he said, I quote: At last we can look our ancestors in the face and say your sacrifices were not in vain. The time has come to correct the wrongs that colonial invasion brought on our communities. Through to the mandate given by the ANC, let me echo to the words of the same words that President Nelson Mandela would have said, at last we as the people look our ancestors in the face and in addressing land hunger, we seek a solution that is generally acceptable to all and approach that eliminate the suspicion, mistrust and anger that had characterised land disputes over the years. The ANC support this Budget Vote 29. I thank you.

Ms A STEYN: Thank you, Chairperson. Chairperson, let it be clear that the DA puts land reform first and will keep on fighting for a just and equitable land transformation. This speech is in recognition of Mr David Rakgase who was brave enough to walk hand in hand with the DA in the legal battle with the state over property ownership. The brave stance taken by Mr Rakgase has opened the door to many other black farmers who are now fighting the battle for land ownership in South Africa.

The Bill of Rights in our Constitution guarantees existing property rights, but ... [Inaudible.] ... it places the state under a constitutional duty to take reasonable steps to enable citizens to gain equitable access to land. It demands security of tenure and to provide redress to those who were dispossessed after 19 June 1913. This was agreed to by the majority of South Africans when we adopted the Constitution on

8 May 1996. When we agreed on our Constitution, we place the big responsibility in the hands of the state, by asking the state to put measures in place to deal with land transformation. These measures must be appropriate and must be reasonable in conception and implementation - and it is exactly here where the ... [Inaudible.]

The implementation of land reform needs a capable state, with clear and implementable policies. The chopping and changing of policy direction has caused havoc in the land reform space. No one is even clear of what policy is currently used for beneficiary selection. We have no proper and updated database of current land reform beneficiaries or even a list of available state land. Land administration is in chaos, and it can be seen in the current examples of farmers being evicted from state land.

The publication of the much talked about 700 000 hectares of supposedly vacant or underutilised state land is made available for redistribution. Another clear example of the chaos in the land administration is the publication of the Nooitgedacht farm of Mr David Rakgase who won a court case for ownership of this land after a long drawn out battle with the state, as well as the list of farms that were forwarded to Gwatyu community who battle to four years to get their

42 000 hectares of land transferred into ownership clearly shows the example of a government that is out of touch with the realities on the ground. The portfolio committee also recognises inadequate support to communal property associations, CPAs, and trusts with farms already transferred

under the land reform process is contributing to the collapse of land reform farms.

This ANC government keeps on saying that will transfer title to beneficiaries but keeps on signing lease agreements with farmers who have been leasing for years. The only reason could be that the ANC wants to keep farmers dependent on the state. In this system of patriarchal order, no one will query the status quo because they are scared of being kicked off the land.

I found a perfect example of this during a recent visit to Melmoth in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Community members asked me to investigate why don’t they take the state to court to get land transferred into their name - this after years of long court battles in a restitution case. It has costs millions of rands in restitution and court cases only to be back in court by the state to get access to their land.

Minister Didiza, why is your department involved in a court case against the Mtombanjeni community? Just transfer the land into the names of the successful claimants. I also want to know why has your department appointed service providers as

caretakers on their land. We can only begin to address land ownership disparities occasion by our colonial past if you take into consideration the realities of mismanagement and corruption - that’s enabling corruption in the state land administration process.

You jumped into conclusion that the ... [Inaudible.] ... clause in the Constitution is the cause of all land reform troubles. We are dealing with shifting attention away from the years of government mismanagement of state responsibility.

That is why I wrote to the Speaker to request a debate on land reform. She denied. Land reform was a national competency but the Western Cape government over the responsibility to shows how competent state will ensure successful land transformation. Thank you, Chairperson.

Mr M K MONTWEDI: Chairperson, the EFF rejects Budget Vote 29 of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform. It is now 27 years since the country attained political freedom; 25 years since the adoption of the Constitution, and 23 years since thousands and thousands of people in the country lost their land restitution claims. In

1994 you promised the return of 30% of the land back to black people by 1999.

Today, less than 10% of the land is being returned to black people. The few parcels of land that have been returned to black people have been systematically run down by your incompetence and your shameless hatred to black progress.

Today, your department faces more than 2 billion in lawsuits from black farmers who have been frustrated and evicted from farms owned by your department. Is it correct for your department run by natives to evict successful black farmers from state-owned land? Why do you hate black people so much? Not only have you evicted black people from their farms they have been farming profitably, you have also failed to protect vulnerable farm workers and farm dwellers who are treated as slaves by white farmers across the country.

Black farm workers are evicted on a daily basis from farms they were born and grew up on. Black farmers are paid less than a minimum wage. They do not get their leave days. They get paid with wine in the Western Cape’s vineyards. Pregnant black women are not given their maternity leave. All this is

happening because of your chronic fear of white privilege or white people?

As if it was not enough, Minister, you run an administration that is woefully incompetent with more appreciation of the crucial importance of your office in the transformation of this country. You are yet to finalise land restitution claims that were lost in 1998, many of those responsible for lodging those claims died even without seeing their claims processed.

In two instances where you claim that this restitution has been resolved, such as the case of Ndabeni land claim in Cape Town - people have been refused the right to settle or use their land in a manner that would benefit their communities. You have deliberately sought division in communities in order to allow whites to continue exploiting land that belongs to our people. All these challenges can be resolved. Our proposition has always and will remain as follows, we must amend the Constitution to allow for expropriation of land without compensation. This must be an unambiguous amendment, not this obfuscation that have been proposed by the ANC that makes reference to vague notions of meal compensation.

Any amendment to the Constitution that maintains the status quo must be rejected. There must be an unambiguous commitment to a private ownership of land in the constitutional amendment. Land is not a commodity - it is a public resource that must be enjoyed by all and not only who have resources to buy it. Part of the amendment must include the end of land restitution and land reform programme. We rather need to have a strong land redistribution component, driven by capable and unwavering state.

All farms currently owned by the state must be made available to black farmers on long-term leases, and these farmers must be supported with extension services and business support services. Land in urban areas must be rapidly released to cater for the growing need of land for settlement. In the meantime, there must be an immediate end on the eviction of people who have occupied land for settlement. I think I must repeat this Minister. There must be an immediate end on the eviction of people who have occupied land for settlement.

Rather, municipalities must be forced to provide services for these settlement. These are basic minimum demands that will get our land reform back on track.

We do not need you to hide behind South Africa ... [Inaudible.] ... is at an important juncture where this of shifting away from neoliberal production and towards land ownership and agrarian reform practices. This shift in policy discourse is predicated on the call for expropriation of land without compensation led and championed by the EFF in this House. Anything less than a speedy and a fundamental resolution of the land question which shall be in the custodianship of the state invites nothing but our contempt. We therefore, Minister, reject this Budget Vote.

