

# Agri SA on Expropriation Bill

■ **Roelof de Jonge**

Agri SA submitted its commentary on the Expropriation Bill electronically to the Portfolio Committee on Public Works and Infrastructure on the 22nd of February, according to Annelize Crosby who is the head of Agri SA's Land Affairs. This was mandated by all the organisation's affiliates.

Agri SA had commissioned two studies in support of its commentary, namely a study on the economic impact of an approach of zero compensation or minimal compensation, as well as a study on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the agricultural sector.

"Agri SA also sought legal advice on the matter, which was used in compiling the written submission."

Briefly, Agri SA's submission entails the following highlights:

- Agri SA represents the largest group of rural landowners and wishes to ensure a sustainable, viable sector.
- The farmers of today cannot alone be held liable for historic events and cannot be expected to carry the burden of Apartheid-era dispossessions.
- Agri SA remains firm in its support for free market principles.
- Landowners whose land is expropriated should always have the right to approach the courts.
- Reference is made to the study on the potential economic impact of zero compensation or minimal compensation, specifically the impact on capital formation, as well as the study on the impact of the pandemic on the agricultural sector.
- An international perspective is provided, namely that the constitutions of most countries require that compensation be paid. Reference is made to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation's study on best practice for compulsory acquisition of

property.

- The lessons learnt from Zimbabwe and Venezuela are shared to illustrate the disastrous effect that their land policies had on the respective economies.

- The implications in terms of potential loss of tax income for the government, as well as the potential negative impact on food security, are also highlighted

- Commentary is provided on specific definitions and clauses, such as the definition of 'expropriation' and 'public interest' and the zero-compensation clauses.

- Agri SA believes strongly that landowners should immediately receive adequate and effective compensation, which will enable them to start again elsewhere, and that they should not be worse off because of expropriation.



Annelize Crosby, the head of Agri SA's Land Affairs.