

Insession



The official newsletter of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

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Protecting Women's Rights

Parliament recognises the role of women in society





PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Mace of National Assembly

Vision

An activist and responsive people's Parliament that improves the quality of life of South Africans and ensures enduring equality in our society.

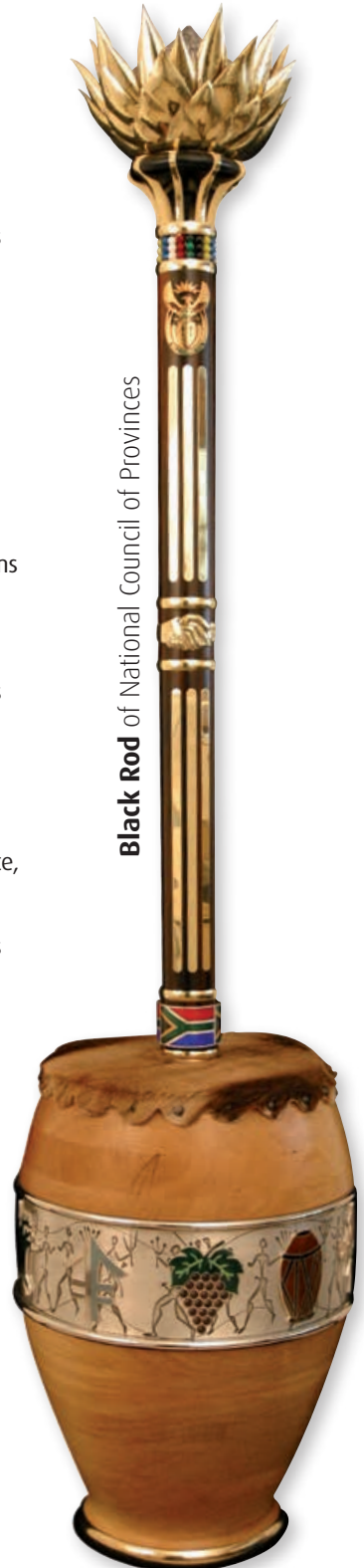
Mission

Parliament aims to provide a service to the people of South Africa by providing the following:

- A vibrant people's Assembly that intervenes and transforms society and addresses the development challenges of our people;
- Effective oversight over the Executive by strengthening its scrutiny of actions against the needs of South Africans;
- Participation of South Africans in the decision-making processes that affect their lives;
- A healthy relationship between the three arms of the State, that promotes efficient co-operative governance between the spheres of government, and ensures appropriate links with our region and the world; and
- An innovative, transformative, effective and efficient parliamentary service and administration that enables Members of Parliament to fulfil their constitutional responsibilities.

Strategic Objectives

1. **Strengthening oversight and accountability**
2. **Enhancing public involvement**
3. **Deepening engagement in international fora**
4. **Strengthening co-operative government**
5. **Strengthening legislative capacity**



Black Rod of National Council of Provinces

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Strategic Objectives

Strengthening oversight and accountability; enhancing public involvement; deepening engagement in international fora; strengthening cooperative government; strengthening legislative capacity.

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OR Tambo women demand land.

Land expropriation opens up historical wounds

The public hearings on whether to amend section 25 of the Constitution, to make it possible to expropriate land without compensation in the public interest, has inadvertently opened wounds in the hearts of many people caused by the bitter and painful history of colonialism and apartheid, writes Mava Lukani.

That history of dispossessing them of their inheritance inevitably became fresh in the people's minds and automatically created a mixture of contrasting emotions of anger and excitement in the hope of regaining what was lost centuries ago.

Furthermore, that history became alive when those who own land resist attempts at land redistribution to undo the haunting legacy of inequality among South Africans.

However, hope for the redistribution of land triumphs over the legacy of bitterness and anger. Coincidentally, the discourse on expropriation of land without compensation is balanced by celebrations to commemorate the centenary of the birth of those icons of the liberation struggle, Mr Nelson Mandela and Ms Albertina Sisulu.

Furthermore, the public hearings on the land issue took place in Mandela Month, when we remember Mr Mandela's legacy in South Africa and in the world. Both of these struggle icons are symbols of reconciliation and justice, and their names are the antithesis of anything that goes against these two ideals.

The Eastern Cape leg of public hearings on the possible amendment to the Constitution began in mid-July in the Mthatha Town Hall, where people sustained themselves in the long queues outside the hall as they waited to participate in the hearings by reminding each other of the history of dispossession that took place in the 18th century in the frontier wars from 1779 to 1879, in which the AbaThembu, AmaXhosa and AmaMpondo kingdoms were dispossessed on their lands by colonial forces. People reminded each other of the torture and killing of the famous King of the AmaXhosa, King Hintsa, near Nqabara River during one of those frontier battles.

Ms Noziyolo Phethani, of the town of Mqanduli, said the pain of dispossession still rankles: "We hear about this from history and it is very painful. How much more to those who experienced this pain in their lifetime?" she asked.

Another participant in the Mthatha hearings, Ms Phyllis Noah, identified herself as a descendant of the Griquas. She shared an emotional history of the killing of the Khoisan kings and their

people, which took place before the frontier wars. The Khoisan kings were the original owners of the land. "The Khoisan people were created in South Africa by God. [He] settled them in their country and they were prepared to share their country with all the refugees that came later."

Based on this history, she argued for the expropriation of the land with compensation. She said expropriation with compensation is consistent with the spirit of reconciliation and inclusive nation-building as espoused by Nelson Mandela. "Expropriation without compensation is inconsistent with the values of reconciliation which Nelson Mandela laid in this new republic," Ms Noah emphasised.

Some people taking part in the public hearings argued that the land should be placed in the custodianship of traditional leadership, as the state is not to be trusted. Holding this view was Prince Burns-Ncamashe, who said the state must first release the 87% land in its possession.

The majority view on the custodianship of land at all the Eastern Cape public hearings, however, was that the state should be the custodian of the land, on the basis that South Africa is a constitutional democracy.

People participating in the hearings called for speed in amending the Constitution, to ensure that the long-overdue redistribution of land is not impeded in any way. 🌍



Women's rights include right to land: Women MPs share their views

InSession writers spoke to various women Members of Parliament to hear their views on the current debate on the redistribution of land.



Ms Rosalia Morutoa (African National Congress)

Ms Morutoa, a veteran of the struggle against apartheid, said South African women are not homogenous, but one of the demands made by women through the 1954 Women's Charter was for equality for women. They wanted a society where women are able in their own rights to own and inherit land.

As a country, we have achieved a lot under the government of the African National Congress (ANC), but various barriers are still prevalent and hinder women from owning land.

One of the barriers faced by rural women is the issue of traditional and customary laws that are still prevalent in our rural areas.

In rural areas, it is customary for a male child to inherit land, but not for a woman. We still have situations in our rural areas where a widow is forced to marry another male within the family so that she can continue staying in the late husband's homestead. This is the reality for women in some rural areas.

The issue of land ownership by rural women has been the subject of debate in various regional and international platforms, including the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women. South Africa, as a member of UN Women, is expected to adopt laws that ensure equitable ownership of land by women.

The current debate on land in South Africa is happening at just the right time.

"We are a constitutional democracy, and we recognise equality and non-sexism as among our core constitutional pillars. We need to collect gender-disaggregated data on land ownership, conduct research on obstacles hindering women's access to land ownership and come up with effective programmes to assist women's access to land.



Ms Thandeka Mbabama (Democratic Alliance)

Ms Mbabama of the Democratic Alliance (DA) said that section 25 of the Constitution states that no one may be deprived of property and that the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to foster conditions which enable citizens to gain access to land on an equitable basis.

The government has failed to implement land reform, as proven by the High Level Panel, headed by former President Kgalema Motlanthe, in their report to Parliament. Not only has the

government failed the people of South Africa, it has failed women in particular. From time immemorial, women have been discriminated against when it comes to access to and ownership of land. This is true both in an urban and rural setting.