The sugarcane industry in KwaZulu-Natal has died in the hands of you Minister. Having cried on many occasions for you to intervene as a department, you have not intervened. You are still speaking of taking matters to the ministerial committee. And the sugarcane industry is dying. Farmers are running out of income for them to be able to support their families. Once again, as the EFF we reject this Budget Vote of the department. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

*IsiZulu:*

Mnu R N CEBEKHULU: Sihlalo, sisethubeni elibi lapho khona uhulumeni wethu eyekelela khona ukuphathwa komhlaba ngendlela

eyiyo. Amapulazi amaningi uhulumeni awathengileyo awasebenzi futhi awakhiqizi lutho. Abantu ababe sebenza emapulazini balahlekelwe imisebenzi yabo, mahleli emakhaya abakwazi ukondla imindeni yabo nezingane zabo.

Muva nje uMnyango ube nohlelo lokuthi usize abalimi abancane abasafufusa [small holder farmers.]. Kwakhishwa amavawusha ukuthi bakwazi ukuyothenga abakudingayo ukuze bakwazi ukusebenza amasimu ngoba kuthuthikiswa ezolimo. Okwenzekile kulawo mavawusha, baphoqelekile abantu ukuthi banikeze abantu abathile amavawusha kube yibona abakhokhela impahla ethengwayo ezikhungweni ezidayisa izinto zezolimo. Ngemuva kwalokho kube khona imali ehleshulwayo kulawo mavawusha abantu. Wusizi esibhekene nalo kodwa kube kuthiwa kusizwa abantu.

*English:*

Hon members, now more than ever, our government needs to carefully consider prevention programmes to protect humans, animals and agriculture against the spread of pests, infectious diseases and other harmful substances. It has been reported that our country currently faces four active avian flu outbreaks. It was reported end of March this year that

over 2 000 pigs in a farm in the North West died of African swine fever.

The stag reality is that outbreaks such as African swine fever

– which to date has no vaccine and highly contagious - not only has a major economic impact on our export industry, but also has a dire consequence to small holder farmers. The only solution we have is to ensure that proper biosecurity measures are implemented to minimise the risks. Therefore, it is alarming that only R3,3 million has been allocated by the department to the biosecurity programme. This meagre allocation shows clearly government’s lack of commitment to minimise the risks of such outbreaks. The IFP strongly supports the committee’s recommendations that the biosecurity subprogram should be strengthened and that the department should develop a functional alert system to promote a proactive response to disease outbreaks. The IFP will carefully monitor the feedback on this recommendation as the cost of a weak biosecurity programme could cost our country dearly.

On further analysis of the committee’s Report, the IFP fully support the committee’s recommendations that comprehensive

progress report on the land development. Such programmes should be submitted to Parliament. The IFP has always maintained that the failure to ensure comprehensive post settlement support coupled with corruption has greatly jeopardise the lender the land reform projects. This has been one of the greatest tragedies in land reform. The IFP also supports the committee’s recommendation that the department should ensure proper service level agreement and accountability frameworks are in place with all partner organisations the implementation of the land development support programme in specific instances.

In conclusion, hon members, the Covid-19 pandemic has greatly impacted food security across the globe although the Minister of Agriculture, land Reform and Rural Development has maintained in responses to written questions that South Africa has ample maize to meet the demand in the human and future market. We anchor the committee’s concern on the strategic budgetary growth in the food security programme. The stag reality is that access to food and in light of the massive economic strain our people are experiencing, justifies the committee’s recommendation that the department’s contribution

to implementing the national policy on food and nutrition security should be strengthened.

In conclusion, hon members, this department fulfils a critical mandate in fulfilling its constitutional duty. We need to be vigilant on how the department enforces accountability and ensure resources are properly managed. The IFP will closely monitor feedback on the committee’s recommendation. We support the budget. Thank you, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr F D Xasa): Now, hon Lesoma will take over from me. I now call upon hon Breedt.

*Afrikaans:*

Me T Breedt: Daar is geen mooi manier om te sê dat die departement besig is om droog te maak en om met landbouers en die mense van Suid-Afrika se toekoms te speel nie. Ek voorspel dat die Adjunkminister hierna gaan opstaan en sê dat ek weet nie waarvan ek praat nie, of een of ander kleinlike aanval op my persoonlikheid of my party loods. Maar kom ons kyk na die feite van hierdie begroting en dienooreenkomstige teikens.

*English:*

Approximately 52% of the total vote appropriation goes to transfers and subsidies and yet some of these have been the source of repeat audit findings associated with poor accountability and monitoring of the utilisation of funds transferred to provinces. However, instead of finding ways and mechanisms to ensure that provinces and the concurrent functions work, the department blames concurrency and shrugs their shoulders.

Despite the department’s important and central role in agricultural production biosecurity and management of agricultural disasters, Programme 2 will only be allocated approximately 15% of the department’s total allocations. The new inclusion of biosecurity as a subprogramme under Programme 2 is welcomed. However, I am concerned about the

small budget allocation of R3,3 million that is merely 0,1% of Programme 2 total allocation. Taking into account that there is outbreak of the food and mouth disease, African swine flu and Avian influenza, also taking into account the revenue losses incurred specially the loss of export revenue, and the impact on critical industries within farming, is worrisome.

These losses incurred also have a significant impact on job creation within the sector. Something that has also been troubling me, Chair, since the last interaction that we had with the provincial department of agriculture, it has even been more worried now, taking the budget into account, it’s climate change and our preparedness within this department to mitigate the impact of natural disasters related to climate change. The natural resources and the disaster management subprogramme which plays a central role in the implementation of policy frameworks to mitigate disasters in rural and urban areas only receive 11% of Programme 2’s already small budget.

*Afrikaans:*

Dink net wat hierdie departement ... [Onhoorbaar.] ... sekuriteit en klimaatsverandering sal kan doen as hierdie departement net ophou om geld op projekte wat nie werk nie te mors en sal ophou om geld aan provinsies oor te dra waar die provinsies net eenvoudig ... [Onhoorbaar.] ... geld ... [Onhoorbaar.] ... soos in die Vrystaat waar die geld vir ’n state of the art [gesofistikeerde] melkery en fabriek wat vir die mense bedoel was, deur Ace Magashule gesteel is en vir sy maatjies die Guptas gegee is om ’n groot makietie in Sun City te hou.

