



## **MEDIA STATEMENT: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Vuvulane Irrigated Farms**

**LOZITHA, 17 December 2018** - **Tibiyo Taka Ngwane** has noted, with concern, allegations circulating on social media and other forums on its alleged role in disputes with Vuvulane farmers.

Tibiyo Taka Ngwane is committed to the development of the **Kingdom of Eswatini** and to uplifting the quality of life for all Emaswati. Tibiyo Taka Ngwane has been instrumental in the education of thousands of Emaswati through scholarships and bursaries and in the creation of employment through investment in agriculture and other commercial activities.

The success of farming activities carried out by **Vuvulane farmers** is key to growth in the economy and the development of these communities, and Tibiyo Taka Ngwane will continue to support legitimate sugar cane farmers at Vuvulane.

It is important to note, however, that the **Vuvulane Irrigated Farms** project was intended to benefit the whole Nation and generations to come, and not only the farmers who were allocated farms in the early stages of the project.

Having reviewed various social media statements and articles in the press, Tibiyo Taka Ngwane would like to place the following facts on record:

1. In 1958 the Colonial Development Corporation (later to become the Commonwealth Development Corporation or **CDC** as it was commonly known), acquired freehold title to **Farm 860** in the Vuvulane area for purposes of establishing a smallholder irrigation project to benefit individual farmers as part of a large scale agricultural project to benefit the Swazi Nation as a whole.
2. **CDC** invested the necessary capital to build canals and irrigation systems and all the infrastructure necessary to make the project a success. CDC established the **Swaziland Irrigation Scheme** to provide water to the **Vuvulane Irrigated Farms** project as well as a number of other projects in the region.
3. The rights of the parties were clearly set out in written documents.
  - a. CDC acquired **title** to Farm 860, the land on which the **Vuvulane Irrigated Farms** project was established under deed of title number 255 of 1958.

- b. Vuvulane farmers leased portions of Farm 860 from CDC under notarial deeds of **lease** registered in the Deeds Office. The terms of the leases were absolutely clear and conferred no rights of ownership on the farmers.
4. Title to the land was subsequently transferred to the **Ingwenyama in Trust for the Swazi Nation** so that the whole Nation and future generations would also benefit.
5. In 1983 CDC entered into agreements in terms of which:
  - a. The **Swaziland Irrigation Scheme** was transferred to a Partnership between CDC and the **Indlovukazi in Trust for the Swazi Nation** called the **Inyoni Yami Swaziland Irrigation Scheme** to continue to provide water to all the projects and repay the capital investment from revenues generated by the projects;
  - b. The plant and machinery purchased by CDC and the infrastructure developed by CDC for the **Vuvulane Irrigated Farms** project was transferred to a new company called the **Swaziland National Agricultural Development Corporation (Pty) Ltd (SNADC)** to enable it to continue to provide water and services to the farmers.
6. Farmers were required to pay SNADC for the water and services to enable it to repay the capital invested by CDC and for the water supplied by IYSIS.
7. It is worth noting that some Vuvulane farmers refused to pay for the services rendered by SNADC or even to pay for the water they received, and this led to the financial collapse of SNADC in 1986.
8. In 1987 the name of SNADC was changed to **VIF Limited** and CDC invested additional capital into VIF Limited in order to provide the necessary services to the Vuvulane farmers and ensure the success of the project. IYSIS continued to supply water to VIF and VIF supplied water and services to the Vuvulane Farms.
9. Once again some Vuvulane farmers refused to pay for water or services and this eventually led to VIF Ltd being placed into liquidation.
10. In 1998 the freehold title to Farm 860 was transferred by CDC to the **Ingwenyama in Trust for the Swazi Nation**.
11. The provision of water and services to the VIF Farmers was contracted out by IYSIS to the **Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation Limited**.
12. Some Vuvulane farmers have continued to pay for water and services and have farmed successfully.
13. Some Vuvulane farmers continue to refuse to pay for water and services and have taken over freehold title land that has never been allocated to them.
14. Some Vuvulane farmers have taken land that belongs to the Nation and allocated it to people from outlying areas with the knowledge that they have no title or authority to allocate that land.

15. Based on the above facts, Tibiyo Taka Ngwane wishes to clarify that:

- a. **No** persons have ever been **unlawfully** evicted from land in respect of which they were in lawful occupation.
- b. The solution to these difficulties is for the Vuvulane farmers to respect the **Rule of Law** and pay for water and services.

16. Tibiyo Taka Ngwane remains committed to its mission statement and organisational objectives to ensure that Emaswati are both participants and beneficiaries of all national economic activities.

**Dr. Absalom Themba Dlamini**  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR**