

ANCYL wants 'radical' land reform

Written by Sapa
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Johannesburg - The ANC Youth League supported President Jacob Zuma's call for a review of the "willing buyer willing seller" land redistribution strategy, a spokesperson said on Friday.

"The African National Congress Youth League is totally behind President Jacob Zuma's call for a decisive land redistribution strategy, particularly the long overdue review of the willing buyer-willing seller principle," said a statement from Floyd Shivambu who had just returned from a league field trip to Venezuela on oil nationalisation.

The ANCYL also agreed with Black Management Forum (BMF) president Jimmy Manyi's contention that the constitutional imperative of providing a fair price for land needed to be revised because under the current system "exorbitant" market-related prices were being paid.

Zuma broached the topic at a BMF conference on "unintended consequences" of the Constitution.

No land invasions - Zuma

But, Zuma hastened to add there would be no land invasions, an apparent reference to Zimbabwe's land redistribution programme widely regarded as the main contributor to that country's economic crisis.

"There will be no similar kinds of land invasions in this country, because we do things within the law," he said.

Zimbabwe's land redistribution policy was largely run by people calling themselves war veterans who would camp on farmers' property and either forcibly remove farmers or harass them into leaving. A void in agricultural knowledge, and of the funding required for inputs, saw the agricultural sector plunged into a crisis that left huge swathes of the country dependent of food aid.

The league said that historically defined racial inequalities should be appreciated and that it would lobby for a "more radical and decisive" economic transformation and land redistribution programme.

"None of these programmes will undermine the rule of law, but will ensure that law is progressively utilised for redress purposes."

The land reform department said that its core land reform programme was to redistribute 30% of white-owned agricultural land.

Redistribution

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To date 5.9 million hectares of land had been acquired through redistribution and restitution.

The league's president Julius Malema recently said he supported Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe's programme of land seizures from white farmers, and that South Africa's political freedom would mean nothing if a practical programme of intervention on property issues was not decided.

He claimed that South Africans did not own their own country because the land was owned by foreigners.

The league had already spoken out on its belief that mines should be nationalised, and, said Shivambu, on the Venezuela trip, they learnt how the state's control of oil contributed to the national fiscus.

"People are having immediate benefits from the state's control of the oil industry," said Shivambu, who accompanied Malema on the trip.