Voedselsekuriteit, huishoudelike sekuriteit – die buzz woorde in die era van COVID-19; woorde waarvoor die departement self baie lief is ... mense juis dink dat weens die huidige omstandighede, die departement dit sal prioritiseer. In die lig van die huidige hongersnood, is die stagnerende begrotingsgroei vir die subprogram van ... [Onhoorbaar.] ... sekuriteit kommerwekkend. Nog ’n rede tot kommer is dat alhoewel die departement ’n mandaat vir die implementering van die nasionale ... [Onhoorbaar.] ... sekuriteitsplan het, het die departement geen raamwerk of teikens daar gestel om voedselsekuriteit te meet nie. Hoe gaan ons dus ooit werklik voedselsekuriteit en veral huishoudelike sekuriteit aanspreek?

*English:*

Furthermore, we once again trust the Land Bank with R385 million for this financial year alone. That is

R1,2 billion over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework, MTEF. The reason that the department has started partnering with other major commercial banks was because of their reservation towards the Land Bank, taking into account the shambles with regards to the blended finance model. When I say we are squandering money and playing with the future of South Africans, this is what I mean.

Albert Einstein said the definition of insanity; “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.” Chair, I have focussed on Programme 2 because I felt compelled to highlight its issues in depth and I am sure that as you have seen today that my colleagues will do justice to the other aspects. Minister, when you were reappointed as the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development at the beginning of the Sixth Parliament, you were not met with the same contempt as the other Ministers because agriculture in all of its forms spoke highly of your deeds in your first tenure as Minister of Agriculture.

Minister, I urge you to once again be that woman, be that Minister the tales I’ve heard, be the woman that stands up for agriculture not just for today but for the future of agriculture, for the future of food security and the future of South Africa.

*Afrikaans:*

Staanop, staan sterk en staan saam, want ’n volk wat vir sy

landbou sorg, sorg vir sy toekoms. Voorsitter, ek dank u.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL

DEVELOPMENT – S M Dlamini: Thank you very much hon Chairperson, hon Minister Didiza, all Ministers and Deputy Ministers present here today, the Committee for Rural Development, Agriculture and Land Reform, hon members of the House, esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Today as we present this budget we want to pay tribute to all the families who have lost their loved ones as a result of Covid-19 and we also want to salute health workers and people living in rural communities who had to face and fight the coronavirus under conditions in which there were fewer health resources. It has been inspiring to observe how despite these challenges some rural communities have worked in partnership with government, private sector, non-governmental organisations and traditional leaders to spread the correct healthcare related messages in relation to this pandemic. This is what rural development should be about.

Rural development is a sustained multi sectoral participatory process aimed at empowering those residing in former homeland areas, in farming areas in defined rural space within urban

areas and metros in urban areas in small rural towns and in villages.

It is about government intervening at all levels to ensure a people driven and people centred process of building sustainable communities through agricultural and non- agricultural interventions to achieve healthy products and economically vibrant socially cohesive equitable and sustainable space and livelihoods.

National and integrated rural development strategy is another area we have to talk about. According to Statistics SA, the provinces with the highest head count of adult poverty are Limpopo which is at 67,5%, Eastern Cape 67,3%, KwaZulu-Natal 60,7% and North West 59,6%.

For these four provinces, significantly more than half of their population were living in poverty. It is also saying said that almost two thirds of agricultural households are living in poverty, it says that almost two thirds of agricultural households in KZN is 24%, Eastern Cape 20,7% and Limpopo 16,3% combined. It is for this reason the implementation of our national integrated rural development

strategy will pay special attention to these provinces without complaining or comparing the required interventions for rural development in other provinces.

This year we will be visiting our provinces not to ask what our people want, it’s because they have told us what they want since 1994. We are going to be there to work with them towards ensuring rural development in their own terms. As the department, we are currently adopting an intergovernmental approach and we are re-strategizing on how to optimally utilise existing government programmes and other funding to unlock economic opportunities in various rural districts. We have recently tested this approach when we had an interdepartmental collaborative intervention programme in the Eastern Cape at Stynsburg.

In a few months from now we will be working with young people on the Narysec programme in the ICT projects and work to support sub cooperatives in various projects which include poultry, piggery, the bakery projects, water harvesting and we will be providing sewing machines and agricultural tools and implements including other different forms of support.

The revised national integrated rural development strategy considers the central thrust proposed in chapter 6 of the National Development Plan which includes the following: capitalising on agriculture as one of the main economic drivers of the rural economy through the agriculture and agro processing masterplan; making land reform work through improved rural governance systems improved land administration; land access for further economic opportunities; proper beneficiary selection processes utilising existing rural farming networks and improvements; developing none agricultural activities with key sectors including technology mining and tourism; building human capital, social security, food security and basic services; and revitalising rural towns and improved rural governments.

Part of the practical work we will undertake as part of our rural development strategy linking emerging rural producers of farm and non-farm products to market and appreciate value chain through the agriculture and agro processing masterplan and the implementation of farmer production support units, facilitating business development services for rural enterprise through programmes such as comprehensive agricultural support programmes, assisting rural women people

with disabilities and youth through targeted capacity building and enterprise development support and actively promoting procurement policy that favours women and youth.

The last financial year several consultations have taken place within government through the South African local government association network via a multi stakeholder policy platform coordinated by civil society on how to effectively implement these objectives over the MTSF, Medium Term Strategic Framework*,* period and beyond in support of vision 2030.

We have conducted our studies, consulted our people both from inside and outside of government work undertaken in 2020/21 financial year, farmer production support and rural infrastructure. Hon Chairperson, in the last financial year we committed to support 15 farmer production support centres with the necessary infrastructure to make them functional.

We are pleased to announce that we have supported one project in the Eastern Cape in Zanyokwe; three in Free State namely the Odendaalsrus, Springfontein and Kroonstad; four in KZN Pomeroy, Matleng, Mkhuphula and Hluhluwe; two in Limpopo and

Taung in the North West; and the Ebenhaezer in the Western Cape as mentioned earlier on.

A total of 64 infrastructure projects to support the production and other socioeconomic infrastructure Narysec work as the Minister mentioned earlier. The department [Interjections.] ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms R M Lesoma): Hon Minister, kindly just wrap up please. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL

DEVELOPMENT – (S M Dlamini): Thank you Chair. It’s just a point on Narysec on the jobs that have been created there, 1926 and the flagship projects on the economy and many other initiatives that have taken place. Thanks for your time Chairperson. Thank you.

Mr W M THRING: Thank you, hon House Chair. Noting that the hon Mandela raised the matter in this debate, let me indicate that the ACDP recognises the right of any sovereign nation, including Israel, to protect itself from unprovoked attacks.

