

PRESS RELEASE

LAND EXPROPRIATION - AGRICULTURAL OBJECTIVES ARE PREREQUISITES

Fanie Brink - Independent Agricultural Economist

"The primary agricultural objectives must be taken into account in the debate on land expropriation without compensation, otherwise it will not succeed, and South Africa will become an underdeveloped country like most other African countries," says Fanie Brink, an independent agricultural economist.

He said in all the statements that were made about land expropriation, clear prerequisites have not been defined for the crucial importance of the basic objectives of agriculture, which means that the departure point of the government's land reform policy and the support it has received from the organised agriculture and private business sector is not correct.

These goals are, firstly, the promotion of the profitability and sustainability of agricultural production based on acceptable scientific and economic principles to ensure the financial survival of agricultural producers.

Secondly, the support and promotion of the agricultural industry by addressing the threats posed for the industry by the international and local political and economic developments and the utilisation of the opportunities that new technological and economic developments will bring about to ensure food security for the country.

Thirdly, the establishment of a political and economic policy environment which will improve the profitability and enable the industry to make a greater contribution to the economic growth of the country.

"Food security can only be sustainable if food production is profitable."

The same objectives apply equally to all the other industries in the secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy that must also be supported because economic growth is totally dependent on the profitability of all the individual industries in the economy.

These goals have not been taken into consideration during the public hearings on land expropriation that took place throughout the country, because the General Assembly of Parliament has simply deleted the predetermined prerequisites from the ANC's original resolution taken during its conference last year. Consequently, it was not included in the terms

of reference of the Constitutional Review Committee that will make recommendations on Article 25 of the Constitution to the Parliament.

The current political and economic policy of the government cannot create the prerequisites for sustainable agricultural production, food security and economic growth, while a plan for the future of the commercial agricultural industry in the country does not exist. The political solutions for land reform will not address the problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality because these problems can only be solved by the creation of higher economic growth and prosperity.

The average long-term contribution of the agriculture industry in South Africa to economic growth is approximately 2,5%. In most of the underdeveloped countries in Africa, the agriculture contributes about 85% to economic growth because the rest of the economy has fallen apart in these countries and because almost just as many people have become dependent on the agriculture. In a developing country such as South Africa and the developed countries in the world, the proportional contribution of agriculture decreases as the other industries in secondary and tertiary sectors develops at a faster tempo, which is a normal feature of the agriculture in these countries.

"If these primary objectives of agriculture do not form the basis for any land expropriation plan, it will plunge black farmers in poverty and the country in hunger without any economic growth being achieved," Brink said.

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