

# MAKING AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT WORK FOR AFRICA: a parliamentarian's response to the land rush

## TIRER PROFIT DES INVESTISSEMENTS: la réponse parlementaire à la ruée vers les terres



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### PRESS RELEASE

Parliamentarians from Southern Africa address the current scale and impact of the land rush in the region

## PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT TO HOST REGIONAL SEMINAR ON PARLIAMENTARIANS' RESPONSE TO LAND RUSH

*On 11 – 12 August 2014, parliamentarians of the Southern African Development Community-Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) will debate on strategies to ensure that foreign investment in agriculture brings benefits to local populations, including strengthening citizens' land rights, food security and employment opportunities.*

Johannesburg, South Africa – During the two-day seminar, Members of Parliament (MPs) will analyze the current trend of foreign investments in Southern African land and water. They will examine how they can best implement recent initiatives and international agreements, including the [Land Policy Initiative](#) and the [Maputo Declaration](#). MPs will also explore business models for agriculture that are currently being used in the region, highlighting citizens' land rights. The seminar will provide a better understanding of the legal frameworks for foreign investment in agriculture and how parliamentarians can contribute, through their functions and mandate, to ensure that populations share the benefits of investment.

Foreign investments in agriculture have gained growing global attention especially since the 2008 food and fuel crisis, when international actors from the public and private sectors began looking to Africa to solve their growing resource needs. According to the [International Land Coalition](#), 80 million hectares of land have been allocated to investors in the past few years, of which 40 million hectares in Africa alone. However, in many a case, these deals bring limited to no benefits to local populations and often undermine human rights.

Addressing the land rush implies strengthening land policy and governance. It is in this context that the PAP, in collaboration with African regional parliaments, launched in 2011 a campaign entitled "[Making Agricultural Investment Work for Africa: A Parliamentarian's Response to the Land Rush](#)". The campaign included meetings at the [Pan-African](#) level (2011), as well as in [West](#) (2012), [East](#) and [Central](#) (2013) Africa. The planned Southern African seminar is the last of this series.

Following the seminar, on 13 August, commitments made and key issues emerging from the continental campaign will be presented and debated in the context of the annual Speakers' Conference of the PAP. How these commitments are to be translated into reality is the next step of this campaign that the PAP will continue to lead with the implementation of the Phase 2 of the Project.

These events are organized jointly by the [PAP](#) and [SADC-PF](#) in collaboration with the [International Institute for Sustainable Development](#) (IISD), the [Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa](#) (AWEPA), the [African Union](#), the [Land Policy Initiative](#) (LPI), [Africa Forum](#), [OXFAM](#), [International Land Coalition](#), [Agricultural Research for Development](#) (CIRAD) and the [Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies](#) (PLAAS).

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