

Presentation to Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform on Tenure Rights

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Background

- On 16 March 2011 heard submissions from civil society, farmers' unions, NGOs, and farm workers' labour unions on tenure related problems on farms.
- The primary purpose of the meeting was to find out what solutions could be put into place.
- The Portfolio Committee found, amongst other things that the lack of credible information on conditions on farms and evictions was hampering progress.

Background(continued)

- Subsequent to the Portfolio committee hearings, the Green Paper on Land Reform was published and a National Reference Group with sub-working groups established by the Minister to engage on the contents of the Green Paper.
- There is a working group dealing with land tenure – all the ngo's and organised agriculture are invited to the meetings of the working group.
- The working group discusses policy, legislation and implementation.

Background(continued)

- Agri SA has undertaken to make its views on expropriation available to the Portfolio Committee, which it has done by way of its Land Policy document.
- Agri SA is also fully supportive of research to be done by an independent institution.
- Such research need to look, not only at the causes and extent of evictions and weaknesses in the legislation and implementation, but also more generally at labour conditions on farms.

Way forward

- Agri SA will support independent research into conditions on farms and the extent of and reasons for evictions from farms by an objective institution.
- Such research could then be used as a basis for policy formulation, legislative amendments and/ or improved implementation.
- The Land Rights Management Board as envisaged in the Green Paper, which will consist of stakeholders such as government, ngo's, representatives of farm dwellers and organised agriculture has the potential to assist in defusing the conflict over tenure rights on farms.
- Agri SA is strongly in favour of mediation as a tool for solving tenure disputes. A memorandum on mediation in land disputes was made available to the Portfolio committee.

Thank you