No nation, when it comes under enemy fire of thousands of

rockets, can sit by leaving its innocent citizens defenceless. We call on the South African government to play a peace broking, diplomatic role of working towards a two state solution for the Israeli and Palestinians. Hon House Chair the ACDP notes the increased budget allocation of some

R1,7 billion to R16,9 billion in 2021-22. The ACDP notes some of the noble departmental outcomes, which includes improved governance and service excellence, spatial transformation and effective land administration, redress and equitable access to land and producer support, increased production in the agricultural sector, increased market access and maintenance of existing markets, integrated and inclusive rural economy and enhanced bio security and effective disaster risk reduction.

However, pertaining to these outcomes it must be said that, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. As thousands of South African land and homeowners, wait for their title deeds from government and the department, farmers like David Rakgase had to wait almost 20 years for the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, to honour its word to sell the Nooitgedacht farm, that he had leased for over 28 years.

The ACDP acknowledges that the committee, during its

deliberations on the annual performance plan, APP and budget allocations of the department and its entities, made some damning observations such as, the existence of inadequate quality assurance within the department, uncertainty regarding the department’s capacity to timeously develop essential legislation and policies to address sectoral challenges.

The absence of specific targets on agroprocessing, which is identified in the National Development Plan, NDP as a key drop driver, while more than half of the total Budget Vote goes to transfers and subsidies in the current financial year, weak monitoring and evaluation in the department remains a challenge and will continue to affect accountability on transferred funds as well as performance and service delivery. The final point, the stagnant growth and a budget allocation in the food security and assess the efficacy of food security interventions, which are implemented by provinces. In the light of the challenges our nation faces, it is prudent that we pursue policy and political stability, something the ruling party has failed to do, as well as ensure that we prioritise food security. The ACDP will champion these causes essential to the survival of our nation. I thank you Chair.

Mr V ZUNGULA: Thank you Chair. The structure of the Budget Vote 29 on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development betrays the folk time agenda of the ANC-led government. A careful analysis of the line item allocations and projections into the outer years, paints a picture of a government that speaks left and walks right. The ANC government has misled people into thinking it is serious about land expropriation without compensation. The phrase “without compensation” does not even exist in the Eighteenth Amendment Bill, to amend section 25 of the Constitution. It is evident that bulk of the money is reserved for land expropriation with compensation, despite the without compensation rectorate. Even the mandate of this department, seeks to sanctify looting in that, no attempt has ever been made by the department to challenge section 25(7) of the Constitution, which seeks to deal with land restitution only for those dispossessed after 1913, when it is public information that bulk of the land dispossessions took place in the 1700s.

The ATM is, therefore calling for the following: The Eighteenth Amendment Bill must be must replace expropriation with compensation, with expropriation without compensation. The Eighteenth Amendment Bill must include backdating the cut-

off date for land restitution from 19 June 1913, to 6 April 1652 when Jan Van Riebeeck first set foot in our land. The structure of the budget must be overhauled to result in more money for post restitution, so that our people can have a success of their efforts to be commercial. The spending on rural development must be more than doubled, and reflect that indeed our communities are taken seriously. The rural economy must benefit the people of those particular rural areas.

Citizens in the rural communities can’t lose the most basic economic activities to non-South Africans. Emerging black farmers must be assisted with a market for their produce in their respective localities. Retailers in Ngqeleni and Tsolo can’t be sourcing a significant portion of produce from other provinces. Retailers must by law, procure a significant percentage of their stock from local farmers. Water shortages affect farming especially for emerging black farmers. The department must work with all relevant departments to deal with this crisis. The department must provide skills development centres in all rural areas to teach young people about farming. Young people must be trained, financed and equipped to work the land. I thank you.

Ms T M MBABAMA: Thank you Chair. On 26 April 2021, during an oversight visit to Sunnyside farm in the Eastern Cape, I was met by the stench of rotting meat. Carcasses of cows lay exposed on the ground, their twisted bodies infested with maggots and flies. It soon became apparent to me why this was the case. Neziswa, a farm dweller had just knocked off from work at Grey Hospital in King William’s Town, where she worked as a nurse. She had to rush to buy water in a rundown bakkie, a futile exercise, as most of the water spilled out of the 20 litre drums on the uneven gravel road.

This she did every other day when not buying lucerne from local farmers on credit feed her animals. All this because her family and animals, were restricted to a small portion of land with no water, no toilets, no electricity, and nowhere to sort firewood for cooking. Surely this is gross inhumanity and cruelty to animals. Nonezile Moyeni, her mother, told me that they have been on the farm since 1964 when the farm was owned by one Mr Burger, who allowed them to share the grazing and water in peace. Her husband died and she watched as the farm changed hands among several owners who were not as kind to them as Mr Burger. The previous owner, told them that their animals were becoming too many, they need to sell them off to

the ... They bore the brunt of the animals being constantly impounded, and having to release them thereafter at huge costs, money they could ill afford.

This went on until 10 August 2020, when a man broke into their yard without so much, as a molweni [greetings], lawfully proclaims that he was the new owner of the farm and he wanted them off his farm in a few days. He further told them that he had already procured a tractor-loader backhoe, TLB to bulldoze their humble abode down. When they resisted, he confined them to a small portion by fencing them in, and cut off the water supply. The man is Thembelihle Gxothiwe, husband to Eastern Cape Transport, MEC, Weziwe Tikana-Gxothiwe. The attempt to mimic apartheid era evictions by an ANC cadre, is reminiscent of George Orwell’s classic novel titled, *The Animal Farm*, where some are indeed, more equal than others.

The Moyeni story is not isolated. This is the state of farm dwellers across our provinces. The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has an obligation to protect and assist farm dwellers, who are ex-employees or whose husbands were employees through the Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997, from exploitation and illegal evictions

by farm owners, including ANC cadres like Mr Gxothiwe, who have recently acquired farms.

There is little evidence of the department being effective in implementing the reliefs found in Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997, such as finding suitable alternative accommodation or facilitating the legal allocation of a suitable piece of land on the same farm. The DA is extremely appalled that 27 years into our democracy, families and especially those headed by women, can be so severely traumatised due to the inefficiencies of the department ... [Inaudible] ...with their protection. Minister Didiza, the DA demands justice for the family of Nonezile Moyeni and her animals, which are dying on a daily basis. I thank you Chair.

Ms K D MAHLATSI: Thank you very much, hon chairperson, Ministers, Deputy Ministers and hon members, good afternoon. Hon Chairperson, as an ANC Member of Parliament it gives me great joy to take a notice of progress made by government towards resolving the most pertinent question of the day, the land question. Chairperson, the historical personality of the African people has always been the land, it has always defined who we are and what we stand for. The land has always defined

our heritage, our history and our collective future as Africans. Consistent with the teachings of comrade Cabral, the only way to truly wage a formidable and credible national liberation of our people is by ensuring that they gain the historical personality, which is their stolen land.

