



**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF LANDS, AGRICULTURE, WATER AND RURAL RESETTLEMENT AND THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE WAKE OF THE CONCLUSION ON 29 JULY 2020 OF THE GLOBAL COMPENSATION DEED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE FORMER FARM OWNERS**

**BACKGROUND**

1. The signing of the Global Compensation Deed on 29 July 2020 represents a major milestone in the restoration of trust and cooperation between the former farm owners and the Government of Zimbabwe. The agreement was also done in the context of moving the Vision 2030 agenda forward and therefore to ensure its timely realisation through increased agricultural productivity, among other initiatives.
2. Going forward, Government's highest priority in Agriculture is to increase production and productivity through the collaborative efforts of all Zimbabweans. This includes skills transfer from former farm owners to the resettled farmers and the provision of an attractive land tenure system that will be supportive of increased levels of investment on agricultural land.
3. In the light of the foregoing overarching objectives, it has become necessary to issue this statement to clarify the following issues:
  - 3.1 Tenure status of land which was compulsorily acquired for resettlement but the former farm owners have continued farming operations, with or without tenure documents.
  - 3.2 Compensation of former farm owners whose land was compulsorily acquired for resettlement and are entitled, in terms of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, to compensation as provided for under Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements (BIPPAs) or Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs).
  - 3.3 Farm downsizing priorities.
  - 3.4 Illegal occupation of farmland on which Government has issued offer letters to incumbent farmers.

**SECURITY OF TENURE FOR FORMER FARM OWNERS STILL FARMING**

4. Former farm owners on compulsorily acquired land should urgently regularise their tenure through designated Government institutions in the first instance, before consideration can be made for the issuance of 99-Year Leases. Former farm owners who already hold Offer Letters may proceed to apply for 99-Year Leases.

**ENTITLEMENT TO COMPENSATION FOR BOTH LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS**

5. Those former farm owners who are indigenous Zimbabweans or citizens of countries which had ratified Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements or Bilateral Investment Treaties with Zimbabwe at the time their land was compulsorily acquired for resettlement are entitled to compensation for both land and improvements, in terms of subsections (1) and (2) of Section 295 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

This category of former farm owners is not eligible for payment of compensation under the Global Compensation Agreement signed on 29 July 2020. Their compensation will be considered separately on a case by case basis. Through the Land Commission (Gazetted Land) (Disposal in Lieu of Compensation) Regulations (SI 62 of 2020), Government has already provided that these former farm owners can apply in writing to the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement for restoration of title to the piece of agricultural land that was compulsorily acquired from them for resettlement. Government will grant their applications where the circumstances presently obtaining on the ground permit the restoration of their land to them. In this regard, in order to allow former farm owners in this category to regain possession of the pieces of land that were acquired from them, Government will, in the appropriate circumstances, revoke the offer letters of resettled farmers currently occupying those pieces of land and offer them alternative land elsewhere.

6. Where the situation presently obtaining on the ground makes it impractical to restore land in this category to its former owners, Government will offer the former farm owners alternative land elsewhere as restitution where such land is available.

7. Where a former farm owner under this category regains possession of the land that was previously acquired from them or accepts an offer by Government of land as restitution, this shall be in full and final settlement, or to the extent that may be mutually agreed with Government, of any claims for compensation from the State that the former farm owner may have.

8. Where it is not possible or desirable for the State to restore the acquired land to its former owner or offer alternative land, Government shall offer compensation to the former farm owner based on the same valuation methodology as was applied under the Global Compensation Deed.

#### **FARM DOWNSIZING PRIORITIES**

9. Consistent with the Second Republic's thrust to increase production and productivity in the agricultural sector and in order to anchor the attainment of an upper middle income economy by 2030, Government has taken a deliberate policy position to initially exempt fully utilized productive farms from downsizing until agricultural land under multiple farm ownership, derelict and/or under-utilized has been brought into production. Ministers of State for Provincial Affairs and Provincial Lands Committees shall ensure strict adherence to this policy.

#### **PROHIBITION OF ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF PRODUCTIVE FARMS**

10. Government has received numerous reports regarding the resurgence of illegal land occupations, particularly on highly productive farms thereby disrupting production. This comes at a time when the focus should be on increasing utilisation and productivity on agricultural land. These illegal farm occupations are taking place in complete disregard of offer letters which Government has issued to the affected farmers. Such disorderly behaviour among our citizens is indiscipline of the highest level which Government does not condone or tolerate. It should stop forthwith.

Hon Dr A.J Masuka  
Minister of Lands, Agriculture  
Water and Rural Resettlement

Hon Prof M Ncube  
Minister of Finance and  
Economic Development

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