

Cape Town, South Africa, March 14 (Infosplusgabon) - Nearly 25 years after the collapse of apartheid, white South Africans still own about 72% of farms, followed by mixed race “coloureds” who own 15%, Indians 5% and blacks just 4%.

This indication was given by President Cyril Ramaphosa while addressing proposed land reforms in the National Assembly on Wednesday.

PANA reports that the ruling African National Congress (ANC) has hit a nerve by proposing that land should be expropriated without compensation to correct the ills of the past.

Ramaphosa said his government needs to create a comprehensive programme of land redistribution that strengthens the property rights of all South Africans, increases agricultural production and improves food security.

"The dispossession of land of the indigenous people of this country is what I characterize as the original sin that continues to constrain our people. The return of land is fundamental to our

society, and it is critical to improve the lives of poor people in our country," he said.

However, the official opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) warned that land expropriation without compensation has been a disastrous model wherever it's been tried and tested and therefore proves to be "bad principle, bad policy, and bad politics".

"Quite frankly, the debate on expropriation allows the ANC a get out of jail free card. It gives them the perfect cover to avoid accounting to our people for their massive failures over the period of two decades to implement land reform seriously," said DA MP Thandeka Mbabama.

Earlier in the day, the Rural Development and Land Reform Portfolio Committee issued a report, saying "the need to pay compensation has not been the most serious constraint on land reform in South Africa to date".

The report, chaired by former President Kgalema Motlanthe, further revealed that other constraints, including increasing "evidence of corruption by officials, the diversion of the land reform budget to elites, lack of political will, and lack of training and capacity", have proved more serious stumbling blocks to land reform..

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