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ANC will support constitutional amendment to expropriate land without compensation

President Cyril Ramaphosa. (Kopano Tlape, GCIS)

President Cyril Ramaphosa announced on Tuesday that the ANC would support an amendment to a section of South Africa's Constitution to "explicitly" expropriate land without compensation.

On Monday, ANC secretary general Ace Magashule told journalists Ramaphosa brought up the emotive issue of land during his political report and that there were things the ANC government could "implement immediately".

The ANC resolved to expropriate land without compensation at its watershed national elective conference in December, which it followed up in February when it supported an EFF motion to expropriate without compensation in the National Assembly.

The governing party also held a land summit in May where it decided there was no need to amend the Constitution. Instead, it opted to test current legislation. This, the party explained, was because many believed Section 25 in its current form allowed expropriation of land without compensation.

The party's land summit had also decided that land expropriation without compensation could also go ahead, adding that certain national departments such as public works, basic education and human settlements already had the power to expropriate land without compensation.

Ramaphosa's announcement comes as Parliament's Joint Constitutional Review Committee's public hearings reach finality. The hearings have been held to establish whether there is a need to amend Section 25 of the Constitution.

The committee, which has been hearing the public's views on the matter, is currently in the Western Cape - the last province it intends to visit - before sorting through the various views on the issue.

South Africa's current economic situation was also discussed at the lekgotla, with the hope of developing a stimulus package that would spark economic growth.

Magashule said the party was trying to figure out how it could intervene when it came to the high cost of living in the wake of VAT increases and petrol price hikes.