Since 1994, the government has tried to redress black people's dispossession of land through three programmes: land restitution, land redistribution and land tenure reform. My view is that claims from black women should have been prioritised in the restitution process. This prioritisation should have also happened where land was redistributed in the different grants that the government used, such as the settlement land acquisition grant; the land redistribution for agricultural development grant; and more recently the proactive land acquisition strategy grant. Even the Land and Agricultural Development Bank up to this day does not have land acquisition products that target women.

Rural women have also been sidelined by traditional authorities on tribal land. It is still difficult in some areas for single women to access land and widows are sometimes chased out of their homes on the deaths of their husbands. Females make up more than 51% of South Africa's population and yet they are still treated as second-class citizens. It is high time that women were totally emancipated from the authority and control of patriarchal men and traditional power structures. Equal land rights for women should be prioritised, gender discrimination should be removed from all laws, institutions and behavioural patterns. And legal standards must be set to promote women's full equality with men.

"Inequitable land ownership must be addressed as well as the existence of discriminatory gender practices that marginalise women." Cynthia Majeke



Ms Hlengiwe Mkhali (Economic Freedom Fighters)

In its founding documents, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) made it clear that the women's struggle must be taken forward to fight against patriarchy, which is still much alive in our society. Gender-based violence, domestic violence, and the rape of women, our struggle takes the fight against any form of women abuse.

There are more women in South Africa than men, with 52% of the population made up of women, but women only own 1% of land in South Africa. The customary regime dominates and oppresses women in a land system across sub-Saharan Africa. Within this regime, women have little or no say or means of owning land or inheriting property. Women only access land through their male relatives on their husbands' side and after the death of a husband, a woman loses her rights to land. Women's relationship with land is therefore through their husbands, fathers, brothers or sons.

Women's insecure property rights make households vulnerable to poverty. Women living in rural areas suffer more oppression than men in rural areas and in cities. The EFF therefore fights for women to own land. When women

have access to land, they can hold the key to economic empowerment and security. It will give women more influence over finances and household decisions. It will also give them access to credit to start businesses and improve their lives, and they will be able to support their children and their families. Most households are headed by women with no support from the government.

Women must benefit from the expropriation of land without compensation when this is implemented – and they must be supported through the state's programmes in giving them the implements to work the land and produce food. The EFF will guide the women owning or leasing land by fighting for them. The state must buy more than 50% of food for hospitals, schools, prisons and so on from these women.



Ms Deidre Carter (The Congress of the People)

The Congress of the People (Cope) was founded in defence of the Constitution, its vision, its values and the principles that underpin it. As history records this event, our 1994 democratic elections

represented our political emancipation. And it is our Constitution that sets out our national vision and the broad means to achieve social justice and our economic emancipation, including equality between women and men.

As such, Cope believes that it is an imperative and fundamental right that women achieve social justice and equality in general (and with respect to land) within the framework set out in our Constitution, in a peaceful and stable national atmosphere. We believe that the Constitution, in its current form, provides all the powers required to ensure the full realisation of just and equitable land reform, for women in particular.



Ms Cheryllyn Dudley (African Christian Democratic Party)

The African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) recognises the enormous challenges facing the country with regard to land and rural development. At the same time, the ACDP recognises that women face specific challenges, challenges that are in danger of being overshadowed if not highlighted.

A truly integrated and inclusive economy demands that we give attention to an integrated and inclusive society, including gender equity. This must factor into all development initiatives, from job creation in

communal areas to expanding commercial agriculture; land reform; and developing non-agricultural activities, human capital, social and food security, as well as basic services.

Women make up almost half of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, but assets like land and livestock are owned and controlled mainly by men. Women also still face barriers to finance, extension services and land rights.

The ACDP agrees that as more women gain control and ownership of land, they are likely to have stronger bargaining power, higher incomes and a more influential voice in communities and households. Research shows that even when women own land, their husbands are still perceived as household heads and have better access to public resources including subsidies and advisory services.

The ACDP supports policy that is gender sensitive and would like to see families being encouraged to pass on agricultural skills, knowledge and encouragement equally to both daughters and sons from a young age. The degree of equality or inequality in society and in the agricultural sector is learned from role models in the home from very young. Power relations and gender norms within a household play a major role. It is not enough for a woman to know her sexual rights and the benefits of family planning. Men in the household must be equally informed. Incentives for sharing domestic responsibilities should also be a consideration when talking about empowerment of women.

The ACDP believes that basic services play a major role in empowering women. In our industrialised world, training in new technologies is critical for women land owners and farmers.

Solid leadership in land reform and communal tenure security is needed. We also need the Treasury and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform to adequately provide for infrastructure, plus financial and technical support to farmers both male and female.



Ms Cynthia Majeke (United Democratic Movement)

The United Democratic Movement (UDM) believes a woman's ability to own, inherit and control land is vital to enable them to access resources and participate in the economy. South Africa promises equal rights to all with regard to accessing economic benefits, but the South African economy has not structurally transformed. As a result, it has high levels of poverty and economic exclusion.

Exclusion from the economy is predominant among African women and those with disabilities and it is worse in the rural areas.

Today, women own only 13% of agricultural land while men own 71%. Inequitable land ownership must be addressed as well as the existence of discriminatory gender practices that marginalise women.

Women must also be given the right to obtain education that would liberate them from poverty, of which land is key.

Most of all, education will enable them to be economically active citizens and will improve their access to resources and land ownership. 🌱

Eastern Cape kings welcome and support public hearings



Prince Zolile Burns-Ncamashe

*The Kings of AbaThembu and AmaRharhabe welcomed and embraced the delegation of the Joint Constitutional Review Committee conducting public hearings in the Eastern Cape on the possibility of amending section 25 of the Constitution to expropriate land in the public interest without compensation, writes **Mava Lukani**.*

The Co-Chairpersons of the committee explained the purpose of the hearings and urged members of the public to display tolerance at all the venues of hearings. They appealed to the participants not to confuse the hearings for expropriation of land with other land programmes, such as land restitution.

“We are not going to take questions on other land issues here. We are here for just one issue: good reasons to amend or not section 25 of the Constitution to make it possible to expropriate land without compensation,” Mr Nzimande explained at all the venues.

Expressing a word of welcome to the delegation on behalf of the King of AbaThembu at the Mthatha hearings, Chief Zwelengqaba Mgudlwa, the King’s spokesperson, said the involvement of

all South Africans in the public hearings on the issue of the redistribution of land is an interesting paradox. He said it’s an involvement of the recipients of the land that was taken by the violence of the powerful system of colonialism, and the descendants of the rightful owners of the land.

Chief Mgudlwa said although the AbaThembu clan does not promote the reopening of the wounds of the violence of colonialism through which black people were dispossessed of the inheritance of the land they got from their ancestors, it must be highlighted, however, before talking about the amendment of section 25 of the Constitution for redistribution, that the land was taken by force from its rightful owners, the kings of the indigenous people of South Africa. “We must reiterate that fact eloquently and unapologetically,” stressed Chief Mgudlwa.

Chief Mgudlwa said AbaThembu support the expropriation of the land without compensation. “Section 25 of the Constitution must be amended to make it possible to expropriate the land without compensation,” he said. However the land must be put under the custodianship of the kings, as it was taken from them. “The 87% we all agree was taken, was taken from the kings and the common logic and sense is that it must be returned to the same custodians it was taken from,” said Chief Mgudlwa.

An appeal was made by participants to stop the deepening stereotype that the land is going to be expropriated from white people only. “We are all South Africans, one nation which Nelson Mandela and others sacrificed everything to build. Let us ensure that we are debating land distribution from a nation-building perspective. We are going to take from those who have more and distribute to those who do not have land. That is the determining principle, not colour,” said Ms Phyllis Noah, who identified herself as a descendant of the Griquas.

