



EFF STATEMENT ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS MINISTER GRANDSTANDING ON RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN BANKING SECTOR

Thursday, 29 August 2024.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) notes the recent statements by the Minister of Human Settlements, Mmamoloko Kubayi, with deep suspicion. Her so-called "concern" over the systemic racism entrenched in the home loan industry is nothing but grandstanding, a pathetic attempt to appear as though the ANC government is finally awakening to a reality that has long been exposed by countless institutions, individuals, and ourselves as the EFF.

The statistics she presented—where less than half of the six million home loan applications from historically disadvantaged persons (HDPs) were approved, while white applicants received loans valued exponentially higher—are not new revelations. They are merely the latest numbers in a long history of economic apartheid, where Black people are denied access to the fundamental human right of housing, while white wealth is further entrenched and protected.

The EFF have long been aware of the racist practices entrenched within the banking sector, where Black people are systematically exploited and denied fair access to financial products. As early as 2019, the EFF publicly demanded a judicial commission of inquiry with financial forensic capacity to investigate these discriminatory practices, particularly after the revelations of FNB's racism against Black homeowners were exposed on SABC's *Special Assignment*.

We have always known, from the countless complaints received from our people, that this exploitation is not isolated to home loans but extends across the entire financial sector. Black people are forced to pay exorbitant interest rates, not only on home loans but also on funeral cover, life insurance, motor insurance, and other financial products—all because of the colour of their skin.

The EFF has consistently condemned these racist practices and called for the withdrawal of banking licenses from institutions that discriminate based on race. We have highlighted how Black people are quick to lose their homes and other properties when they face financial difficulties, while white people are given ample time to make arrangements without losing their assets.

Let us be clear: asking the very capitalist banks who perpetuate these racist practices to disclose the demographics of their beneficiaries is not only ironic but fundamentally misguided. Capitalism thrives on exploitation and racial inequality; it will not willingly expose its mechanisms of oppression. The Minister's call for financial institutions to disclose such information is nothing but political theatre. If the ANC was truly committed to addressing this injustice, they would have utilised parliamentary processes to summon these banks before portfolio committees, forcing them to account for their discriminatory practices under oath.

The reality is that with the ANC now in bed with the DA, we can only expect the situation to worsen. Racist capitalist institutions are becoming more emboldened, knowing they have the approval of those in power. The ANC's hollow rhetoric does nothing to challenge the deep-seated racism within the banking sector, nor does it propose any radical measures to dismantle the system that continues to deny Black people access to housing.

The EFF stands firm in our belief that the solution to this crisis does not lie in asking racists to reveal their racism but in confronting and dismantling the racist capitalist system that continues to oppress our people. We have consistently called for immediate steps such as the creation of a state-owned bank that can provide the necessary financial products for our people to gain and maintain assets such as homes without discrimination and predatory rates.

The EFF will, through the portfolio committee on human settlements, work to process the long overdue presentations by these banks in order to resolve this matter once and for all.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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