Speech Delivered by Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Hon Thulas Nxesi to the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) conference at Boksburg on 19 March 2011.

Programme Director
Members of Executive Council
Director-General
Senior Managers
Farmers
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we have come to an end of our workshop which we started yesterday. A lot of work has been put into during the sessions.

Now, it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to use the information and knowledge we have shared during our interactions over the past two days to benefit our farming operations.

We are encouraged by the success stories that have been narrated to us this morning. Small and emerging farmers cannot, and would not remain small and emerging forever. We have also noted your concerns regarding funding, particularly in relation to Land Bank and other financial institutions. We are, and shall always be prepared to help you.

In response to lack of infrastructure support to LRAD or State land the recapitalization and development policy extends to the revitalization of irrigation schemes, this process is underway with the collaboration of local government as well as provincial

It should also be noted that recapitalization and development is not only meant for the distress farms however it extends to good farms since its objectives is also to graduate emerging farmers to commercial farmers.
With regard to the provision of security to farms, yes the department is in the process of introducing a new cadre of Youth (like Narysec) called Farm Rangers their responsibly amongst others is to ensure compliance with land use and the safety of infrastructure as well as livestocks on farms.

With regard to the selection of projects to be recapitalized, please note that once the Council of Stake Holders (COS) has been established they will be part of the selection panel for recapitalization and development. It is therefore very important that you as beneficiaries speed up the process of formation of these structures.

All that has been said here today, Ladies and Gentlemen, please note that it is depended on your cooperation as well as you resolving community conflicts. It is should also be noted that since you have title deeds sometimes it becomes difficult for us as government to intervene, especially in cases where you have formed legal structures such as a Trust.

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform will continue to assist people to obtain land for farming and settlement. We shall continue to assist LRAD farmers to grow to become commercial farmers.

The more successful farmers we produce the better it is for food security and economic growth of our country. This, too, will generate employment for rural people and turn around the socio-economic conditions in the rural areas where poverty is rife.

Agriculture contributes about three percent of the country's annual GDP.

One of the principles underpinning land reform is the deracialisation of the rural economy for sustainable and equitable growth.

Our new programme of recapitalisation and development is designed to assist all farmers that have been given land. This is an effort to provide, for a minimum of five years, post settlement support to new farmers and to revive farms that have collapsed and even farms that are currently doing well.

Soon we shall be going to the ballots to elect our local government councillors who will provide you with services you need for your communities.

It is incumbent upon you to choose leaders who will serve your interests, the leaders who will be able to address your community needs.

Sometimes it is better to deal with the devil you know best than risk your political life with unknown quantity!

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish you a safe journey home, may you have an enjoyable long weekend.

I thank you.