**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**2531. Mr D W Macpherson (DA) to ask the Minister of Trade and Industry:**

With reference to the ongoing debate on the expropriation of land without compensation and the nationalisation of the SA Reserve Bank (SARB), (a) on what number of occasions have representatives from his department met with their American counterparts to unpack the unfolding debate on both matters, (b) what has the feedback been from each meeting and (c) what effect has he found that the expropriation of land without compensation and the nationalisation of the SARB had with respect to South Africa’s continued participation in the African Growth and Opportunity Act, 2000? NW2818E

**Response:**

1. **The dti** officials have met with the US Embassy no less than three times between June and August 2018. All these discussions were aimed at exchanging views and sharing information on bilateral trade and investment issues between South Africa and the US. Discussion on the ongoing debate on land expropriation arose in this context, and was not more prominent than other issues under discussion. The nationalisation of the SA Reserve Bank (SARB) was never raised in the discussions between **the dti** and the US Embassy.
2. The discussions have been mostly to discuss recent developments such as the US Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminium imports into the US and their impact on South Africa’s AGOA benefits. In the few instances where the US raised the land issue, **the dti** provided an update and explained the transparent and responsible approach that will be followed in decision making. The Embassy emphasised that the US government would not be taking sides but had an interest in seeing a legal and constitutional resolution of the issue.
3. In all the meetings with US Embassy, no links were made on land expropriation without compensation and AGOA. The US State Department, as indicated in its statement, recognises the complexities of the land reform programme and its intention to ensure equitable distribution of land in South Africa. There is also recognition that South Africa’s land reform programme will be undertaken through a Constitutional process that is inclusive and transparent and will be carried out in accordance with the laws of the country. The World Bank has also published a study on “Overcoming the legacy of exclusion in South Africa” which states that a well- managed system of land distribution is essential to redressing the country’s economic inequality. The President’s statements on this issue have also assisted to communicate a clear message to all trade partners on the approach to land reform which aims to ensure that the land reform aims to boost the productive use of land to promote sustainable development. Furthermore, land reform will be undertaken taking due consideration of the need to promote food security and the implications for other sectors of the economy. There is also recognition of the ability of South Africa to handle complicated issues of national interest having managed to find a peaceful solution in resolving apartheid and in moving towards a democratic dispensation.