



MINISTER

AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Honourable House Chairperson;

Honourable Minister Didiza;

Honourable Deputy Minister Capa;

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;

Honourable Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee;

Honourable Members;

Board Members of our Entities;

Senior Officials of the Department and State-Owned Entities;

Ladies and Gentlemen

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Tomorrow, 10 May 2023, it will be 29 years since the first democratically elected President was inaugurated. As we meet today, we should always remember where we come from. Indeed, we stand on the shoulders of giants.

Who can forget these lines which were shared in the National Assembly on that day?

***“Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world”*** (Nelson Mandela, 10 May 1994)

We also need to recall that the first Act he signed into law was the Restitution of Land Rights Act -22 of 1994.

**Honourable Chairperson:**

I now turn my attention to our programs,

Land Redistribution, Tenure Reform and Restitution of land rights constitute the backbone of land reform in our country. A lot still needs to be done for us to make a meaningful impact on the skewed land ownership patterns.

**2. Land Redistribution**

*2.1. Land acquisition*

To achieve the goal of equitable access of the land as enshrined in the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of South Africa, the Department acquires and allocates land under the land redistribution program. In the 2021/22 financial year we reported that we acquired 57 000 ha of land, in the 2022/23 financial year we acquired 51 000 ha of land through the Pro-Active Acquisition Land Acquisition strategy (PLAS), exceeding our target of 35 000 hectares.

In 2023/24 we intend to allocate 36 711 hectares with our allocated budget of R427 million. I should mention that the high land prices are still a challenge, the rejection by landowners of values determined by the Valuer

General remains a reality and a challenge especially in the Western Cape. This delays the finalisation of some land claims and land reform in general,

## *2.2. Land Tenure Reform*

In the previous financial year, we acquired 3154 hectares. The department has set aside a budget of R218 million for acquisition of land to address security of tenure, in this regard the department intends to acquire 5685 hectares of land in the current financial year.

The land to be acquired for tenure security addresses different land tenure needs including settlement of the Labour Tenants applications and Extension of Security of Tenure Act No. 62 of 1997 (ESTA) occupiers.

## *2.3. Labour Tenants and the Special Master*

To give effect to this constitutional promise, the Department has prioritized the settlement of outstanding labour tenants' claims. The Land Claims court appointed the Special Master on Labour Tenants to work with the Department on expediting the settlement of these labour tenants' claims. The Department received a total of 20 325 applications in seven (7) Provinces with most claims in KwaZulu Natal and Mpumalanga, a total of 10 992 claims have been finalized, with 9 333 claims still outstanding.

Honourable members, working with the office of the Special Master on Labour Tenants, a Labour tenant implementation plan has been developed and approved by the Land Claims Court. The Department is currently processing applications for awards of land by labour tenants. The Department is therefore working with the Special Master to settle all

the outstanding labour tenant claims as ordered by the Land Claims Court and targeting to finalize 758 labour tenant claims in the 2023/24 financial year.

The living conditions of farm dwellers remains a major concern for the Department. The Department has taken these findings of the Joint Portfolio Committee seriously and has since provided a report on interventions to address these challenges.

#### *2.4. Communal Property Associations (CPAs)*

Currently, more than 1 700 CPAs have been established and registered nationally. In the past financial year 2022/2023, we registered eighteen (18) CPAs and over 3 000 Communal Property Associations (CPAs) members received training on governance of these entities to ensure compliance with the Communal Property Associations Act.

We will further train 715 executive members on governance of these CPAs in the current financial year.

In 2021 we said that we will be starting with an audit of CPAs and that it would take two financial years. Today we can report that the audit was finalised at the end of April 2023 and the Department must still receive the report and consider the way forward.

The Provincial Presidential Izimbizo program really fast-tracked the Ministry's interaction with our CPAs. Although we were unable to meet

with all CPAs in a specific province, led by the Minister, we were at least able to interact with those needing urgent attention.

We thank the Honourable President for this initiative. After the Presidential Imbizo in Carolina, Mpumalanga, the Minister assigned the two Deputy Ministers to interact with CPAs in the three Districts, working with the MEC, we can report that this task was done and has had a positive impact. We visited Gert Sibande, Nkangala and Ehlanzeni Districts. Similar work was done in other provinces as well in collaboration with the respective MECs.

CPAs themselves must assist the Department by making sure that they work together and resolve their problems rather than taking each other to Court. More time must be spent on working the land and the business.

It must be emphasised that the executive is leading on behalf of the beneficiaries, for all the transactions they do on the land, they must account to the membership. The membership should have a voice on what is happening on their land and not be spectators.

## *2.5. Communal Tenure -TRANCRAA*

Communal tenure remains another priority for Land Reform, the process to expedite the transfer of the 23 rural areas (so called TRANCRAA areas) in four provinces in South Africa, classified as coloured reserves, where certain land is held in trust for the respective communities.

The four provinces are the Western Cape (12), Northern Cape (8), Eastern Cape (1) and the Free State (2). The transfer of these areas to communities has commenced despite underlying challenges in these historic areas that hampers progress of transfers.

Progress has been made, a total of 106 000 hectares have been transferred to the communities. The Government will continue to make efforts to ensure the deserving communities receive their land.

