



Natal community delegates at the fifth national meeting of land claiming communities.

Land campaign to intensify

ABOUT 60 communities from all over South Africa have agreed to broaden their land claims campaign and to embark on a national, regional and local programme of organisation, mass action and lobbying around the issue of land claims.

The meeting on March 27 and 28 reiterated its dissatisfaction with the government-appointed Advisory Commission on Land Allocation (ACLA) and the determination of communities to get back the

land from which they were forcibly removed - whether this land was now state owned or in private hands. It was left up to each community to decide whether they would continue to make submissions to ACLA, while taking other action, or not.

De Klerk's reply "inadequate"

Communities rejected as inadequate and unacceptable, a letter from the state president asking them to be patient and to

give ACLA a chance. De Klerk's letter was in reply to a letter from communities after their last national meeting in November 1992.

Representatives resolved that the "restoration campaign be broadened to include all communities who make claim to a piece of land to which they have a historical connection".

Campaign broadened

By broadening the campaign, the meeting has effectively invited labour



Delegates at the fifth national meeting of land claiming communities agreed to broaden their campaign and to embark on a local, regional and national programme of organisation and action to get back their land.

tenant communities and communities with Group Areas Act claims, among others, to become part of one national campaign for land restoration. The meeting was attended for the first time by farm labour tenants from Natal.

Becoming part of the national campaign will greatly strengthen the struggles of labour tenant communities. It will enable them to draw on the strength and experience of communities who have been part of local, regional and national initiatives for land rights for some time. These include the Natal communities of Roosboom and Charlestown, who recently had their land restored, but who are still part of the campaign.

Focus public attention

Representatives undertook to intensify the campaign so that greater public attention is focused on the struggle for land. Among the activities proposed were:

- pickets, demonstrations and marches
- a signature campaign
- occupation of government buildings and offices
- reoccupation of land being claimed
- lobbying international observers and peace monitors, political organisations, civics, unions, foreign embassies and ACLA
- popularising and lobbying support for a land claims court as an alternative to ACLA

- exposing the concerns of land claimants in the media.

Organising structures to form

Community delegates also agreed to form representative regional community committees in their regions which will coordinate regional activity and from which representatives will be elected to coordinate activity at a national level.

Natal community representatives at the meeting came from Impendle, Baynesfield, Cramond, Estcourt, Colenso, Ladysmith, Weenen, Newcastle and Louwsberg.