

**BUDGET VOTE 27
LAND AFFAIRS**

**I C DITSHETELO
17 JUNE 2009**

Despite the significant progress made by the Democratic Government of South Africa over the past 15 years to address poverty, people in rural areas are still faced with high levels of poverty which results from lack of access to land and basic services. Since poverty alleviation is top priority of Government, it makes sense that rural development becomes one of the main priorities for Government over MTEF period.

So the Department has the following key priorities to consider, they include:

1. Finalising outstanding claims.
2. Speeding up the formulation of policy and legislation in order to regulate access to, and ownership of land by foreigners.
3. Linking land and Agrarian Reform to the Broader Integrated and Sustainable Rural Development Strategy.
4. Providing adequate post-settlement support to land reform beneficiaries and,
5. Improving capacity to deliver.

In this Budget Speech, the Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, alluded to the fact that Land Reform received an additional R1,8 billion for rural development and Agrarian Reform. Furthermore, a total budget for the next three years for land reform rose to R2,03 billion which includes a budget for a Land Reform and Restitution Programme.

2.

In this financial year the budget for the Department had declined from 2008/09 and 2009/10 by 13,11 percent, driven by the decline in capital budget allocated to restitution programme. The decrease in budget for the department is of serious concern. Considering the fact that in the last year the department indicated that it requires an average of R15 billion per financial term or an estimated R74 billion to deliver the remaining approximately 21 million hectares of land in order to meet its target redistributing 30 percent of white owned agricultural land by 2014.

The Parliament must be, updated regularly on the progress made in the finalisation of the Restitution Programme and the cost implications thereof.

It should monitor the Letsema Campaign, and monitor the new trading account to make sure that it is used for the benefit of land beneficiaries.

I thank you.