

2016 Expropriation Bill withdrawn to avoid ‘parallel proccess’ on land

THE portfolio committee on public works yesterday resolved to withdraw the Expropriation Bill so that it can be reintroduced after the Joint Constitutional Review Committee finishes its work on expropriation of land without compensation.

“The committee has observed that the work of the Joint Constitutional Review Committee is now approaching a conclusion and the recommendations are soon to be made available once concluded before the end of September, which will lead to new parliamentary processes, including legislative processes, and new directions

should become clearer before the end of 2018,” reads a statement from committee chairperson Humphrey Mmemenzi.

“The committee is aware that this process will lead to the minister of Public Works re-introducing a revised Expropriation Bill that will possibly include clauses that deal with expropriation of land without compensation.

“That bill will give more clarity on how South Africans should deal with the land question and the property issues that today still favour the minority at the expense of the majority of South Africans, in par-

ticular black people.”

The committee believes withdrawing this bill in its current form will assist and avoid running a parallel process while there is a committee of Parliament that is still busy with the possible [review] of section 25 of the Constitution.

“The committee is happy and hopes for a better piece of legislation that will include the inputs from South Africans across the country on the land and property question,” Mmemenzi said.

The committee has adopted a report that recommends to the National Assem-

bly that the current Expropriation Bill be rejected. Mmemenzi believes that the National Assembly might deal with this matter as soon as next week.

The ANC study group on public works welcomed the withdrawal.

“As the ANC, we reiterate our commitment to pursue the expropriation of land without compensation as one of the measures to ensure that land reform is implemented in a way that increases agricultural production, improves food security and ensures that the land is returned to those from whom it was taken under colonialism

and apartheid,” said the ANC whip in the committee, Freddie Adams, in a statement.

The bill had a fraught passage through Parliament. After it was adopted in 2016, then president Jacob Zuma had to refer it back to Parliament after questions were raised about the public participation process.

The bill sought to bring expropriation in line with the Constitution. Current expropriation legislation dates back to the 1970s.

— News24.