Chairperson, yesterday the Deputy President gave a response on a question raised around what progress made by government in implementing the recommendations of the presidential high level advisory panel on the land reform and agriculture. It is indeed the African National Congress that is capable of bringing the land question into its logical conclusion. The logical conclusion is not to deny other citizens their best based on their race, class or gender access to the land use and land ownership.

Chairperson, the congress of the people’s Freedom Charter declares in 1955, that restrictions of land ownership on racial basis shall be ended and all the land will be re- divided amongst those who work it to banish famine and land hunger. The Freedom Charter further envisioned a developmental role of state in the agricultural economy when he states that; the state shall help peasants with implements, seeds, tractors

and dams to save the soil, assist toilers and that the people shall not be robbed of their cattle, forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished. Chairperson, this year is the 25th anniversary of the South African Constitution. Looking back there is much to be celebrated but still more to be done. The constitutional mandate of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development can be found in sections 24, 25, and 27 of the Constitution of the Republic.

These provisions are enshrined in the Bill of Rights and it is not easy to tamper with these constitutional guarantees rights. However, the process to amend section 25 of the Constitution by this Parliament is necessary in order to redress the injustices of the past. Our constitution and the Bill of Rights provides a firm basis upon which this beautiful country has been built upon. The land reform programme in our country has a stable legislative framework that provides by the Constitution. Chairperson, there are three pillars of our land reform programme and that is; the land restitution, the land redistribution and security of land tenure.

Section 25(7), deals with the land restitution cases and this is in respect of persons or communities dispossessed of their

property and gives effect to restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994 to administer the task to establish the commission on restitution of land rights and the land claims court.

As the Deputy President said yesterday, key legislative and policy interventions such as land claims will be finalised. Notwithstanding challenges associated with the land restitution cases over 2 million land claims have benefited from the transfer of 4,7 million hectares of land. This year alone. Chairperson, the department plans to finalise 459 claims for 2021-22 financial year restitution programme gets an allocation of about R3 512 088 066. The intention of this allocation is to acquire about 600 hectares of land for restitution for the purposes of agrarian transformation, industrial parks, human settlements and rural development.

Chairperson, on redistribution and tenure reform R965 million and R29 000 is allocated to this important programme of the land redistribution and land tenure.

Chair, in order to fast-track the implementation of the slow pace land reform programme, the ANC in 2007, at Nasrec conference, resolved that we must pursue with greater determination the programme of land reform and rural

development as part of the programme for radical socioeconomic transformation and expropriation of land without compensation should be among the key mechanisms available to government to give effect to the land reform and redistribution. This vote Chairperson, we will acquire strategically located land for various land use. Chairperson, the current insecure land tenure system that we have inherited today, is a legacy of apartheid state. After major land dispossession, the majority of Africans were concentrated into former homelands constituting only about 13% by 1913.

Chairperson, it is said that African Continent, the north and south of Sahara will both have a combined 2,5 billion populations by 2050, and half will live by the cities. The South African population has grown by almost 20 million citizens since 1994, and it is projected that in South Africa population growth will double by the year 2050 to 100 million citizens. This points to the utmost importance guaranteeing our food security. The allocation of R2 022 066 000 towards food security demonstrates to us that this vote is committed to securing the nation’s food supply. We would like to see support programmes that will promote urban farming and was given priority to rural women and youth who are at most times

had to leave the rural communities for cities searching for better opportunities. These women and youth in the rural areas are most to benefit towards the implementation of the state support investors in the Freedom Charter and that is supporting farmers with implements, tractors and seeds.

Furthermore, Chairperson the National Development Plan says that linking farmers to existing markets is not enough as this would also require investment in agricultural infrastructure and sufficient water resources such as irrigation infrastructure. Land and water are intertwined and we cannot begin to think of increasing agricultural productivity when the small scale black emerging farmers who fall in Maloja Phofung, in the Free State, have no access to water to their farming enterprises. In certain parts of the country the quality of water is quite toxic. In conclusion, hon Chairperson, I stand on behalf of the ANC to support this Budget Vote 29 for the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. Chairperson, the 1992 ANC ready to govern policy guidelines said; the land redistribution processes or purposes our policies should focus on expropriating land for redistribution targeting land that is

underutilised, land held for speculative purposes and land obtained through nepotism and corruption.

We have never nowhere in our policy documents promoted land grabs, land invasions and this budget has not made any allocation for such. Chairperson, there are those who continue to make claims that we have not achieved much in the past 27 years of democracy. In responding to them, we called one of the greatest African sons, Comrade Kwame Nkrumah, when he says; *“*Those who would judge us merely by the heights we have achieved would do well to remember the depths from which we started.” Thank you very much, Chairperson.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL

DEVELOPMENT (Mr M Skwatsha): Hon House Chair, hon Minister Didiza, Deputy Minister Sdumo Dlamini, chair of the portfolio committee, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, senior officials of the department, the acting director-general and all of you from state-owned entities, distinguished guests.

The month of May is recognised as workers’ month globally. In our country it’s also significant for another reason: on the 10th of May 1994 it was the inauguration of the first

President of the democratic government of South Africa, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela; on the 8th of May 1996 the Constitution was adopted by the constitutional assembly. Who can ever forget that occasion when former Deputy President then, Thabo Mbeki, delivered that seminal speech, I am an African.

Whenever we discuss land reform or embark on activities that restore the rights of land to previously dispossessed persons, we move from a point of departure which recognises that an injustice was committed against the indigenous majority and that our decisions and actions should be deliberately and unapologetically designed to undo that situation. We should not allow anyone or any organisation to try to twist the truth by attempting to make us feel bad for demanding what rightfully belongs to us.

During the title deed handover ceremony to the community of Covie, in the Bitou Municipality, I reminded the gathering about what his Excellency, President Ramaphosa, characterised as the original sin was committed, how land and livestock were brutally and forcefully taken away from the rightful owners; as I narrated how Paul Kruger captures one battle in his memoirs.

What we are doing is called justice. What we are doing is restoring the dignity of the majority of South Africans. When such dignity is restored, we are sure we can find peace as former President Nelson Mandela reflected:

Returned land, which translates to wealth, back to the dispossessed majority is an important task because it is one way of addressing the injustices of apartheid.

All communities whose rights to their land have been restored through the title deeds handed over events recently, we say to them: That is your land, enjoy the benefits that come with being landowners. Be proud, walk tall. You now enjoy what is called security of tenure and keep it that way for generations to come.