She said land distribution is unavoidable in South Africa to address the injustices of the past. But it should be done in a manner that is going to promote nation-building and national cohesion. She proposed expropriation with compensation.

Although the view for the amendment of section 25 of the Constitution was popular, other views were also highlighted. The view for the amendment was reiterated, in the main, based on the reality of widening inequality between the historically white privileged, and black and African in particular under-privileged South Africans.

The land, according to those who are for the amendment, is the source of privilege, hence colonialists took it by force to weaken and impoverish its owners for ever. “Expropriation of land



Chief Zwelenqaba Mgudlwa

without compensation is a solution to the fundamental economic problems of exclusion of black people in the economy in South Africa," stressed Mr Lawrence Mambila of the OR Tambo Farmers' Association.

The view against expropriation was based on, among other things, the threat to food production, threat to nation-building and the alleged bad record of corruption of the government to be the custodian of land.

The East London hearings were attended by AmaRharhabe's traditional leaders that included the 92-year-old chief of AmaBhele ase Tyhume, Chief Thandathu Justice Mabandla. Chief Mabandla of Krwakrwa Village became the first chief executive councillor of the Ciskei Territorial Authority and later on 1 August 1972 ascended to newly created position of Chief Minister.

Participants at the East London hearings expressed divergent views on the proposed amendment of section 25 of the Constitution to allow the expropriation of land without compensation. However, as at the Mthatha, Queenstown and elsewhere in the country views in favour of the amendment dominated proceedings. Delivering a submission on behalf of the Kingdom of AmaRharhabe, their spokesperson Prince Zolile Burns-Ncamashe told members of the delegation that East London falls into the area of land that was taken from

King Mgolombana Sandile after the war of Ngcayichibi, one of the frontier wars of resistance against colonialism that took place in the 18th century.

He said East London, which is still wet with the blood of the armies of King Sandile, was called Gompo before the area was taken by the barrel of the gun by the mighty colonial forces. According to Prince Burns-Ncamashe, King Sandile lost his stick of kingship during that fateful war and the stick was taken to Britain. After their defeat, he said, black people were pushed away from the fertile land, which includes East London, King William's Town, Stutterheim and Komga, and settled on less productive land on the outskirts of the Border region.

He told the delegation that AmaRharhabe Kingdom welcomed the notion of expropriation without compensation, as it follows the logic of dispossession without reparation. He also called for the return of the land to the custodianship of the traditional leaders, the kings in particular, as the land was originally taken from the kings.

When interviewed by *InSession*, Prince Burns-Ncamashe complained about the limited number of people who participated in the hearings. He argued that the district municipality hosting approach denied the majority of the people of AmaRharhabe from participating in the hearings. "This was

supposed to be ward-to-ward public hearings to ensure that the majority of people had an opportunity to participate," he said.

Also making a submission at the East London hearings where he was born, Adv Dali Mpofu, the national Chairperson of the Economic Freedom Fighters, said amending the Constitution is necessary. As the Constitution stands currently, expropriation of property goes with compensation. He assured those who fear that expropriation will be done revengefully that there are no plans for this. "Expropriation of land without compensation will be done by ubuntu. We want the equitable redistribution of land," said Adv Mpofu. To ensure this, the land must be put under the custodianship of the state, not traditional leadership, he argued. 🇿🇦

"Expropriation of land without compensation is a solution to the fundamental economic problems of exclusion of black people in the economy in South Africa,"

Mr Lawrence Mambila of the OR Tambo Farmers' Association.



Land redistribution creates hope for healing of the historical wound of dispossession

*For 68-year-old Mr Musa Shabangu of Vryheid's Ngoje village, the memory of a fateful sunny 1975 day when his family was evicted from their land is a sore wound that has not healed. He struggles to hold back tears as he speaks of the day, a day that changed his family's life from the one of possession to dispossessed, writes **Malatswa Molepo**.*

The Joint Constitutional Review Committee's public hearings in Jozini in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) represented to Mr Shabangu a hope that his family's wound will finally heal. "I fully support the amendment of section 25, which will ensure that my family receives what rightfully belongs to it. I came here to tell these parliamentarians: they must amend section 25; that's all I ask," Mr Shabangu said.

Mr Shabangu's family was forcefully removed from Ngoje on the outskirts of Vryheid in 1975 and they lost everything. "I feel like crying when I remember that day; we lost everything. We had about 90 head of cattle, 25 sheep, 80 goats and 21 pigs. We lost all that livestock on that fateful day. To this day, it hurts to think of all the pain we suffered on that day," Mr Shabangu emphasised.

Compounding the injury, their traditional leader was removed and

relocated to Paulpietersburg. This left the villagers without the protection and guardianship of their leader. "Our house was totally destroyed; we could only recover a few things. From there, we went into exile in Swaziland. On our return, we moved to uMhlabuyalingana, where my mother was selling alcohol to put food on the table. We struggled, staying in a corrugated-iron structure, but it was nothing compared to our old house," Mr Shabangu told the public hearings. He has never married, he says, because he does not have anything to offer a bride. "All I want is the land of my forefathers, so I can use it to be a better person than I am today," Mr Shabangu explained.

While he wants the land that was forcefully taken, he also called for greater support of beneficiaries to ensure recipients of land are able to use the land productively for the benefit of the country. Mr Shabangu said that the amendment must be done speedily to ensure they get the land while they are still alive. "My mother and some of my siblings have passed on. I am hoping I will get my land before I pass on from this world," Mr Shabangu concluded.

Opposing views in KZN

The hearings in KZN, as in other provinces, produced diametrically conflicting views, with those supporting the expropriation of land without compensation pinning their argument on redress of past injustices, while those that do not support the amendment of section 25 arguing that economic collapse will follow the loss of property rights.

“I feel like crying when I remember that day; we lost everything. We had about 90 head of cattle, 25 sheep, 80 goats and 21 pigs. We lost all that livestock on that fateful day. To this day, it hurts to think of all the pain we suffered on that day.” Mr Musa Shabangu

A businessperson in the construction sector in the Vryheid area said the current debate has already cost South Africa and Vryheid, in particular, investment opportunities that would have created much-needed job opportunities in the area and in the country. “I fully support the redress of past injustices, but I am not here to argue for or against the motion. What I want to highlight is that the current debate we are having is already impacting negatively on businesses on the ground. My company has recently lost three big contracts because investors are uncertain of what is going to happen in the next few years in the country,” he said.

“The first contract was from a German consortium that wanted to invest in construction in Vryheid. They said they want to wait for the next two years to see what will happen,” he said.

Another project involved a farmer who wanted to build bigger packing areas and a processing plant on his farm to increase productivity. While a third project planned to extend the accommodation on a game farm, which would have resulted in more beds and increasing job opportunities.

“As a result, we have had to retrench 120 workers over the past few months. We anticipate that a further 40 workers will be retrenched in the coming few months. That is the kind of impact I am talking about,” he emphasised.

He called for a wholesale reflection of what the current debate is costing the country. 🇿🇦



North West people ‘very keen to have their voices heard on land redistribution matter’



*After the break of a few weeks, the delegations of the Joint Constitutional Review Committee went to different provinces to hold public hearings on whether or not section 25 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa should be amended to make it possible to expropriate land without compensation. **Faith Ndenze** reports from the hearings.*

A delegation of the committee led by Mr Vincent Smith went to Taung in the North West province’s Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti District Municipality for public hearings on the issue. The committee listened to a number of oral submissions from members of the public, including representatives from farmers’ and civic associations, political parties, traditional leaders and ordinary citizens. The majority of the oral submissions made supported the review of the Constitution, while a few were against it.

