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COGTA WARNS COMMUNITIES AGAINST LAND INVASION IN MPUMALANGA

The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in Mpumalanga has issued a warning against perpetrators of land invasion. Land invasion was raised by traditional leaders amongst the contributory factors that perpetuate lawlessness and instability in their areas during a recent meeting with the MEC for Cogta, Mr Mandla Msibi in Mbombela. Traditional leaders urged the Department to assist them to confront the scourge of land invasion head on.

Mr Msibi expressed the Department's determination to pursue land invasion cases. "Land invasion is a criminal act and those who perpetuate it must be arrested and face prosecution. We are working together with law enforcement agencies, municipalities and traditional leaders to bring this scourge to an end," Mr Msibi said.

In rural areas land invasion is committed by people who cash in on unsuspected individuals by allocating them land for settlement. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was entered between Cogta, the South African Police Services (SAPS), the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the Mpumalanga Provincial House of Traditional Leaders as signatories to mobilize resources in the fight against land invasion, which MoU will soon be amended to include the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. "Land invasion is one of the serious threats for food security. Communities in rural areas depend on land for grazing and for small scale farming to feed their families. Any allocation of land must be in line with the provision of the applicable legislations such as the Spatial Planning of Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) that determines land for human settlement, business and other purposes. Any occupation of land outside the applicable legislation is illegal and the Department will ensure that the perpetrators are brought to book to face the full might of the law," Mr Msibi said.

He also urged traditional leaders and Municipalities to work together for the proper allocation of land. He added that failure to do so will create a fertile ground for land invasion.

End.

Issued by the Department of Co-operation and Traditional Affairs
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