

ZIMBABWE LAND SERIES:

INTRODUCTION

In September 2008, the parties to the Global Political Agreement (GPA) committed themselves to conducting a comprehensive, transparent and non-partisan land audit, and ensure that all Zimbabweans shall be considered for allocation of land irrespective of race, gender or political affiliation. They also agreed to ensure security of land tenure, to work towards restoring full agricultural productivity, and to secure compensation for the former land owners.

Sokwanele believes that discussion on these and other key land policy issues should now begin. The intention is to open space for dialogue by encouraging Zimbabweans from all walks of life, including the Diaspora, to engage in an informed and vibrant online debate. Sokwanele has therefore invited two specialists on land in Zimbabwe, Prof. Mandi Rukuni and Dr. Dale Doré, to present a series of discussion papers on our website. They have each agreed to write a series of articles over a year on key historical, legal, social and economic issues that have come to define land policy in Zimbabwe. The hope is that Zimbabweans will comment on their ideas through the internet in what should prove to be a lively debate.

The two invited contributors have each prepared a framework paper which introduces and outlines their series of articles. Mandi Rukuni takes an organic and holistic approach towards building a free, fair, just and caring society. His approach is founded on the belief that Zimbabweans should create a new history to become a model African society, whose foundation is not only truly African, but also an effective member and contributor to common global welfare. Dale Doré examines how the nationalist narrative of land has driven land policies that have undermined property rights, the agricultural economy, and the rule of law. His approach is founded on the need to treat land as an economic resource within the context of international law. In particular, he argues that secure property rights form the basis for commercialising smallholder agriculture and the structural transformation of the economy.

Mandi Rukuni is a distinguished scholar, having published 12 academic books and more than 100 research articles. He was Professor of Agricultural Economics for 20 years and served as Dean of Agriculture at the University of Zimbabwe. During his tenure he was invited to Chair the Commission of Inquiry into Land Tenure Systems in Zimbabwe in 1993. In 1998 he was appointed as Director of the Africa Program for the W. K. Kellogg Foundation where he worked before being asked by the World Bank in 2009 to facilitate Cabinet retreats to support Zimbabwe's newly formed Inclusive Government. He is currently the

Founder and Executive Chairman of the Mandi Rukuni Seminar Group which includes IBS Consulting and the Wisdom Afrika Leadership Academy (WALA). He is also the Founder and Trustee of the Barefoot Education Trust for Afrika (BEAT).

Dale Doré is a former Oxford scholar and agricultural economist with a special interest in the economics of land tenure systems and the structural transformation of the economy. He has consulted widely on land, rural livelihoods and environmental issues within communal areas of Southern Africa. From 1997 to 2000 he was the regional research co-ordinator of a community-based natural resource management programme in 5 SADC countries. He is currently a Trustee and Director of Shanduko (Centre for Agrarian and Environmental Research), which seeks to promote economically viable livelihoods that are socially acceptable and environmentally sustainable within the context of human rights, democracy and good governance. He was recently invited by UNDP to join a group of eminent economists to prepare a Comprehensive Economic Recovery Strategy for Zimbabwe.