

VOTE 39: RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND REFORM
Budget Debate Vote Speech

By Hon. Inkosi RN Cebekhulu MP
Spokesperson on Rural Development

Delivered at Parliament in the E249

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Honourable Chairperson,

Amongst the primary targets of this department is the management, monitoring, restoration and restitution of land amongst the previously dispossessed and marginalised rural people of South Africa, whilst ensuring sustainable rural livelihoods and fair employment in an environment of increasing social and economic advancement for all South Africans.

The Department has been working closely with land claims commissioner to investigate and process all land claims lodged.

At first it was also assisting in comprehensive agricultural programme jointly with department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries with its role being to assist in with the improvement of food security.

Acceleration of the settlement of land claims and the redistribution of land shall remain a key challenge for the department. This has now given birth to the 'land expropriation without compensation' slogan which is currently being so actively voiced by many members of this parliament as well as the public.

This issue which will shortly be before the Constitutional Review Committee in the 3rd Term of this parliament must be looked at very carefully. The IFP maintain the view that 'expropriation without compensation' should never be the default position of government but should rather, if employed at all, only be used in the most extraordinary, marginal and unique circumstances, as one of a possible basket of options available to address land reform in South Africa, once all other options have been exhausted.

Programmes by the department are failing miserably.

Rural development was introduced with the hope of emancipating the rural communities in communally shared land as well as farm dwellers. Yet what is actually transpiring in our communally shared land appears to be nothing but mere lip service. Those who were fortunate enough to be assisted in the agrarian and land tenure transformation programme, the 'One Household, One Hectare' initiative are even without water to irrigate their vegetables.

Additionally such transformation was only provided to very few amongst our small holder farmers who actually received assistance, with very little else taking place in communally shared land.

Farms that were commercially productive and employing seasonal workers are now lying fallow. There are also reports employees on some of these farms that were leased to individuals in terms of agrarian transformation programmes, being exploited and not receiving their wages at the end of the month.

In conclusion, rural development is failing in this country. We still find large numbers of families and individuals flocking to big towns and cities with the hope of finding employment, only to end-up building temporal informal shelters occupying open land municipalities have reserved for other developmental projects.

Subject to the above concerns the Inkatha Freedom Party will support this budget vote debate.

I thank you.

Inkosi RN Cebekhulu, MP