Cabinet, in December 2020, approved the beneficiary selection and land allocation policy, which is aimed at expediting the land allocation process which prioritises women, youth and persons with disabilities. The participation and protection of these vulnerable groups across the value chain of our economy is critical. This policy is already in the implementation phase within the various programmes of the department.

In the 2020-21 financial year the department acquired 22 366 hectares of land for agricultural purposes. These included land for livestock, fruit, crops, forestry and game. We have already allocated 16 198 hectares to deserving women and youth with most of these hectares, 11 866 hectares allocated to the youth. This allocation, supported by post settlement interventions, will ensure transformation and sustainability of the sector and importantly address the challenge of ageing commercial farmers in our sector.

We are emboldened by the new developments and we will continue on this project as we empower our communities albeit with reduced resources as there have been budget cuts because of the pandemic.

This financial year the budget for land acquisition is R175 million and our plan is to acquire 33 720 hectares of land with this budget and through rigorous reprioritisation within the Pro-active Land Acquisition Strategy, PLAS, project.

The land tenure reform programme is key in achieving the constitutional promise entrenched in section 25(6) of the Constitution of the Republic:

A person or community whose tenure to land is legally insecure as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices, is entitled to the extent provided by an Act of Parliament, either to tenure which is legally secure or to comparable redress.

The Land Reform (Land Tenants) Act 3 of 1996 on farmworkers, farm dwellers and labour tenants seeks to secure the tenure rights of labour tenants and former labour tenants including by regulating their tenure and prohibiting illegal evictions.

Wherever farm dwellers, farmworkers, labour tenants and women have limited vulnerable land rights, it is our responsibility as this department in conjunction with other departments such as employment and labour to take steps to correct such instances.

For that 2021-22 financial year the department has set aside a budget of R244 million for the acquisition of land for labour

tenants and farm dwellers as well as to honour cases settled for court orders. The budget will be used to acquire 6 150 hectares. The department in conjunction with the Office of the Special Master on Labour Tenants have targeted to finalise

1 500 labour tenants claims in the current financial year.

In recognising the multiplicity of challenges faced by farm workers, farm dwellers and labour tenants, the department, working with the Department of Justice and Legal Aid South Africa, continue to provide legal support and mediation services to persons facing unlawful evictions on farms.

The expeditious transfer of the 23 rural areas as administered by Transformation of Certain Rural Areas Act, TRANCRAA, is continuing apace. These areas, previously classified as coloured reserves, are in four provinces in South Africa. The land in these areas is held in trust for their respective communities. The process of transferring this land, in consultation with affected communities and municipalities, is advancing at a faster pace.

In the past financial year we have transferred land in Haarlem, Mamre and the biggest portion of Ebenhaesar. We are

currently busy with the transfer documents for Kranshoek, Zoar and Slangrivier as part of the 11 areas to be finalised in this financial year. The other remaining areas are at an advanced stage of implementation and all transfers will be completed in the 2022-23 financial year.

Communal land tenure remains a key component of land tenure reform. Communal areas are home to approximately 17 million people. The people living in communal areas mostly hold informal land tenure rights that are not recorded due to the collapse of land administration in the former homelands.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Agriculture is guiding on processes in this most important and sensitive area. Our department, working with the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, CoGTA, and the Department of Justice, is embarking on a consultation process with all stakeholders including traditional leadership organisations and communities. The consultations will culminate in a National Land Summit to be convened in September this year.

One of the significant threat to food security and livelihoods of our people in rural and farming areas is rural safety. Our

country has recently experienced various challenges including high levels of criminality and human rights violations.

Incidents reported to law enforcement authorities include murder, public violence and damage to property, racism, land invasions, unlawful evictions and stock theft.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee led by the hon Deputy President has established a task team consisting of our department, the Department of Police and CoGTA. This is a plan with intervention measures and has since been approved by the Inter-Ministerial Committee. These interventions will open dialogue amongst various role players and stakeholders including farmers’ association and farm dwellers. We also continue to support the rural safety plan led by the ministry of police.

The department is grappling with the challenges facing Community Property Associations, CPAs. We will continue to ensure that CPAs are capacitated and supported to be compliant with the Act within the means available to us. The department will also embark on an audit of all CPAs and the [Inaudible.] CPA must be compliant with the Act as over a period of two

years starting this financial year with a view to review the models of land holding for land reform.

Currently, more than 1 500 CPAs have been established and registered the nationally. In the past financial year I mentioned that we are going to support 477 CPAs ...

The House Chairperson (Ms R M P Lesoma): Hon Deputy Minister,

kindly wrap up now. You’re left with less than a minute.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL

DEVELOPMENT (Mr M Skwatsha): However, due to the difficult circumstances due to COVID-19 we were able to support four 436 CPAs.

The commission had an original budget of R3,6 billion which was reduced to R3,3 billion for this financial year after a reprioritisation process by the National Treasury.

I now wrap up, Chairperson. I just want to say that as I wrap up, I hope that the hon Mbabama was informed by the Moyeni family that the mess created by that past apartheid regime, we are busy dealing with it and we are in the process and that

farm is a private farm, belonging to a private owner but the Moyeni family has not been evicted and we are busy trying to allocate a farm for them.

As for hon Steyn [Time expired.]

Mr M G E HENDRICKS: Hon House Chair, Dr Archie Mafeje was one of the fought leaders in Africa as far as agriculture, land reform and rural development is concerned. And, I can see that the Minister has learned a few lessons from the leadership given by Dr Archie Mafeje, who was also my mentor since 1960, and we had a relationship until he died.

It is therefore my view, that we are in good hands with the leadership of the Minister. The Chairperson of the portfolio committee, hit the nail the head and said that as far as restitution is concerned, we need to look our ancestors in the eye. So if we look President Mandela in the eye, we need to assure him that we have not given up the struggle to return the land of the Palestinians to them and to ... [Inaudible.]

... and not only return the land to them, but also their beds and furniture that has been confiscated over the last few days.

It is not humanitarian to support those who are child killers and occupiers to have the right of defence. They have lost a right of defence and no civilised person will grant them the rights of defence if their child killers and also occupiers, and steal people’s furniture and people’s beds.

Hon House Chair, as far as restitution is concerned, I acknowledge the hard work of Deputy Minister Skwatsha. We are appreciated it, but we feel that there has been a lapse in his oversight. How can we allow the government to pay R4 million for a restitution house that costs R400 in district six?

