

Land reform an economic necessity, says Ramaphosa

Land reform is not only about correcting a grave historical injustice, it is an absolute economic necessity, says President Cyril Ramaphosa.



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“Accelerated land reform, undertaken within the framework of the country’s Constitution and in adherence with the law, can be an effective catalyst for greater agricultural production, rural development, employment creation and broader economic growth.

“Emerging farmers will have the land, security and support they need to establish viable businesses. Poor people in urban areas will have affordable housing in areas that are located near economic opportunities and social amenities,” the president said, speaking at the Discovery Leadership Summit in Sandton, Johannesburg, on Thursday, 1 November.

Ramaphosa said through fair, transparent and comprehensive land reform, the country seeks to unlock the full economic potential of land and its people.

“The current focus on accelerated land reform is therefore a vital opportunity to address economic exclusion. Without assets, most South Africans are unable to accumulate wealth, are unable to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, and are unable to finance whatever entrepreneurial ventures they may conceive,” the president said.

Lack of access to land and other assets

Ramaphosa said another reason for economic exclusion is the lack of access by black South Africans to land and other assets.

Government is intensifying the implementation of land reform and restitution programmes so that South Africans can leverage land for the betterment of their lives and the growth of the economy.

Last month Ramaphosa said more than 20 land claimants will have their land returned to them as part of government's land reform programme.

"It is our firm belief that communities must take great interest in their land restitution processes and be active participants in all enterprises and activities taking place on their land.

"The concept that will be developed through piloting the Mkhwanazi land claim settlement will be rolled out to other land claims across a number of sectors and industries. This is the first of a number of land claims that we aim to unlock over the next few months," Ramaphosa said at the time.

Parliament is currently considering public submissions on the proposal for the Constitution to be amended to pave the way for land expropriation without compensation.

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