**BUDGET VOTE NO 29: AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

1. Chairperson, the EFF rejects Budget Vote 29 of the department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform.
2. It is now 27 years since the country attained political freedom, 25 years since the adoption of the constitution, and 23 years since the thousands of people in the country lodged their land restitution claims.
3. In 1994, you promised to return 30% of the land back to black people by 1999. Today, less than 10% of the land has been 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 of black progress.
4. Today, your department faces more than R2 billion in lawsuits from black farmers who have been frustrated and evicted from farms owned by your department. In what world is it correct for a department run by natives to evict successful black farmers from state owned land? Why do you hate black people so much?
5. Not only have you evicted black farmers from the 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.
6. Black farm workers are evicted on a daily basis from farms they were born and grew up in. black farmworkers are paid less than the minimum wage, they don’t get their leave days, they get paid with wine in the vineyards of the Western Cape. Pregnant black women are not given their maternity leave. All this is happening because of your chronic fear for white people.
7. As if that was not enough Minister, you run an administration that is woefully incompetent, with no appreciation of the crucial importance of your office in the transformation of this country.
8. You are yet to finalize land restitution claims that were lodged in 1998. Many of those responsible for lodging those claims died without even seeing their claims processed.
9. In the few instances where you claim that these restitution claims have been resolved, such as the case of the 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 sowed divisions in communities, in order to allow whites to continue benefiting.
10. All these challenges can be resolved. Our proposition remains as follow:
11. We must amend the constitution to allow for the expropriation of land without compensation. This must be an unambiguous amendment, not the obfuscation that has been proposed by the ANC that makes reference to vague notions of nil compensation. Any amendment to the constitution that maintains the status quo will be rejected.
12. There must be an ambiguous commitment to end private ownership of land in that constitutional amendment. Land is not a commodity, it is a public resource that must be enjoyed by all, not only those who have resources to buy the land.
13. Part of that amendment must include the end of land restitution as a land reform programme. We rather need to have a strong land redistribution component, driven by a capable and unwavering State.
14. 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.
15. Land in urban areas must be rapidly released to cater for the growing need of land for settlement. And in the meantime, there must be an immediate end to the eviction of people who have occupied land for settlement. Rather, municipalities must be forced to provide services to these settlements.
16. These are the basic minimum demands, that will get our land reform on track. We don’t need you to hide behind
17. South Africa is at an important juncture, where the discourse is shifting away from the neoliberal conception of land reform and agricultural production, and towards a complete reconfiguration of 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 and by the EFF.
18. Anything less than a speedy and fundamental resolution of the land question in which land shall be in the custodianship of the state, invites nothing but our contempt.
19. We therefore reject this budget vote.