**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 571**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 4-2022 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**571. Mr M K Montwedi (EFF) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

With regard to an audit finding made by the Auditor-General against Agricultural Land Holding Account for the 2019-20 financial year, which indicated that a previous owner has been using the farm after acquisition by the entity since 2013, how does her department intend to assist black farmers who continue to be exploited by white capitalist farmers, including all those farmers that have not yet been identified?  **NW639E**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

Yes, Mr. Classen was indeed in the farm on the joint venture arrangement known to the Department. Recently the relationship between the two parties has deteriorated and to that extent the department served Mr Classen with the eviction letter signed on the 1st of February 2022 whilst on the other hand the lessee has taken this matter to court.

In order to assist black farmers, the Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development is using the policy and the condition stipulated in the lease agreement to ensure that farmers do not enter into any partnership without the consent of the Department. This is to ensure that any relationship that will be establish with anyone is fair and non-exploitive.

Paragraph 5.7 of the State Land Lease and Disposal Policy makes provision that “The Lessee shall utilise the Farm in line with standard farming practices and may not deviate there from substantially without the prior written consent of the Lessor, who shall exercise this discretion taking into account prevailing agricultural and business conditions”.