The Deputy Minister needs to sit down with the Minister and explain why there has not been proper oversight, and I will be visiting district six on oversight visit with the Deputy President so that we can look President Mandela in the eye and tell him that the deed that he gave to the district six beneficiary trust and development trust will be honoured, in spite of other Ministers changing the trust deed which President Mandela gave, left right and centre.

We need to look him in the eye and restore the dignity and the promise that President Mandela made the people of district

six. Every family that was forcibly removed will have representative in district six, no matter what timelines there are, so that it can be a reminder for future generations of the effects of the group areas act, which we now she in the occupied Palestine. So, I hope South Africa will support Turkey and hopefully Russia, that as far as ... [Inaudible.]

... Airports Company South Africa, ACSA, is concerned, the soldiers and police our wiped off the face of that particular precinct. [Time expired.]

Mr N P MASIPA: House Chair, in rural parts of South Africa, the biggest challenge faced by our citizens, poverty, hunger and unemployment. A strong agro base economy should be a buffer against all these triple challenges. History has shown that when farmers do well, the whole nation prosper. During Covid-19 the farmers came to the rescue of the hungry. Farmers did not stop working in order to ensure that South Africa is food secured. Meanwhile, farmers are being shown the middle finger by the corrupt ANC government, even as they try to keep the country food secured.

Limited knowledge about agriculture, appropriation and budget, is a problem for the ANC government. They think that a

R16 billion allocation of agriculture is big money. When the corrupt ANC government see the bigger appropriation figures, they do not think about job sustainability.

Mr Nokola Mola, a farmer in Limpopo, is one of the victim of the Presidential Employment Stimulus Initiative. He received his voucher of R8 300. Little did he know that it needs to pay Sassa grant to the middle man who earned 25% commission, resulting in him buying items of R6 225 only. Prices of calf self-starter pellets, which normally costs R300, is priced at R633. Yellow maize of 50kilograms which goes one R145 is priced at R455. Lucerne that cost R100, is at R400. These prices are inflated between 100% and 300%.

When the DA welcomed the stimulus package, they did not expect middlemen to generate over 50% profit. The DA expected real jobs on the farms. The ANC government which is so corrupt, it’s reliance on middleman is killing hope of commercialised in black farmers in this country. Worst of all, drought has not abated in parts of central Karoo, Eastern and Northern Cape as yet, whilst farmers in the corrupt ANC government received patent from job allocations due to middleman who

helped himself with Sassa grant money meant for struggling farmers.

The DA government in the Western Cape has continued to support struggling farmers with fodder, without inflating their prices, to help them keep jobs on the farms, which is the right thing to do. Seven years’ drought cannot be found with one season’s rain, but the corrupt ANC government, withdrew the funding support in the midst of farmer struggles.

The DA conducted oversight at ... {Inaudible.] ... This strategic institution plays an important role in fighting animal diseases and pest and, they are struggling financially whilst monies are wasted on the middle man who adds no value.

The DA ... [Inaudible.] ... at the corrupt ANC government, to strengthen bio security after the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Limpopo in 2019. A budget of R499 million was allocated - no tangible programmes or results are in place to show the value for money. And now, we are faced with avian influenza and no bio for security. A mere R3 million was allocated. My plea to you, hon Minister, is to stop wasting taxpayers’ money on middle man and prioritize farmers,

sustainable jobs and national food security. I thank you, Chair.

Ms M E TLHAPE: Hon House Chairperson, Ministers, Deputy ministers, hon members. House Chair, let me join my colleagues in the debate of today Vote 29 of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. First and foremost, hon Steyn, hon Minister has just reassured the farmers, once more in South Africa that no farmer that is successful, that has a valid lee shall be evicted. And instead there’s provision to allocate them land that is not encumbered, including support to make them productive.

We will continue hon Steyn to chop and change Legislation and policies, review them to suit our people, to make sure that more land is on the hands of our people, including amending Section 25 of the Constitution. It is resolve of the ANC, the

54 Conference, to accelerate the rollout of title deeds to Black South Africans, to guarantee their security of tenure and provide them with collateral. That is why today the Ultra Amendment Bill that seeks to address challenges of individual security tenure is before this Parliament.

Hon Montwedi, Deputy Minister, DM Skwatsha, has just outlined the continued plans to put more land on the hands of our peoples and together me and you know that this House has resolved, that challenges of farm dwellers is the responsibility now of the portfolio committee, including Labour, to go out there and deal with the appalling conditions. And I trust that me, and you will do justice to that. I am happy that you alluded to the evictions in the Western Cape. And, we want to congratulate the department through Minister Skwatsha, Deputy Minister, who’s always there, to intervene on behalf of the ANC.

Hon Cebekhulu, thanks to reaffirming in the committee’s recommendations, let us continue to monitor implementation throughout this year.

Hon Breedt is bemoaning 52% of transfers and subsidies, the agriculture, like you say, it’s a concurrent function and these moneys will go to where implementation has to happen. Considering the budget constraints, the department comes now with another target of preventive measures against diseases through bio security targets, that will considerably reduce

its spread and contain foot and mouth, disease, swine fever

... [Inaudible.] ...flu.

We want to congratulate the department, for coming not only with reactive measures, but being proactive with preventive measures.

The land bank hon Breedt, has never squandered the money for this department. It was returned and it is there on record, even reported to the portfolio committee. We in fact appreciate the support from Treasury to make sure that these entities allocated funds for this financial year.

Minister Didiza continue to do your work, your collaboration with the sector has made wonders. We have seen the growth in this sector of about 27,8%, in the first quarter of 2020. And currently, the projections are that, it will continue to grow at 13%, driven by the bumper maize crop of about 15,5 million tonnes that we are expecting. So, don’t listen to distractors, focus and continue to upgrade the performance of the sector.

Hon Zungula, I’m afraid that the train has left the station.

Your recommendations on Section 25 are bit late. The ad hoc

committee has just consolidated public hearings. And all your recommendations on other issues, come to the committee hon member, they have been taking care of, we will give you reports.

Thank you, hon DM Stock, for the department intervention on Moyane family again, and I hope that hon Mbabama, just like the ... [Inaudible.] ... matter that you brought before the Minister and the committee and the department. This Moyane family matter shall be resolved and continue to do the good work of bringing this problems, because we know that as individual members, as society, when the department gets such cases, they act with immediate effect to resolve these matters.

House Chairperson the ANC recognises the important role that agriculture plays in our economy, and we are appreciative of the strategic role that this sector plays as a springboard to industrial development. President Cyril Ramaphosa’ Sona 2020 address carried in it, an underlying theme of economic growth, job creation and transformation, amongst other things. He reiterated a statement that has been made several times before that, agriculture is one of the industries with great

potential for growth. There is a clear need for accelerated land reform programme to deal with skewed spatial planning, persistent land hunger, as well as ensure food security.

