

AFRA



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Government to give land to Lebowa

ALMOST two months ago the government's plan to transfer state land under the Department of Land and Regional Affairs to homeland administration was uncovered. Throughout this period, repeated requests for details of the plan to be made public met with no response. And there has still been no consultation with communities living on the land.

Then, on October 13 1992 the South African Ministry of Land and Regional Affairs and Lebowa's Chief Minister announced in a joint press statement that 380 000 hectares of state land will be transferred to joint Lebowa/South African government administration. There has been no announcement yet of similar definite plans for KwaZulu.

The 380 000 hectares of former South African Development Trust land will be handed to tribes in Lebowa, existing

companies in which Lebowa is represented, the Lebowa Agricultural Corporation and the Lebowa Development Corporation. It is said this land will be jointly administered by the South African and Lebowa governments. AFRA believes that such transfer will mean de facto ownership of land and effective control over land settlement and use by the Lebowa authorities.

Under the cloak of joint administration and handing over land to companies and corporations, the government is trying to give homeland governments, who are in their death throes, effective power and control over land and development.

This confirms AFRA's fears that land is being used to win support in negotiations and to preempt any genuine negotiation around land reform.

Basic services, such as schools, health facilities and pensions, would hardly improve under the administration of structures which are grossly strapped for cash. A decline in quality and quantity of services has been the experience of areas now under homeland administration. Communities say that responsibility for development and administering services lies with the central government.

The land transfer plan is an attempt by the government to shirk its rural development responsibilities and to complicate attempts to reconstruct a post-apartheid South Africa.

Since the government's plan to transfer 1,2 million hectares of state land to homeland administration was uncovered, there has been widespread opposition to the plan from a range of different