

Press Release

For immediate release

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South African Institute of Race Relations

The power of ideas

Media Contact: Terence Corrigan Project Manager Tel: 066 470 4456 Email: terence@sairr.org.za

General Media Contacts: Michael Morris Tel: 066 302 1968 Email: michael@irr.org.za

Kelebogile Leepile Tel: 011 432 7221 ext: 2018 Email: kelebogile@irr.org.za

Groundswell against expropriation without compensation as comments deadline looms

In just five days, more than 12 500 South Africans from all communities and all walks of life have endorsed the submission by the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) opposing a policy that would allow the state to take property without paying for it.

The detailed submission to the Joint Constitutional Review Committee, setting out the issues and arguing why property rights should not be diluted, was posted on the IRR website on Tuesday 5 June.

By the early morning of Saturday 9 June, 12 500 concerned citizens had endorsed the submission.

This number is expected to climb considerably by the 15 June deadline for public comment set by the government.

The range of names among respondents so far shows that popular anxiety about the threat to property rights is spread across all South Africa's racial and socio-economic communities. People are united in valuing their own and their neighbours' rights to property.

The IRR's submission emphasises that

- The implications of expropriation without compensation are severe and will stunt South Africa's economy and undermine its democracy
- Properties rights are a critical asset for the well-being and advancement of all South Africans

- Property rights are not the reason why land reform has failed
- There is little popular demand from poor people to go back to the land
- Expropriation without compensation will cause great economic and political damage
- There are much better ways, which require urgent attention, to help emerging farmers succeed.

The IRR argues that thorough, research-based submissions of this kind are critical to public participation. In the absence of submissions drafted by experts, few citizens are in a position to respond to a subject as complex and far-reaching as changing the status of property rights as a means of advancing land reform.

The IRR's submission, [here](#), is indispensable to enabling ordinary people to let their voice be heard in helping to protect property rights in South Africa. It urges citizens to 'endorse our submission and we will ensure that your endorsement is received by the Joint Constitutional Review Committee'.

Later this month, the IRR will be taking the campaign overseas with the message that South Africans need international support in protecting their property rights from a government that intends to take them away.

Read more about the IRR's research [here](#).

Ends.