As in other provinces, many people attended the hearings, many more than the committee had expected. The committee applauded the manner in which the people of Dr Ruth Segomotsi



Mompoti District Municipality tolerated divergent views during the hearings. There was complete silence when others spoke against the review of the Constitution and there was no need to ask people not to interrupt a speaker. The committee was impressed that the arguments that were made showed that people had applied their minds.

“The engagements are robust, as expected, but the committee is comfortable with the quality of the arguments presented. We hope that it carries on like this going forward,” said Mr Smith.

In contrast, the committee was concerned about the low levels of tolerance displayed at the Mafikeng Civic Centre public hearings. There was a lot of interference from the crowd when individuals tried to make their submissions.

Faith Ndenze of Insession spoke to women participants at some of the North West venues of public hearings, asking them about their views on the expropriation of land without compensation and on whether section 25 of the Constitution should be amended.

A 70-year-old **Ms Ntshadi Pilane-Tsheole** of Morolong Solspoort in Bagatla Ba Kgafela village in the North West province, said: “Africans in South

Africa have the right to own land. The question that needs to be clarified with any amendment of the Constitution is: how are Africans going to own land? Firstly, I believe that the land that is under rural communities must not be expropriated. It must be kept there. It is tribal land.

“The report of the High Level Panel that was led by former President Kgalema Motlante does not distinguish between the tribal land that has been bought by communities and the tribal land, which has been allocated to communities. I come from a community that has title deeds to the land. Our forefathers, when they realised that their land had been taken and was about to be owned, they started buying the land. Therefore, all the land that belongs to the people of Bagatla Ba Kgafela under Kgosi Pilane is owned by them. The people have title deeds.”

A 34-year-old **Ms Tshikhawe Savhasa** of Rustenburg said: “I believe that land that belongs to white people must be expropriated, because most of them did not buy the land. Most of them inherited the land from their parents who dispossessed the land from our forefathers. Most of the traditional leaders (chiefs) did not buy the land either, so that land should be shared equally among the community members.”

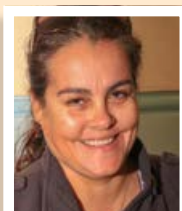
39-year-old **Ms Vivian Modibedi** of Rustenburg said: “I believe that section 25 of the Constitution must stay as it is. I believe that government should have explained to everyone first how this expropriation of land without compensation was going to happen. Secondly, I think the government is going back to 1963 where our forefathers’ lands were expropriated without compensation. This is not democracy. We are starting another war. We are going back to the apartheid era, only this time it is vice versa.” 🌱



Ms Phylis Noah

The land was taken by force from the Griquas. There must be land redistribution in South Africa to make our freedom meaningful.

But when we do that it must be done in a manner that avoids the creation of a new mistake. Let us expropriate land with compensation. I am sure the Griquas, from whom the land was forcefully expropriated, would say the same thing. We are now in a constitutional democracy. Let's do the correct expropriation, the one with compensation.



Ms Marlene Evers

South Africa belongs to all those who live in it, this presupposes that we are one. Once you say expropriation with or without compensation, it means

that you are dividing what has been put together through a very heavy price of loss of life during the struggle for freedom. Section 25 of the Constitution already provides enough guidance on land redistribution.



Ms Khulukazi Phangwa

"We are living in exciting times. We are very excited about this honour of participating in the public hearings on the expropriation of land without

compensation. We supported it when it was still discussed at Parliament by our representatives. We are praying to God to empower us with wisdom to work and manage the land after it has been returned to us because that is another very important issue, knowledge to work it to produce food and wealth for the country"



Nomaafrika Ngobeni

Without land we looked like an incomplete people. Although we attained political freedom in 1994. But it has been meaningless without land. We

have look like squatters in our own homeland. Our claim to this country is vague and is going to remain

vague without the control of land. We are happy that that is going to be addressed. Even our ancestors are rejoicing in their graves when they see these developments"



Ms Phindiwe Msesiwe

"We are very delighted about the return of the land back to its rightful owners. There are people among us

black people those who are advantaged who are very unhappy about what is happening, the fact that the land returns back to all of us. Resistance to land expropriation without compensation is not from whites only, there blacks who hide behind the fear that this may affect food production. We must be given our land. It's us who work on farms and deliver production. I wonder why there is this fear and pessimism"



Chief Justice Mabandla

The 92-year-old chief of AmaBhele ase Tyhume, Chief Thandathu Justice "Ah Jongilizwe" Mabandla has

expressed his mixed feelings about the expropriation of land without compensation. Chief Mabandla of Krwakrwa Village became the first chief executive councillor of the Ciskei Territorial Authority and later on 1 August 1972 ascended to newly created position of Chief Minister.

He said: "Although I am supporting the expropriation of land without compensation, but I appeal to the people that they must take the issue of knowledge and skills to work that land very seriously. That must always be a critical element in the land discourse. To have that land and don't have knowledge and skills to work it is useless". He said, black people were disposed land and knowledge, based on that, he said, there must be a perfect balance between ownership and knowledge to work that land.



Kelebogile Baitsonedi:

As a young female supporter of the Economic Freedom Fighters, we want the land back.

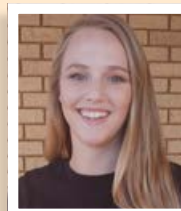
Most of us are suffering because we don't have land. We want the land previously owned by our parents and grandparents to be returned to its rightful owners. The amendment of section 25 of the Constitution will liberate us as women and ensure that we provide for our families.



Tsabeng Ramalope, Tshwane:

"The willing seller, willing buyer policy has failed the people of South Africa. Must

we have a civil war to resolve the land issue? President Cyril Ramaphosa must act to resolve the issue of land expropriation without compensation."



Taylor Roberts, Westonaria:

"I totally disagree with the amendment of section 25 of the Constitution and expropriating

land without compensation. This will only result in creating greater divisions among South Africans. What we need to do is to acknowledge that both white and black people fought and died for this country to be what it is today."



Nthabiseng Mokwane (from Kagiso)

"Section 25 must not be amended as it will give government greater power and

control over the land. Amending the Constitution will give government the right to decided who can live where. Instead government must give the land in its possession to people, with their title deeds, as this will provide greater security to all citizens."

CO-CHAIR GIVES DIRECTION: Mr Lewis Nzimande, Co-chairperson of JCRC and committee members.



Western Cape public hearings on constitutional review hear of forced removals

*The Joint Constitutional Review Committee conducted its last public hearings in the Western Cape in Outshoorn and Beaufort West. As in the public hearings in other provinces, emotions ran high as one speaker after another recounted how their families had been forcefully removed from their land. The committee held a total 34 hearings in all nine provinces, listening carefully to the diverse views expressed by the citizens throughout the country. **Rajaa Azzakani** reports from the hearings.*

In Outshoorn, Mr Jacques Booysen told the committee how bulldozers had destroyed his parents' house when he was seven years old. He recounted how he and his family had to sleep outside in the cold and wet winter for three weeks until the authorities found them alternative accommodation.

Chief Theron of the Korana community told the delegation that the Khoi and the San are the first people in South Africa and they were the first people to be dispossessed. He demanded fair redistribution of land. He said redistribution of land must begin with the land that was dispossessed as far back as 1652.

The committee heard that the Western Cape provincial government is still removing the indigenous people by force from their land. Farm workers, one after another, spoke of the terrible conditions under which they live on the farms.

Mr Witengel van Heerden said when his grandmother died at 92 recently, he could still recall how the apartheid government forced them off their land. "Our people live in dilapidated houses and the farmers refused to either fix them or allow us to fix them. We want what was stolen from us. We want our land; we want our culture. We want our land so that we can farm," emphasised Mr Van Heerden.

Other people attending the hearings in Outshoorn expressed different views on the issue of expropriation of land without compensation. A female farmer, who introduced herself as Mrs Le Roux, insisted that her forefathers bought the land she now farms on. She believes the current legislation and Constitution should remain as they are.