The Department has targeted to transfer 43 000 hectares of TRANCRAA land to residents in the affected Provinces. We intend to give Title Deeds to two TRANCRAA communities, Concordia in Northern Cape and Enon Bersheba – in Eastern Cape - within this financial year. This constitutes about 91 000 hectares.

## *2.6. Communal Tenure and Land Administration*

In order to resolve the Communal land tenure challenges facing our country, we reported during the previous Budget Vote Speech, that the Department of DALRRD in collaboration with COGTA and DJoc&CS concluded the consultation process by hosting a Summit which resulted in 38 outcomes that are currently being processed through Inter Ministerial Committee in Agriculture and Land Reform and shall be presented to Cabinet for approval. The Department further hosted a seminar with academics to solicit further inputs. The Department has started with the development of the New policy and Bill on Communal

Land Tenure and Administration in an attempt to address the communal land tenure and land administration issues.

### **3. RESTITUTION**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of June this year we will be marking 110 years since the enactment of the 1913 Natives Land Act which disposed and robbed millions of our people their land and consigned them to lives of deprivation and misery which had a devastating effect on social and economic position of black South Africans. There's no greater grief than the loss of ones' land.

2023 marks 29 years since the enactment of the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994 (Act No. 22 of 1994). We are determined to continue to highlight the importance of addressing the past land injustices, through the restitution process.

While we celebrate the milestones achieved for the thousands of people who have benefited through this programme, we are mindful of the frustration of those who are yet to receive their land back.

One of those milestones is the beautiful success story of Luyolo Land Claim (Simonstown), in the Cape Metro – Western Cape. As we speak, people who were forcibly removed are moving back into their houses, built for them in Simonstown. Soon we will be witnessing a mass “Going Back Home” celebration where more than eighty claimants will be receiving keys to their properties.

Amongst those claimants is a 76-year-old Mr Broadhurst Cona, who called me, requesting that I convey to the Minister and the Government of the Republic his appreciation for this achievement.

The Commission is committed to accelerate the settlement and finalisation of land claims through a backlog reduction strategy and the close monitoring of performance throughout the year.

A total of 82 761 land claims have been settled to date and many Communities who were previously displaced have received their land with some having opted for financial compensation.

The commission continues to report to the Land Claims Court in line with the LAMOSIA Constitutional Court judgment. The Commission was able to present the seventh report in March 2023 on the progress made, challenges and plans to deal with old order claims.

In the last financial year, the Commission settled 355 and finalised 429 claims at a cost of about R3 ,9 billion. We were able to meet our targets with the budget allocation.

In this financial year 349 claims will be settled, and 406 claims will be finalised with a budget of R3.9 billion.

There are many challenges that we continue to face in the process of



settling claims which delay the settlement process. There are both internal and external factors which we continue to address.

The sustainability of some projects remains a challenge as a result of the lack of post-settlement support, conflicts and instability within the Communal Property Associations. A case in point, the Fish River Sun Hotel, which forms part of the property awarded to Prudoe community is today in ruins because of thugs who have vandalised the place. A facility which could have contributed towards economic growth in the area and provided much needed jobs is now in a sorry state.

The Commission and the Department will continuously work to find meaningful solutions to these challenges.

#### **4. OFFICE OF THE VALUER GENERAL**

In fulfilling the vision of setting itself in the market as the centre of excellence and innovation in respect of all property valuations with a primary focus on land reform, the Office of the Valuer-General is making remarkable progress in this regard.

The Office of the Valuer-General continues to serve as a critical partner in enabling an efficient and effective land reform programme through the execution of just and equitable property valuations.

In the previous financial year, the OVG has received valuation requests which are over 200% higher than the previous financial year due to the increase in the number of valuation requests from land reform programme

and the OVG's new clients. The OVG having successfully boarded the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environmental Affairs and Department of Water and Sanitation is expecting to attract new government departments in the current financial year.

The Office of the Valuer-General will continue to play a critical role in the completion of land reform transactions in alignment with the targets as set out in the annual performance plan of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development for the 2023/24 financial year.

I am also pleased to report that the Ministerial Advisory Panel which was established in 2019 to review the Property Valuation Act 17 of 2014, has completed its groundwork and submitted a final report for the Minister's consideration. This report which aims to provide recommendations which will improve the systems and structures of the OVG, is expected to trigger and drive the initiatives of change which will affect the OVG's nature, role and mandate.

In the same breath, the OVG is further looking forward to investing in a formal programme of digital transformation. This digital transformation strategy is expected to transform and accelerate the delivery of the set strategic outcomes as defined in the 2023/24 Annual Performance Plan to the benefit of the OVG's internal business processes and the performance expectation of the overall clients.

The human capacity challenges that have been encountered in the past three years are also receiving attention through the review of the current

business operating model which is expected to yield a turn-around strategy that will ensure adequate staff recruitment, retention and improved organisational performance.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

*Honourable House Chair:*

I started my contribution with a quote from our Icon – Nelson Mandela and I wish to end with one of his quotes:

***“Land creates stability and opportunities. For some, it simply means a place to live, securely without threat of removal or eviction. For others it is creating opportunity for the poor to provide for themselves, their families and their communities and to contribute to the wealth of the country as a whole, through productive agricultural enterprises”.***

This is an invite to all stakeholders to work for the benefit of the those dispossessed of their land; including the opposition.

I thank you.