



**SURPLUS
PEOPLE
PROJECT**

**Statement on the State of the Nation Address
Surplus People Project
3 February 2006**

SPP welcomes the Presidents pronouncement that land and agrarian reform is critical to address the problems of landlessness, poverty and rural underdevelopment.

We support the commitment to review the current land reform programme, which has proven to be inefficacious over the past decade, in the form of reviewing the willing buyer willing seller approach, land acquisition models and the manipulations of land prices and the regulation of the conditions under which foreigners buy land. However the review should not be restricted to these three categories, but the entire market based land reform policy framework as expressed by the landless and civil society organisation at the recently held Provincial and National Land Summit. We believe that international practices and norms that would be considered during the review should allow for a wider spread of international experiences as oppose to the limited market based approach.

SPP believes that the review should be participatory and not be restricted to technocrats and academics, but should actively involve communities in the review process. The development of an alternative land and agrarian reform is critical in solving the development challenges faced by rural South Africa.

The movement towards integrating land redistribution within the broader Integrated Development Plans of local government is welcomed, which will ensure an integrated approach to land reform and local economic development. We further hope that the required budget and resources would be allocated to give expression to this commitment made by the President.

SPP however regret that the conditions of farm dwellers and workers did not receive attention, which are faced with continued evictions and also the most marginalized sector of our society. The moratorium on evictions as expressed at the land summit should form an integral part of the government review process. Thus access to land and broader tenure security of farm dwellers are critical components of any successful land and agrarian reform framework.

SPP who are celebrating 20 years in the struggle for land remains committed to work with government in the review of the current market based land reform policy framework and the implementation of an alternative agrarian reform framework. The challenge remain to what extend government will make the required financial and human resources available which would be a key indicator, to the landless poor and civil society, of governments commitment to land and agrarian reform.

