

KwaZulu land deal on hold?

AN agreement between the KwaZulu and South African governments was concluded in August 1993 which could effectively give the KwaZulu government joint administrative control over about 500 000 hectares of state-owned land in Natal.

The announcement of the deal drew condemnation from newspapers and non-government and political organisations, who saw the move as an attempt to use the sensitive issue of land as a political football.

Several rural communities who are part of a national campaign for the restoration of land also rejected the deal. And the Goldstone Commission recommended that such land deals be stopped, on the grounds that they could spark violent conflict over land.

This seems to have forced an unofficial halting of implementation of substantial parts of the deal.

A further concession is the agreement to retain townships under South African administration. Imbali, Edendale, Inanda, Groutville, Itshelejuba, Hlabisa, Somkele, Nkandla and Nongoma will be administered by the Natal Provincial Administration or other South African government departments.

Government sources have admitted that the deal was politically motivated. They also admitted that it would be difficult to implement because of the possible divisions it could cause amongst communities occupying the land in question, as well as implications it could have on the current transitional process. A source said that

he doubted that any of the land would actually be jointly administered and that nothing was presently being planned regarding this. He said that to his knowledge land was being transferred to "tribes" in Inanda and Molweni, near Pinetown, as compensatory land for that which they had lost when the Inanda Dam was built. Nature reserves which were already effectively administered by KwaZulu would be jointly administered.

Some of the land forming part of the deal with KwaZulu also falls under the consideration of the Advisory Commission on Land Allocation, a body which the government appointed in 1991 to deal with land allocation as part of its land reform initiatives.

What the agreement said . . .

IN terms of the agreement the KwaZulu government could jointly administer about 500 000 hectares of state land in Natal.

Ownership of some of the land could be transferred to the KwaZulu Finance and Development Corporation, the KwaZulu Conservation Trust and the KwaZulu Monument Council.

Ownership of traditional rural tribal land may be transferred to tribes and tribal authorities.

Developed land may be leased or sold to farmers jointly selected by Pretoria and the KwaZulu authorities.

Some land may be given to tribes and tribal authorities as compensation for land taken away from them. Some land, such as townships, will

remain under South Africa and will be administered by through the Natal Provincial Administration.

A technical committee made up of the Department of Regional and Land Affairs, the Department of Agriculture, KwaZulu and the Natal Provincial Administration would identify beneficiaries to the land and monitor transfer of the land to them.