

THE Thuma Mina adage found resonance in Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Thoko Didiza's budget vote speech.

She talked about the work that her department has done and intends to do following her return to the department as a Cabinet minister in the sixth administration.

What she tabled in her speech added some kind of palpability in showing how her department has moved, at least in dealing with its share of contributing to the overall reconfiguration and the reorganisation of the state as it was indicated in the president's State of

Didiza's quest to enhance service delivery

the Nation Address.

She spoke of agriculture as one of the sectors that has a potential to contribute to the economy as well as sprucing up job creation – and to that effect she indicated the importance of improving agricultural production, that is linked to market access as well as plans to commercialise black farmers.

Improvements include the recruitment of vets and animal health specialists; the upgrading of existing facilities to ensure livestock vaccination that's in line with international standards;

the regularisation of Communal Property Associations to comply with the Communal Property Association Act; streamlining agricultural finance by aligning the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme from the Department of Agriculture with relevant programmes from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform; revitalisation of land that was acquired through restitution of land rights; development of a deliberate strategy to enable youth and women to move into the agricultural sector; collaborating with

Statistics South Africa to develop a farmer register that will indicate how many producers we have in the country to ensure targeted support to farmers; reviewing the process of land acquisition and allocation; revitalisation of the Agri-parks programme; resolving outstanding labour relations; and lastly, engaging the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure to improve office infrastructure of the newly merged department across the country were a plethora of tasks tabled by the minister in her quest to re-engineer the department to become an epitome of service delivery. Kudos.

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