The 2021-2022 budget Vote 29 for the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, is critical to the realisation of agrarian transformation.

And hon Masipa, this Vote receives a small percentage share on the national budget, much less than 10% of the national budget that the African Union 2003, Maputo Declaration on agriculture and food security, said must be allocated to agriculture. A position reiterated by African Union, AU, 2014 Malabo Summit.

Hon members, proper and effective land administration and management is essential to productive land use benefits. This programme is underfunded at R758,2 million, and the highest allocation was only in the previous medium term expenditure framework period. Behind the achievement of agrarian transformation, lies the task of creating sustainable and progressive agricultural cooperatives sector, including cooparative deproccion agropucuaria, crop production service, cps, notwithstanding funding constraints. We take note that

not enough resources are made available towards the development of cooperatives in the country, as less than R80 million has been allocated for this purpose.

Cooperatives and, cps development in the country will require considerable funding. And we urge the department not only to be concerned about cps compliance to Legislation by their efficiency, administration and operations to the benefit of land claimants.

Hon House Chairperson, a total R886 million has been allocated towards trade and marketing and economic development programme within the department. Access to local and international markets by your local producers is very important and will impact positively to growth of the sector as well as a change of expertise knowledge. Last year in 2020, South Africa agricultural export equal to almost R150 billion, about 3% increase from previous year’s economic performance and this has a potential to increase, given the unfolding opportunities offered by the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement.

The National Agricultural Marketing Council has been allocated R47,3 million to work towards the creation of a viable and

inclusive agricultural marketing system contributing to food security, economic growth and development. Some of the funds allocated will be used to link small scale producers, with commercial agricultural markets. And this, hon members, is important, especially for rural emerging small scale farmers who are faced with multiple barriers of entry into the market.

Members will remember that national emerging red meat development programme implemented by Namark as some private partners, has helped to improve market access and the quality of animals, thus participating in the red meat export industry. That is said to be worth to be R22 billion.

Hon House Chairperson, the ANC made a commitment to develop emerging and small scale farmers, and increase agricultural production, invest in agricultural research and smart technologies, the allocation of about R1,2 billion to Agricultural Research Council, well help innovate technologies that will improve agricultural productivity to all our farmers out there, we wish you a good harvest in this current season. Always remember that yours is a noble profession. It is a profession of hope, like Bread Bryan once said;

Because every year spring comes and every year we plan those crops and try again every single year.

The ANC supports this budget Vote 29, for the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. I thank you, House Chairperson.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL

DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much House Chair, for recognising me and also allow me an opportunity to respond to the debate. First and foremost, I would like to thank the Deputy Ministers as well as all the members of the portfolio committee and members who may not necessarily be sitting in the portfolio committee, but from other parties who have made valuable inputs, that we are taking into consideration on issues that they would like us to take note of. Hon Tlhape and other members have also responded to some of the issues that has been raised by members.

*IsiZulu:*

Make ngithi nje ngesintu, ngiyabonga ikakhulukazi kubalimi ngoba kwesinye isikhathi uma sihleli kule Ndlu yesiShayamthetho, siyaye singaqondi ukuthi yini abalimi

abayibonayo. Yebo, zikhona izinsolo lapho kwesinye isikhathi bebona sengathi kufunele silungise njengoMnyango. Kodwa okuningi bayabonga ukuthi lolo sizo uMnyango olwenzile luhambe lwaba negalelo elikhulu emsebenzini yabo yokulima.

Ngiyafisa ukuthi mhlawumbe ngesinye isikhathi sithi noma sigxeka, kodwa sikhumbule ukuthi ngempela masingabi sesikhuluma esimithiyo. Ngikhulume nje ngodadewethu, uzakwethu, u-Steyn izinto ayaye azisondeze eMnyangweni ukuthi sizibheke njengawo wonke amalungu uma enezikhalazo.

Siyazilandela futhi sibuyisele izimpendulo. Kuhle kwesinye isikhathi sisho ukuthi: Hhawu, siyabonga ukuthi kukhona enikwenzile.

*Siswati*:

Ngitsandza kusho futsi kutsi sibonga kakhulu tsine ngoba loku lokwentiwe nguMengameli Ramaphosa kutsi abeke, Likomiti laboNgcongcoshe leliholwa nguBabe Mabuza, kute kwateke kutsi phela lokubuyiselwa kwemhlaba kuyakwati kutsi kube nekusekelwa lokwentiwa ngulamanye ematiko. Ngitsandza nje kusho kancane kutsi yini leyentiwe Litiko Lekuhlaliswa Kwebantfu.

Ngekuhlanganyela natsi kulamhlangano babona kutsi yini ngemphela tinkinga letikhungetse balimi labasakhasa.

*English*:

I would like to indicate what the Department of Water and Sanitation has done. They have reviewed their general authorisation for taking and storing of water in terms of Notice 538 of 2016. In terms of this notice, 2000 cubic metres of surface water could be taken from all the water management areas in specific rivers listed in the said notice. This adjustment is meant to ensure that, small holder farmers get access to water for a period of 20 years without following the licence application. The Department of Water and Sanitation also gives priority to smallholder farmers in issuing the water use licence by providing and working towards a specific annual target of volumes of water that should be allocated to the smallholder farmers.

I am just mentioning this to you to indicate that, the coordination within the Interministerial Committee has actually gone a long way to make sure that our land reform, agricultural development and human settlements are actually coordinated. We have seen within the Ministerial Committee how other line functions of departments which are not necessarily having land as their core business, have even made a contribution of some of the pockets of land that are within,

which shows the commitment of this ANC led government in the area of land reform,

I must say that I was a bit perturbed when hon Montwedi was making his intervention, which actually are not congruent to the realities on the ground. Yes, there may be challenges, but the issue of the lawsuit of R2 billion by black farmers is new to my ears. It would be interesting to hear from hon Montwedi, where is that happening. Who are those farmers? What are the issues that they are taking government to court for?

I also would like to say, we have continued with our work in terms of our international responsibilities. I would like to thank our agricultural utter chairs in a number of countries, who have really ensured that market access is improved. I would like to also say, in respect of our participation in the African Union, AU, Southern African Development Community, SADC, Food and Agriculture Organisation, G20, we have made sure that the interest of our farmers is uppermost, because it is these instruments for coordination that enable us to actually make better our agricultural environment for our farmers.

Therefore, I would like to say thank you to everyone who participated, including you Chair and the Chair who started this meeting for directing us in an appropriate manner. Thank you very much.

Debate concluded.

The Mini-Plenary rose at 18:43