Another woman pleaded with the committee not to amend the Constitution. "Do not break something that is working. Don't take away the

CO-CHAIR GIVES DIRECTION: Mr Vincent Smith, Co-chairperson of JCRC and committee members.

things that put food on the table. People can rather institute land claims," she said.

At Beaufort West, Mr Vincent Smith, the Co-Chairperson of the committee, appealed to the people to express themselves. "This is your opportunity to ensure that the voice of the people of Beaufort West is heard. This is your opportunity to make sure your opinions are included in our report," said Mr Smith.

One old woman told the committee how she and her family were removed from their land in Prince Albert. "We lost everything. We lost our house, our land. My parents even had geese and lost that as well. I want it back."

One elderly man told the committee how he started helping his father on a farm when he was a child. His father became sick, and the farmer's son who had taken over the farm evicted them from the farm. He just wants a piece of the land his father worked on.

Another farm worker said they are a family of 10 people living in a small house. "We have no dignity. We want our own gardens, but have no space. Let us expropriate the land and thereby close the gap."

A former mayor of Beaufort West, Mr Truman Prins, told the committee that whites own the majority of farms in the Central Karoo District on land that was seized from the Khoi and San people.

Speakers told the committee that some farmers own so much land that they cannot farm it all and leave much of it unutilised. But others present opposed the amendment. A young farmer spoke emotionally about how he and his forefathers worked for the land he farms. "I did not steal even a hectare of land from anybody. Everything that I own today, my forebears and I got it in a correct manner. We won't walk away without a fight," he concluded to a crowd that was clearly unhappy with such a stance.

Another man said amending the Constitution would make it just as immoral as the previous laws. One woman said she felt the hearings were an exercise in futility, as according to her, President Cyril Ramaphosa already indicated that a constitutional amendment will be made to expropriate land without compensation.

The committee concluded its provincial public hearings in the Cape metropolitan area at the Friend of God Church in Goodwood. It was full to its capacity of 1 500 people and there

were long queues outside of people waiting their turn to present. As one person presented a submission, they made space for each other to come into the venue.

At the end of the hearing, Mr Vincent Smith said: "I am confident that this was a democratic process. Everyone who wanted an opportunity to speak was allowed to speak. The committee allowed for democracy to prevail. Following the hearings, the committee will assess the hundreds of thousands of written submissions it received, after which it will invite those who indicated that they wanted to make oral presentations to hearings at Parliament. This process will take a bit of time, as we had a substantial response to this matter. We want to ensure that we do a thorough job."

The other co-Chairperson, Mr Lewis Nzimande, said: "The committee is proud of the tolerance showed by our people, even when they completely disagreed with certain speakers. This speaks directly to how the whole South Africa generally operates: we allow for all views to be expressed." He reminded South Africans that once the process is concluded, the multi-party committee will deliberate extensively on the matter before it reports to both Houses of Parliament. 🇿🇦



STUDENT LEADERSHIP: Ready for engagement

Students' Parliament celebrates the lives of Madiba and MaSisulu

*Parliament hosted a Students' Parliament, in partnership with Freedom Park and the Department of Basic Education, to commemorate the 100th year of the birth of Tata Madiba and MaSisulu, writes **Abel Mputing**.*

Delivering the official opening address to the Students' Parliament, the Acting Secretary to Parliament, Ms Baby Tyawa, said: We are inspired by your presence and we are hopeful that you will carry the inspiration of our society and you will become its future leaders." Ms Tyawa told the students that the values of non-racialism and non-sexism as enshrined in our Constitution were adopted by the National Assembly.

"These are values that were bestowed upon us by Madiba and MaSisulu. And we hope that you will be the torchbearers of these values for your age group."

MaSisulu was full of life and enthusiasm. "She ensured that women are aware of the need and role they must play for a free South Africa. In this centenary, we celebrate the values of how best to live a productive life."

Referring to students, Ms Tyawa said: "In whatever you do, you must obey the prescripts of our Constitution. And at a time where there is a prevalence of racial tensions, we must find ways of instilling social cohesion across races."

Parliament's significance is that it hosts the State of the Nation Address (Sona),

in which the government spells out what it intends to do to improve the lives of the people, Ms Tyawa said. "One of the tasks of Parliament is to supervise the ministers who have to deliver on work and the plans stated in Sona by the President."

After the official opening, the Students' Parliament re-enacted the historical moment that led to the inception of the first democratic Parliament. A Presiding Officer was elected to officiate over proceedings. As MaSisulu stood to elect Tata Madiba as the first democratically elected President without any opposition, we saw history in action. And this underlined the intertwined roles that the two icons have had in ushering in our freedom and democracy.



The students heard Madiba's legendary inaugural speech in which he said: "Let there be justice for all. Let there be peace for all. Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all. Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another, and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world. Let freedom reign."

After this, the students were asked to reflect on Madiba's principles and ideals. They were all unanimous in supporting his recognition of the importance of reconciliation, humility and promotion of an inclusive society through social cohesion and non-racialism.

They were then asked to consider South Africa's human rights record, thinking about those rights which are available to all, while others are not. There was agreement that certain rights, such as political association, are accessible to all, but other rights such as the rights to amenities, are not.

"It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation." Nelson Mandela

The student parliamentarians also highlighted the fact that there are still high levels of inequality, as a result of unemployment, and a lack of skills and access to equal education. As expected, the issues of land was divisive and heightened emotions.

The session concluded with an address from the CEO of Freedom Park, Ms Jane Mufamadi, who told the students that MaSisulu gave her life to the fight for women's rights. She became a leader in the fight against the pass laws and opposed Bantu education. "She went as far as turning her house in Soweto to provide alternative education," Ms Mufamadi reminded her listeners. She explained why Freedom Park

decided on having the Students' Parliament. "We came with this idea for we wanted to nurture a young cadre of leaders. We want the youth to know who they are, and where they come from. If they appreciate that, they will know better the history associated with the issue of land – and they would be able to come with solutions.

"We also chose this concept because Madiba was passionate about children and education." Quoting Madiba, she continued: "It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another.

"We are holding these educational initiatives because we want to see this change in our country's youth. But also, we see education as something that can enliven the legacy of Madiba," Ms Mufamadi concluded. 🌱

Parliament Youth Summit

‘Young people must sustain freedom and democracy’

*As part of the celebrations marking the centenary of the birth of former President Nelson Mandela and anti-apartheid struggle icon Ms Albertina Sisulu, Parliament and the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund, hosted a Youth Summit in July in Parliament, reports **Sakhile Mokoena**.*

The summit saw more than 300 young people from across the country gather in Parliament’s the Old Assembly chamber to discuss various topics affecting South Africa’s youth. The summit was officially opened by the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Lechesa Tsenoli, who said the dialogue was held in memory of Madiba and Mama Sisulu, “whose love for children and young people was always at the centre of what they did”.

“This summit is to reflect on the heritage and legacy that Mandela and Mama Sisulu left us. It is also a platform to talk about the obstacles, opportunities and risks in place that can derail our developing democracy. We are delighted to host this summit. It will ensure that we use this platform for what it is meant for: a platform for public debate and public education, following in the footsteps of those who created it,” Mr Tsenoli said.

Young people are not only the determiners of the future, their contributions and decisions should also impact on the present, he explained. “Your contributions and views will

form an important foundation for us as parliamentarians when we consider issues that affect our society and ensure that government policies are consistent with the Constitution.” Presiding over the first day of the two-day summit, the Speaker of the Youth Summit, Mr Seluleko Ndlovu, indicated that the Constitution will provide its’ guiding principles, to ensure participants’ dignity and equality.

