



Factsheet: Online conversations about land reform and expropriation in South Africa

23 January – 10 February 2025

Overview

- The conversation about the Expropriation Bill received more than 450,000 mentions on X, between 23 January and 10 February 2025.
- Topical events that contributed to the spike in conversation were:
 - Reports that Ramaphosa signed the Bill;
 - US President Donald Trump's threat to cut off funding to South Africa until investigations were done on the so-called land confiscations;
 - Trump cutting aid to the country; and
 - Offering refugee status to Afrikaners.
- Two types of authors were identified in the conversation; those who amplify content in large volumes, and those who post less content but receive greater engagement.
- Misinformation is constantly being leveraged by some accounts to drive an anti-expropriation narrative online. This misinformation is centred around narratives of white genocide, land seizures or confiscations and racial inequalities.

Themes

- Accounts in opposition to the signing of the bill have likened it to Zimbabwe's land reform policies, while others accused Ramaphosa and the government of targeting white farmers
- Among the top 10 most retweeted posts in the conversation is President Cyril Ramaphosa's [post](#) dispelling misinformation about land "confiscation" which was retweeted more than 13,000 times.

Authors

- Authors who contributed the highest volume of mentions predominantly amplified and reposted content that expressed either confusion about how expropriation will be implemented; or an anti-expropriation stance.

- The second set of authors are those whose posts received the highest engagement during the research period. These authors include accounts such as @visegrad24, @RiebvJanbeeck and @EndWokeness. Information about the content by high-engagement authors can be found [here](#).

TikTok

- Our analytics tool detected 3,000+ TikTok mentions related to the Expropriation Bill.
- Conversation on TikTok appears to be less rooted in disinformation and antagonistic influence than content on the X social media platform.
- The most engaged posts stemmed predominantly from reporting on the matter - with two media organisations ([CGTN](#); [Al Jazeera](#)) and two organisational accounts ([Orania Movement](#) ; [The Gareth Cliff Show](#)) leading the conversation.
- Overall, conversation through commentary on TikTok remained polarized. Key terms in the conversation included ANC, Trump, Orania, Minerals and President Ramaphosa.

Global interest

- Considering the geographical distribution of mentions about expropriation from 20 January to 5 February, our analytics tool indicates that a sizeable portion of the conversation comes from accounts in the Global North.
- Of the 141,000 mentions which could be geolocated - 60,339 came from South Africa, 40,226 from the USA, and 8,255 from the UK.
- The stream of disinformation and fearmongering regarding expropriation has a storied history. Most recently, members of the civil rights group Afriforum having toured countries in the Global North drumming up concern around land seizure and farm attacks through their [#TheWorldMustKnow](#) Campaign.
- International influencers and organisations on the X platform have focused on reporting narratives based on racist disinformation within the South African context. Of these, accounts such as 'iamyesyouareno' have supported [perspectives](#) that South Africa was 'better' under the apartheid regime. 'tatethetalisman', brother of manosphere influencer Andrew Tate, has further [stoked the flames](#) of the myth of [white genocide](#) and ethnic persecution within the country.

- Noted Malaysian far-right influencer [Ian Miles Cheong](#), has further commented on the state of the country, alleging [mass famine](#) and [ethnic cleansing](#) as a consequence of repressive policies taken by the national government.