Agri SA

Mediaverklaring / Media Release

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Agri SA reaksie op ANC-beleid oor grond
Agri SA reaction to ANC-policy on land

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Na afloop van die ANC se pas afgelope Algemene Raadsvergadering is Minister Nkwinti in die media aangehaal as sou hy gesê het dat die 50/50-voorstel ingevolge waarvan boere die helfte van hul plase met werkers moet deel, nou amptelik ANC-beleid is. "Hierdie is 'n baie sensitiewe saak wat binne konteks gestel moet word", het Ernest Pringle, Voorsitter van Agri SA se Landbou-ontwikkelingskomitee gesê.

Minister Nkwinti se oorspronklike voorstel, wat neergekom het op 'n rigiede, gedwonge verbeurdverklaring van 50% van elke plaas op 'n vasgestelde formule vir oordrag aan werkers sonder direkte vergoeding aan grondeienaars, is deur Agri SA en talle ander rolspelers verwerp as onwerkbaar, skadelik vir die sektor en waarskynlik ongrondwetlik. Agri SA huldig steeds hierdie standpunt.

Minister Nkwinti het sedertdien met belanghebbendes gekonsulteer en 'n uitdaging aan die georganiseerde landbou gerig om alternatiewe voorstelle op die tafel te plaas. Agri SA het hierop gereageer deur voorstelle wat na sy mening werkbaar is, voor te lê. Tydens sy begrotingsrede het Minister Nkwinti bevestig dat hy 'n meer buigsame benadering gaan volg na aanleiding van die alternatiewe voorstelle wat hy ontvang het. Tydens 'n vergadering met die georganiseerde landbou op 22 Mei 2015 het hy weer bevestig dat grondeienaars toegelaat sal word om hulle eie vennote te kies, dat daar nie 'n enkele model nagevolg sal word nie en dat daar insentiewe sal wees om deelname aan te moedig.

Na aanleiding van hierdie versekerings het Agri SA deelgeneem aan 'n werkgroep wat kriteria vir loodsprojekte moes ontwikkel, sodanige projekte moes identifiseer en vordering oor 'n tydperk van 4-jaar monitor. Ervaring hiermee opgedoen sal verdere beleidsontwikkeling bepaal. Die kriteria maak dit duidelik dat deelname aan die projekte vrywillig en op gesonde sakebeginsels geskoei moet wees. Verder moet 'n buigsame benadering gevolg word wat die diversiteit van die sektor akkommodeer. In dié verband is vaardigheidsoordrag, ekonomiese- en omgewingsvolhoubaarheid asook volgehoue produksie belangrike oorwegings.

"Dit is steeds Agri SA se verwagting dat bovermelde die basis is waarop die loodsprojekte bedryf sal word. Hierdie siening is in ooreenstemming met 'n voorlegging van 'n ministeriële taakspan van so onlangs as 4 Oktober 2015. Agri SA sal derhalwe dringend opklaring wil kry oor die korrekte bewoording en interpretasie van die regerende party se beleidsbesluit oor hierdie aangeleentheid" sê Pringle.

Uitgereik deur Agri SA, Direktoraat: Korporatiewe Skakeling

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Agri SA reaction to ANC policy on land

Following the recent ANC General Council meeting, Minister Nkwinti was quoted in the media as having stated that the 50/50 proposal in terms of which farmers must share half their farms with workers, is now formally ANC policy. "This is a very sensitive matter, which needs to be understood in context", said Ernest Pringle, Chairperson of Agri SA's Agricultural Development Policy Committee.

Minister Nkwinti's original proposal amounted to a rigid, forced confiscation of 50% of every farm in favour of workers by applying a fixed formula, without any direct compensation being payable to landowners. This was rejected by Agri SA and many other stakeholders as unworkable, damaging to the sector and quite possibly unconstitutional. Agri SA stands by this viewpoint.

Minister Nkwinti has since consulted with stakeholders and challenged organised agriculture to bring alternative proposals to the table. Agri SA reacted positively and proposed alternatives which it views as workable. During his budget speech Minister Nkwinti confirmed that he intended following a more flexible approach in accordance with the alternative proposals that he had received. He again confirmed at a meeting with organised agriculture held on 22 May 2015 that land owners will be given the opportunity to choose their own partners, that no one-size-fits-all approach would apply and that incentives will be developed to encourage participation by landowners.

As a result of these assurances Agri SA participated in a working group tasked to develop criteria for pilot projects, identifying pilot projects and monitoring the implementation thereof over a 4 year period. Lessons learnt will determine further policy development. The criteria is based on voluntary participation and requires that projects are based on sound business principles. Moreover, a flexible approach is foreseen in order to accommodate the diversity of the sector. In this regard skills transfer, economic- and environmental sustainability and sustained production are recognised as important considerations.

"It is still Agri SA's expectation that this is indeed the basis on which the pilots will be run. This assertion is in line with a presentation by a ministerial task team made as recently as 4 October 2015. Agri SA, therefor, require urgent clarification of the correct wording and interpretation of the policy decision taken by the governing party in this regard," said Pringle.
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