

# Cabinet mulling land reform recommendations

Information from SA Government Communication and Information System

Cabinet is still considering the findings and recommendations of the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture, President Cyril Ramaphosa said on Thursday, 22 August 2019.

“Cabinet still needs to consider the findings and recommendations of the panel, after which it will be able to pronounce on the implementation of this report,” he said. “We hope this will dovetail with the work being done by the National Assembly on the land question.”



President Cyril Ramaphosa responds to questions in the National Assembly.

This comes after Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture, which was established in September 2018 to provide expert advice on the critical task of land reform – recently produced several far-reaching recommendations aimed at correcting the skewed distribution of land in the country.

The report recommends legal mechanisms to recognise, register, record and enforce a continuum of land rights, so that all people become rights holders. Among others, the panel has called on government to immediately identify well-located and unused or under-utilised land and buildings for the purposes of urban settlement and to prioritise poor tenants for upgrading their rights. The panel also argued that expropriation without compensation is not, by itself, a solution to land reform, but is just one of the means of acquiring land.

The report goes much further to address questions of who should benefit, and promotes a participatory and democratic, area-based approach to identifying land needs. The panel's recommendations complement and reinforce the work being done by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Land Reform.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee is making progress in the development of the National Spatial Development Framework, which will guide efforts to ensure land use and planning is developmental and transforms people's lives, the president said.

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure has released 100 parcels of land for land restitution purposes. For the remaining parcels of land, land use studies are being finalised, which include land identified for human settlements.

"Progress is being made in the development of an integrated model for farmer support," the president said. "The model entails the provision of financial and non-financial support through the value chain. It is intended that, together with the work already underway, the panel's recommendations will inform the finalisation of a comprehensive, far-reaching and transformative land reform programme."

Addressing members of parliament, Ramaphosa said the acceleration of land reform is essential for the transformation of society, for tackling poverty and growing the economy. "Through providing poor South Africans with land on which to farm, to live and to run businesses, we will be able to break the cycle of poverty in which many people are trapped. The report of the Advisory Panel has been presented to cabinet and has been made available to the public. The report provides a detailed and critical assessment on progress since 1994 and outlines some of the weaknesses in our policies and programmes," he said.