

Press statement: Land Tax

Recent articles in local newspapers addressing land tax issues have sparked a considerable number of emotional public comments. In response to these discussions, the Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU) would like to express its unambiguous position on matters related to land reform and land tax.

First and foremost, the NAU acknowledges the historical inequality in the ownership of commercial agricultural land that persisted at the time of the country's independence. Furthermore, the NAU participated in the formulation of the government's land reform policy and supports its implementation.

Throughout its history, the NAU has consistently advocated for a fair and orderly land reform process, emphasizing the importance of fair and affordable land tax. Consequently, the organisation does not object to the exemption granted to previously disadvantaged individuals, recognising that the payment of land tax serves as a mechanism for landowners to financially contribute to land distribution in a systematic and peaceful manner.

Despite acknowledging that the current land tax values are deemed fair and just, the NAU agrees that paying such land tax impacts farmers' profitability, particularly during periods of drought. Compounding this, challenges arise from the poor administration of land taxes, whereby farmers are forced to settle four years' worth of taxes simultaneously in 2024.

The NAU emphasises that the success of land reform hinges on beneficiaries utilising the land productively and sustainably, contributing to the national gross domestic product (GDP). Undeterred in its commitment to the government's land reform process, the NAU accentuates its continuous engagement in negotiations with the government, seeking a mutually beneficial outcome for the agricultural sector. Farmers continue to offer their land to support the ongoing land reform initiatives.

In conclusion, the NAU urges the government to ensure that redistributed agricultural land continues to produce food, aligning with principles of self-sustainability, food security, and job creation. Land reform can only be a success if the beneficiary of the land productively utilises the land in a profitable and sustainable manner. The organisation remains steadfast in its advocacy for a collaborative approach to achieving these goals for the betterment of agriculture in the country.