“We are all equal in dignity and we shall get equal opportunity to speak in this summit,” he said.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund, Ms Sibongile Mkhabela, called on young people to complete what Mr Mandela and Ms Sisulu started. “This is a moment of the future and the importance of young people in defending the democracy project, our youth have a huge responsibility to complete what was started by Mandela and Sisulu.”

Ms Mkhabela added that young people have been given all the tools to define the South Africa they want to live in and realise Mr Mandela words, when he said: “our children are the rock on which our future is built”.

During a discussion on the role of young people in politics, National Assembly Member and Chief Whip of the United Democratic Movement, Mr Nqabayomzi Kwankwa, encouraged delegates to be community activists for the change they want to see and not depend on the youth leagues of political parties to advocate for change. “The past generation was responsible for our political freedom. We now



have to take the country to the next level and grow our economy and end inequality, unemployment and poverty. The struggle that Mandela and his generation led took us to a particular point and moving forward is up to us,” Mr Kwankwa said.

Ten-year-old Mangaliso Mxenge from Gauteng received big applause from delegates when he proposed that the voting age be reviewed to allow for younger people who “have voting intelligence”, but are below the age of 18 to participate in the voting



YOUTH MP makes a point.

process. "What if a child has the voting intelligence of an adult, but he is denied the right to vote because of age? Why don't we assess such children and allow them to vote?" said young Mangaliso.

The summit also discussed tax exemption on sanitary towels, a promise which delegates said was made by government under former President Jacob Zuma, but it has still not been implemented. Other topics deliberated on during the summit covered the quality of education,

the health sector and gangsterism. Delegate Ms Lusanda Sothengwa said there were no "youth-friendly" health clinics in the public sector. This contributes to teenage pregnancy, as some clinic staff turn away young people who want contraception.

Responding on behalf of the government, Tourism Minister Mr Derek Hanekom said there is a panel that has been appointed to make recommendations on which items should be exempted from value added tax. "There is also a strong case of

sanitary towels being made free. It's a human rights issue. It is true that the period of menstruation affects the learning of girls," the Minister said.

"It is up to you to make sure this freedom that Mandela fought for is sustained – freedom from discrimination, stereotyping, hunger and gangsterism. I've been inspired by this session. Let us make this an annual event – turn things around – you are the people who can help turn things around," Minister Hanekom said. 🌍



Summit discusses business opportunities for the youth

Parliament's inaugural Youth Summit on the theme: "A Mandela in Every Generation" re-enacted the ideals and aspirations that now constitute the legacy of Nelson Mandela and his love and affection for children, writes Abel Mputing.

The summit sought to create a platform for the youth to share ideas and experiences, and to harness them to create strategies to address unemployment and unequal access to life opportunities, so that the youth can participate actively in the mainstream economy.

Parliament believes that a new approach is needed to achieve this, an approach that was discussed in "Business with heart: Changing the way we do business with the youth", which formed part of the consultative discussions of the summit. The facilitator of this discussion, Ms Trisha Naicker, underlined the fact that the youth are key enablers in creating sustainable entrepreneurial development initiatives in their communities. "The regional initiatives of the Mandela Children's Fund continue to encourage the youth to be social entrepreneurs through its funding and skills development initiatives."

Through the Efeng Bacha: Give it to the Youth initiative, the fund seeks to nurture entrepreneurial spirit. Founded in 2003, this initiative has assisted 300 youth projects to promote youth entrepreneurship to date, said its ambassador, Ms Nasiphi Bewana. "The fund has assisted the youth to formulate their business proposals and to explore the viability of their ideas."

She advised the youth to make sure that they profile their businesses well. "State clearly how the fund will be spent, how your business will encourage social entrepreneurship. Some youth projects are good, but their proposals don't clearly stipulate their potential to bring about economic and social change in their respective communities."

The CEO of the Mandela Children's Fund, Ms Sibongile Mkhabela, said although the fund is small, it achieved its desired outcomes. "The fund had small seeds, but it managed to cater for the multiplicity of needs."

The National Arts Council (NAC) also participated in this consultative discussion. Its Arts Development Manager, Ms Julie Diphofa, presented on the NAC's funding programmes to empower young people involved in the arts.

Ms Diphofa was asked what the NAC does to stimulate employment in arts-related careers. She responded: "When you are an artist, you don't necessarily have to be employed, you create your own employment either through writing books, plays or setting up art initiatives."

"Tourism is the new gold. We cannot always rely on our minerals as a source of our economic empowerment for those previously disadvantaged because they will in the future be depleted, but tourism won't."

Other questions for Ms Diphofa concerned how one could make a living in the arts world, as it is not properly regulated. She responded: "It is difficult to intervene in such situations because there are unions that operate in that space that are meant to protect artists' rights. If they have a difficulty to do so, they can approach us and we will see how we can help them to protect the rights of the artists."

The Chief Whip of the City of Ekurhuleni, Mr Dlabathi Jongizizwe, presented his municipality's plans, including R100 million earmarked for sports, arts, culture and other business opportunities aimed at supporting youth entrepreneurship. "The youth must lobby us to ensure that they get access to the entrepreneurial opportunity available."

However, he was quick to caution the youth: "We want sustainable and genuine business ideas from

genuine role players, not ideas of self-entitlements, but ideas based on the principles of hard work."

The Director for Domestic Tourism Facilitation in the Department of Tourism, Mr Thulani Sibeko, said his department has a variety of enterprise development programmes for the youth.

One of these is the chefs programme. "There are more than 100 young chefs who went to the United States and other parts of the world on a learning programme. When they have completed their studies, they stand a good chance of gainful employment in the tourism industry. Those passionate about cooking can join the programme."

There are also hospitality, food security, blue flag and safety monitors programmes, Mr Sibeko said. "These are some of the programmes that can enhance the career paths of those who have an interest in pursuing a career in the tourism sector."

Those interested in entrepreneurial development can apply to be part of the department's incubator programme. "In this programme, we mentor those interested in starting a business in tourism. We also introduce them to the value chain of the businesses of their choice and the existing opportunities thereof," Mr Sibeko said.

"Tourism is the new gold. We cannot always rely on our minerals as a source of our economic empowerment for those previously disadvantaged because they will in the future be depleted, but tourism won't. It remains our crown jewel. That is why we need the youth to explore the sector and make use of the business opportunities it presents to them," Mr Sibeko said, concluding his contribution to the discussion.

In her concluding remarks, the facilitator of this discussion, Ms Naicker, stated that the youth must believe with all their hearts, dream with all their minds and achieve with all their strengths. 🌟



Women's march demands emancipation from all forms of discrimination and violence

#totalshutdown

*Feminist gender activists, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, along with women from various groups and affiliations converged on Parliament in Cape Town in the #TheTotalShutDown march to register their outrage against gender-based violence in South Africa, reports **Abel Mputing**.*

The march was a show of women's unity against this scourge and they were unapologetic about holding the government accountable for failing to monitor, evaluate and implement effective laws to deal with gender-based violence. A representative of Mom's Move for Justice, Ms Avril Andrews, said women are held hostage in their own communities by gangs, who terrorise them at will.

"We don't feel safe in our own communities. Our girl children are raped, killed and maimed by gangsters almost at will. We are here to call on government to disarm gangsters in our areas. The best that can be done now is to disarm gangsters who prey on girl children."

The first Deputy President of the South African Federation of Trade Unions, Ms Nomvume Ralarala, said that in supporting the march, the union was not wearing union regalia because women's issues are not party-political. They were there to make a statement in support of women's emancipation from all forms of discrimination and violent abuse.

On behalf of the union, Ms Ralarala complained that task teams and judicial commissions of inquiry are often formed to address various crises facing the country. However, no task team or judicial commission of inquiry has been set up to investigate gender-based

violence, which the union believes has reached a crisis point.

The Total Shutdown's Cape Town convener, Ms Onica Makwekwe, said South Africa lacks an integrated approach to gender-based violence. The march sought to address this by presenting Parliament with a list of 24 demands corresponding to the 24 years since a democratic government was elected in South Africa.

