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Draft law on land expropriation to be fast-tracked through Parliament – Cronin

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THE Department of Public Works hopes to fast-track a new expropriation bill through Parliament as soon as possible, Deputy Minister of Public Works Jeremy Cronin says.

He told Parliament's public works committee yesterday that the bill was

"non-controversial", and had been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

He said Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi was expected to sign off on the bill by month-end. Public comment would then be sought.

After that the bill would go to the National Economic Development and

Labour Council (Nedlac), a body that brings together government, labour, business and communities and is mandated to process draft legislation which would have a significant socio-economic impact.

The bill would be enacted in the second half of the year, Cronin said. Expropriation, particularly of land,

is a sensitive topic in South Africa.

The last time Parliament dealt with an expropriation draft law, in 2008, the bill was withdrawn after public hearings.

Still on the statute books is an apartheid-era 1975 act that allows the government to expropriate land in the public interest.