



28 November 2024

COPE Statement:

COPE's Position on Land Expropriation Vindicated: A Testament to Our Values and Principles.

In the ever-evolving landscape of South African politics, the Congress of the People (COPE) has unwaveringly upheld its values and principles, even in the face of significant opposition and at great cost at the polls because of engineered negative narratives.

One example was our stance against amending Section 25 of the Constitution to allow land expropriation without compensation, which is a testament to our commitment to justice, economic stability, and the rule of law. Under the leadership of President Mosiuoa Lekota, COPE took a principled stand against this policy despite the political cost.

Cheap populism and rhetoric meant those who advocated for short-termism and irrational positions could not sustain their positions during the ensuing public discourse. We have always believed Section 25 was a balanced and rational approach to the land issue. The core problems of the land reform regime's lack of progressive implementation are lack of proper governance, administrative capacity, and corruption. These must be tackled head-on and eradicated. COPE is vindicated because the section of the constitution remains in place. It must be implemented to its fullest extent to achieve land reform effectively.

We believe such an amendment would undermine property rights, deter investment, and ultimately harm the people it aimed to help. Our position was not just a political manoeuvre but a reflection of our core values: respect for the Constitution, promotion of economic growth, and protection of individual rights.

Our stance is not just a political position but a well-informed decision. It follows the original position adopted by the forebears of leaders of the struggle for democracy and the constitution. It aligns with the findings of the Kgalema Motlanthe High-Level Panel report, which highlighted the complexities and potential pitfalls of land expropriation without compensation. The report emphasised the need for a balanced approach that addresses historical injustices while ensuring economic stability and growth. This alignment reinforces the importance of upholding constitutional principles and the rationality of our stance.

As the current political environment unfolds, it becomes increasingly clear that COPE's position is morally correct and inspiring. The economic challenges and legal uncertainties surrounding land expropriation without compensation have only vindicated our stance. As other political entities grapple with the embarrassing consequences of their decisions, COPE

remains steadfast in its commitment to a just and prosperous South Africa, inspiring hope for a better future.

Our stance on land expropriation was closely aligned with our vision for sustainable land reform and restitution. We believe in a balanced approach that addresses historical injustices while ensuring economic stability and growth. Effective land reform should empower beneficiaries with the necessary support and resources to make productive use of the land. This includes providing access to training, financial resources, and infrastructure development to ensure the success of land reform initiatives.

The land issue is fundamentally about economic transformation and is at the heart of COPE's policy framework. We advocate for initiatives promoting broad-based economic inclusion, ensuring all South Africans can participate in and benefit from economic growth. This means creating an enabling environment for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), fostering innovation, and promoting skills development to build a competitive workforce.

Our commitment to economic inclusion also involves addressing systemic inequalities and ensuring previously disadvantaged groups access economic opportunities. By promoting inclusive economic growth, we aim to create a more equitable society where everyone has the chance to thrive.

Our values and principles are more than words; they guide our actions and decisions. We believe in a South Africa where the rule of law is upheld, economic opportunities are available, and historical injustices are addressed through sustainable and equitable means. COPE's vision for the future is one where every South African can thrive, free from the fear of arbitrary expropriation and economic instability. We are committed to this vision and will continue to work towards a just and prosperous South Africa.

As we move forward, COPE will continue to advocate for policies that promote justice, economic growth and inclusion, and the protection of individual rights. We call on all South Africans to join us in building a nation that respects its Constitution, values its citizens, and works towards prosperity for all.

Together, we can overcome the challenges and achieve our shared vision of a prosperous and inclusive South Africa.

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