The list of demands included calls for a gender summit in August and a review of what has been attempted in the past to curb violence against women. They also called for strict criteria for gender mainstreaming in government departments.

"We must ensure that they are gender-sensitive in the broadest sense possible, and understand the rights of non-gender conforming people," Ms Makwekwe said.



There must also be a national plan of action to devise new strategies, and to monitor and evaluate existing policies aimed at curbing gender-based violence. Furthermore, a parliamentary committee must conduct oversight over the policies and processes stipulated in this national action plan, to ensure that it complies with the law and is adhered to.

The list of demands also called for government to launch a 365-day media campaign on gender rights and advocacy for gender awareness on LGBTIQ+ and the non-gender conforming community. Ms Makwekwe emphasised: "We are not free until all these demands are met."

The women participating in the march had expected to hand the memorandum of demands to Parliament's presiding officers. When they heard that the presiding officers were not available to accept the demands, they objected angrily, but

eventually agreed to hand over the list to parliamentary officials.

"We can now see that our plight is not taken seriously," Ms Makwekwe interjected. "In this country, one woman gets killed in every hour. We are here not to just hand over demands, we are also here to perform our anger. To demonstrate that we are tired of being maimed and we are here because we want to die no more."

She concluded: "If men are unaccountable, we will hold the government accountable. And if some of our demands are not met on 9 August, we will be back here. We will be back here not to celebrate Women's Day, but to demand justice and freedom."

Mava Lukani and Abel Mputing spoke to certain women when the #TheTotalShutDown women's march was at Parliament. Ms Venetia Orgio, who is the

Chairperson and the founder of the Mitchells Plain-based women's organisation called Discover Your Support, said as women they do not enjoy the fruits of freedom that men enjoy in South Africa. "The principle of equality between all South Africans enshrined in the Constitution is like a meaningless gospel to us women. Men just eloquently preach that. But practise the direct opposite – and men are the creators and implementers of the persecution of women," said Ms Orgio. "Women must stand up and free themselves from the tight shackles of bondage by men."

Ms Portia Lujabe, who is a third year University of Stellenbosch student, said: "The rising abuse of women and children by men can't stop on its own. It demands a collective and strong action of women from all walks of life to stop it. Lack of fight against it is tantamount to its promotion. As it rises, it becomes violent and kills its victims. We can't fold our arms and watch it." 🌟

‘War against gender inequality cannot be won without involvement of men’

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Africa Region Steering Committee is buoyed by the future prospects of this body. The committee met to reflect broadly on progress and a number of teething issues affecting the advancement and the promotion of women in leadership positions in African parliaments and legislatures, writes Abel Mputing.

The CWP Steering Committee is a statutory entity in terms of the CWP’s Constitution and is the one that governs the activities of this body in the African Region. It also oversees the work of various chapters of the CWP aimed at advancing gender parity. The 49th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Africa Region Elective Conference themed “The Role of African Parliaments in Fostering National and Regional Security” which took place from 13-22 August was hosted by Botswana.

Ms Thoko Didiza who is the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly is the Chairperson of the CWP Africa Region. In her mid-term tenure, Ms Didiza is more than convinced that the CWP has made some inroads in ensuring that the constitutions of respective member states of the CPA are in line with various gender equality instruments to which they are signatories.

In addition to that, during her tenure she re-energised regional gender advocacy workshops to overcome gender stereotypes embedded in

African culture and tradition. “Patriarchy has for a long time prevented African women from ascending to high political office. It’s this culture imbedded in African tradition that does not envisage women as capable of being leaders of any social, religious or political formation or grouping that needs to be dismantled to enable women to ascend the political ladder based on their wherewithal and their intellectual competencies. That is being discriminated against on cultural grounds.”

According to Ms Didiza one of the long-term solutions to uprooting the legacy of patriarchy is to motivate young women to embrace politics as a career. “And that in my view should start at an early age and explain to them why it is important for them to occupy this space in our society,” she said.

But most of all, Ms Didiza said, how can women rights be promoted and protected if women don’t play a role in championing them. “These are some of the strategies we, as CWP, want to implement.”

To ensure that the CWP Africa Region does not lose sight of its cause, once a year it holds a gender sensitisation workshop. This year the Africa Region gender sensitisation workshop was held in KwaZulu Natal.

Ms Didiza said they come up with strategies to support female candidates in countries that are scheduled to hold general elections, such as Sierra Leone, which held its election in April, Swaziland, Botswana as well as Rwanda, which will hold their elections later in the year.

But for this to be successful, the CWP has resolved to engage political parties to ensure that they increase the number of women’s representation on their parliamentary lists in the future.

To Ms Didiza it is not enough to only have women’s representation for the sake of it, coupled with that is a need to capacitate women parliamentarians. To this effect, the CWP Africa Region is set to devise a training programme that will mentor and provide women parliamentarians with leadership skills. “These are some of the strategic imperatives that I would like to see implemented before the end of my tenure next year,” she said

Organisationally, there is now a resolve to have a database that will profile the work of the CWP in the CPA Africa Region to heighten its aims and objectives, and to be more visible on the ground. “We have witnessed the yields of our ground work,” she pointed out. “Now when African parliaments send their representations to CPA conferences, they make sure that there is, on balance, an equitable representation of women in their delegations,” she said.

“These are successes that are not often recorded, but irrespective of that, we should not overlook them for they have a bearing on the profile of the CWP on the continent,” she added.

What remains a challenge, she pointed out, is the coordination of the CWP sub-regions in Africa. A resolution has been taken by the CWP Steering Committee that they should use the platform provided by the 49th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Africa Region Elective Conference to propose a model for coordination to create a

synergy among CWP sub-regions so that this body can be more coherent in its cause.

In her view, what is often overlooked in the fight against gender discrimination is the need for the involvement of men as champions of gender equality. According to her, the war against gender inequality cannot be won without the involvement of men.

“The struggle for women’s rights is a struggle for human rights. And we cannot, in my view, win this war without working together or standing side-by-side with men in overcoming gender inequality. Because gender equality is not only a women’s matter, it also involves men.”

CPA Africa Region is part of the CPA International Organisation comprised of African countries that were formally under the British rule, with limited exceptions. Some of these countries are also members of other regional and international bodies such as the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Southern African Development Community-Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF), the East Africa Legislative Assembly and the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas). The membership to CPA Africa Region is open to national parliaments and provincial or state or territorial legislatures.

South Africa’s national Parliament has sent a high-powered delegation to this conference that included the Chairperson of the CPA Africa Region Executive Committee, Ms Lindiwe Maseko, the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Ms Thoko Didiza, Mr Lechesa Tsenoli. 🌍



Ms Thoko Didiza

“Patriarchy has for a long time prevented African women from ascending to high political office. It’s this culture imbedded in African tradition that does not envisage women as capable of being leaders of any social, religious or political formation or grouping that needs to be dismantled to enable women to ascend the political ladder based on their wherewithal and their intellectual competencies. That is being discriminated against on cultural grounds.”

Thoko Didiza



Celebrating the life and times of two giants of our liberation

*As part of the centenary celebrations for former President Nelson Mandela and Ms Albertina Sisulu, the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) held a debate: “Celebrating the life and times of two great giants of our liberation” as the second parliamentary term drew to a close, writes **Abel Mputing**.*

Opening the debate, the Minister of Communications Ms Nomvula Mokonyane, stated that the legacy of Mr Nelson Mandela and Ms Albertina Sisulu will endure forever, and they remain the shining beacons of the sort of society we are striving to build.

“Throughout their lives, our icons faced numerous obstacles, yet they never once wavered in their fight for a better South Africa. Living in a democracy, as we do today with our human rights and dignity protected by the Constitution, it’s all too easy to forget the circumstances they faced,” she said.

