



MR PRESIDENT WE NEED LAND REFORMS

“Land reforms include reforms or improvements in the land tenure system as well as reforms in other institutions which are related to the land and its utilization such as consolidation of holdings, size of holdings, methods of farming and supply of agricultural credit etc.”-UN.

With President Mgufuli in office, there is a renewed hope with the Tanzania government by many who admire his work ethics and his resilient first days in office. However, in relation to his priorities set about a week or so when addressing the Tanzanian parliament I feel that it is best for him to address the much needed reforms in the land.

In terms of articulation of alternatives to a corrupt society, two problems have been frequent in the public domain. One is election funding and the other is land-use right, over which politicians through the government have enormous discretion. These are not only breeding grounds for corruption but also economically inefficient. Tanzania's extraordinarily high real estate prices are a symptom of not only corrupt practices but also of muddled thinking.

The prevailing massive poverty of the rural population as a serious limiting factor has been impeding the growth of modern industry.

Land reforms can be made from the following:

1. Promotion of Incentive:

Land reforms are needed for promoting incentive to the actual tiller of the land for promotion of agricultural production. These reforms assure farmers that they will not be exploited and get full reward for their labour. It is felt that for raising production, supply of inputs like seed, manure and other implements are pre-requisite and it should be stepped up immediately. As majority of Tanzania farmers who have small size of holdings are unable to purchase these inputs in a required quantity. This results in inefficient utilization of manpower and land.

2. Costless Method of Increasing Production:

It helps in raising agricultural production without involving much use of capital. It is only possible when the relations of the cultivator with land are improved. In other words, it means that if the cultivator is assured for security of tenure, fair rent and right of ownership and free transferability. In Tanzania we do not have an authority that regulates how land activities are managed and catered for from rentals to many other controversies. There should be a Tanzania Real Estate Authority to manage land matters, the ministry alone is



not enough.

Moreover, he is assured that he is the master of all that he produces and there is no scope of any kind of exploitation. That is why, land reform is called a costless method of raising production.

3. Establishing Link between Government and farmers:

Land reforms can establish a direct link between Government and farmers by abolishing intermediaries who are so many in Tanzania. This will facilitate the government to implement plan for agricultural development in a smooth manner.

4. Planned Growth:

Land reforms will enable to bring about a close integration of agricultural economy with the planning process of the country. Such integration is only possible when cultivators will have a direct link with the state government. Eliminations of the heterogeneous and tenurial relations will result in some uniformity of the system throughout the country.

5. Social Justice:

Land reforms are also considered essential as it provides social justice to millions of cultivators. The land policy that changes tenurial relations in favour of the actual tiller means that the cultivator/small farmer is assured of getting the fruits of their labour and equality of income and wealth. Urbanization and industrialization are generally accompanied by economies of scale in building construction and efficient use of land resources through vertical development. Abnormally high land prices which taunt Tanzania, hinder development. They represent rent extraction and divert capital, which is scarce in developing countries, from productive investments that would lift living standards. When land-rent extracts a significant part of the economic surplus, it encourages speculation and reduces incentives for productive wealth creation. Such an economy is unlikely to ever make the transition to a developed economy Mr. President.

It is true of many countries that with time and development, the potential economic and social contribution of a good land reform diminishes. But this is not grounds for concluding that we should be forgetting about it just yet. To do so is in part to make the same sort of mistake made by the 'industry first' proponents of half a century ago who, on the grounds that agriculture's share of output and employment falls as development proceeds, concluded that the sector could safely be ignored and left to fend for itself. This was a costly mistake in a number of countries. Mahatma Gandhi once said;



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“The earth, the air, the land and the water are not an inheritance from our fore fathers but on loan from our children. So we have to handover to them at least as it was handed over to us “