

PRESS STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF LANDS AND RURAL RESETTLEMENT HON. DR. D. MOMBESHORA (MP) ON ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS IN RESETTLEMENT AREAS

1. The main objective of the Land Reform since 1980 was to decongest communal areas and create a class of indigenous commercial farmers.
2. Land allocation and settler emplacement was carried out in an orderly manner and on the basis of farm layout maps. For all the resettlement models, that is, the old resettlement schemes embarked on immediately after independence and the A1 schemes implemented during the Fast Track phase, these layout maps clearly demarcated residential areas, arable and grazing areas. For A2 models allocation was done on the basis of layout maps showing the individual plots allocated to each A2 beneficiary.

3. Given the elaborate and carefully considered planning undertaken in resettlement areas that took into account ecological aspects, such as natural resource management and conservation, as well as issues of viability, Governments will not tolerate illegal settlements that have mushroomed in undesignated areas including grazing and catchment areas of dams and rivers. Any person occupying rural land without an official temporary permit issued by the District Land Committee, an offer letter or permission of the Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement is deemed an illegal settler.

4. This notice therefore serves to inform all illegally settled people to immediately vacate Rural State land i.e. the resettled farms and return to their original homes by the 6th of September 2016. Failure to do so will result in immediate eviction and prosecution.

5. In terms of the Gazetted Lands (Consequential Provisions) Act (Chapter 20:28) it is an offense to occupy Rural State land without the authority of the Minister of Lands and Rural Resettlement.