This centenary gives all South Africans an opportunity to recommit to the principles of social cohesion, freedom and democracy. “Both Mama Albertina Sisulu and Madiba dedicated their lives to ensuring a better and more united South Africa. The 100th year anniversary of the lives of these two remarkable people is an opportunity to recommit ourselves to their principles by building the nation we envisioned at the start of our democracy.”

Also taking part in the debate, the Chairperson of the NCOP, Ms Thandi Modise, said these two icons’ sacrifices and contributions are engraved in our country’s political fabric. This debate allowed Members of the NCOP an opportunity to reflect on their legacy and their contribution to our freedom and democracy.

“It is befitting that we gather today to pay respect and reflect on the lives of South Africa’s two giants: Nelson Mandela and Albertina Sisulu. It is important to reflect on who and what they stood for. They may be gone but their sacrifice and contributions are engraved in the townships and villages of our country.”

Their fight for non-racialism and non-sexism constitutes one of the lasting



legacies of their contribution to our social make-up, she said. "They were freedom fighters leading the oppressed from all sides. They were Africans leading all cultures and languages. They were non-racial, leading the apartheid-defying progressive forces: the Tripartite Alliance [an alliance between the African National Congress (ANC), the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party] and the Federation of South African Women (Fedsaw), among other organisations, eventually leading us all towards non-sexism and non-racialism."

Ms Modise said Mr Mandela and Ms Sisulu remain points of reference because of their personal values of honesty, frankness, dependability, consistency, patience, humbleness and

diligence, and they embraced the plight of others.

"It is befitting that we gather today to pay respect and reflect on the lives of South African's two giants: Nelson Mandela and Albertina Sisulu." Thandi Modise

"They stood for liberties and rights; they stood for correction and advancement of others, not their own. They were both hard task masters; they would not relent or let you be if you were not up for the task. They were rough on behalf of the people on matters of the advancement of the majority, as well as the minority. They focused on the majority, but did not leave the individual out of the loop."

The leader of the Western Cape delegation to the NCOP, Ms Cathlene Labuschagne, said the history of Mr Mandela and Ms Sisulu is a history to be respected and remembered, and should be the foundation upon which South Africa is built.

"Albertina Sisulu's legendary work is as an anti-apartheid activist and the roles she played in various organisations and structures, such as the ANC, Fedsaw, the United Democratic Front, and as a Member of Parliament, as well as her more than 50 years' commitment to the liberation struggle.

The Albertina Sisulu Foundation is and will always be inspirational, not only to women, but to all those who believe in freedom and the dignity of all people," she said. 🌟

Mbete calls for international cooperation to ‘protect vulnerable migrants, particularly women and children’

*South Africa is committed towards cooperating with other nation states to ensure the creation and implementation of more progressive policies to alleviate the international refugee crisis, writes **Brent Simons**.*

Addressing the 138th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (IPU-138) held in Geneva, Switzerland, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, proposed that parliaments worldwide must “ensure that their respective countries put in place mechanisms, including legislation and budgets to implement the commitments enshrined in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the United Nations Summit on 19 September 2016”.

Ms Mbete also used this opportunity to remind delegates of the late Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela’s view that dealing with the issue of refugees and displaced people was “inextricably linked to achieving peace, upholding the rule of law and entrenching a human rights culture and democracy”.

“The solution”, Ms Mbete reminded the IPU, “is in effective global governance with rules . . . supported by appropriate policies . . . in both birth and host countries”. To achieve this, Ms Mbete called for international cooperation to protect vulnerable migrants, particularly women and children.

Using South Africa as an example, she said, refugees and asylum seekers were

entitled to social services and certain social grants, employment, healthcare and education. To this end, the IPU condemned what it termed “hate crimes against migrants and refugees” and called on parliaments to defend organisations which support and protect them.

The 744 Members of Parliament (MPs) who attended the IPU Assembly also condemned the discrimination and abuse of refugees and migrants while calling on greater participation of youth and women in politics.

The Assembly, held under the theme: “Strengthening the Global Regime for Migrants and Refugees: The Need for Evidence-Based Policy Solutions”, emphasised the critical role of parliaments in transforming the aspirations of the two Global Compacts – one on migrants and the other on refugees – into national laws.

According to the IPU, this declaration “asserted that migration, when properly managed, contributes to greater well-being and prosperity”. Recognising that the flight of refugees from persecution and conflict was not new, it called on “those who provide them with the protection and assistance they need” to be supported by the international community.

MPs who attended the IPU Assembly also “tackled sustainable development issues related to health, renewable energy, and conflict prevention”. They, according an IPU statement, reminded governments of their responsibility to “leave no one behind” in their development efforts.

In addition, young MPs who attended the Assembly denounced barriers faced

by young people worldwide regarding access to health services, in particular, those related to the treatment of HIV/Aids. They “reiterated calls for an internationally recognised target for youth participation in parliaments and called on the IPU to take the lead on this issue”.

To this end, the IPU amended its Statutes and Rules to allow Member Parliaments “to increase the number of representatives attending an Assembly with the critical stipulation that one of them is a young parliamentarian. The IPU hopes that this will inspire more youth participation in politics. Delegates “also put forward a comprehensive list of actions that parliaments can take to promote the ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons” –reminding the international parliamentary community “that the use of these weapons is prohibited by international law”.

“MPs attending the Forum of Women Parliamentarians denounced the obstacles blocking women from participating in politics, foremost among them, being inadequate education. The session concluded with an urgent call for concrete actions to increase women’s participation and representation in politics.”

The 139th IPU Assembly, scheduled for early October, will also examine the possibility of adopting a declaration that encompasses the principles and ideals that define Nelson Mandela as part of celebrating the Centenary of Nelson Mandela. For this to be achieved, South Africa has compiled and submit a document describing the principles and ideals that Nelson Mandela stood for to the IPU by July 2018. 🌍

Tribute *to* Ms Zelda Jongbloed

The Fifth Parliament lost one of its Members in July while Parliament was in recess, Ms Zelda Jongbloed who passed away on 21 July 2018. Ms Jongbloed joined Parliament after the 2014 general elections and was sworn in as a Member of the National Assembly.

Parliament's Presiding Officers, on behalf of Parliament, extended sincere condolences on the death of Ms Jongbloed who passed away after a long battle with cancer.

Ms Jongbloed was a seasoned, feisty journalist for some 40 years before she became a Democratic Alliance Member of Parliament in 2014. She served, with dedication on several parliamentary committees – the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration as well as Performance Monitoring and Evaluation and the Multiparty Women's Caucus Committee.

In Ms Jongbloed's passing, Parliament has lost one of the hardest-working public representatives and a true patriot who served the nation with diligence and dedication.

"Our thoughts are with the family, the friends of Ms Jongbloed, her colleagues and the Democratic Alliance, which she represented in Parliament. We wish you strength at this time of loss and grief. May her soul rest in peace."

Speaking at Ms Jongbloed's funeral, her friends described her as a patriot who was prepared to sacrifice her life for her country.

Her time in Parliament was a realisation of what she did all her life. She was described as someone who placed other people above her position. 🌹





OUR SOUTH AFRICA – THE SUN

The sun heals the divisions of the past, improves the quality of life of all South Africans, frees the potential of each person and builds a united and democratic South Africa, taking its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.



OUR PEOPLE – THE PROTEA LEAVES

Our people, building on the foundation of a democratic and open society, freely elect representatives, acting as a voice of the people and providing a national forum for public consideration of issues.



OUR PARLIAMENT – THE DRUM

The drum calls the people's Parliament, the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces, to consider national and provincial issues, ensuring government by the people under the Constitution.



OUR CONSTITUTION – THE BOOK

Our Constitution lays the foundation for a democratic and open society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. It is the supreme law of our country, and ensures government by the people.