

White South Africans turn down Trump's U.S. immigration offer

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**A drone view shows the families residing on Meyerskop farm, in Free State province, South Africa, February 6, 2025. REUTERS/Thando Hlophe
Afrikaners are mostly white descendants of early Dutch and French settlers, who own the majority of the country's farmland [Thando Hlophe/Reuters]**

Pretoria, February 9 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump's offer to rehouse white South Africans as refugees fleeing persecution may not spur quite the rush he anticipates, as right-wing white lobby groups

want to “tackle the injustices” of Black majority rule on home soil.

Trump on Friday signed an executive order to cut U.S. aid to South Africa, citing an expropriation act that President Cyril Ramaphosa signed last month aiming to redress land inequalities that stem from South Africa’s history of white supremacy.

Trump’s order provided for resettlement in the U.S. of “Afrikaners in South Africa who are victims of unjust racial discrimination” as refugees.

Afrikaners are mostly white descendants of early Dutch and French settlers, who own the majority of the country’s farmland. “If you haven’t got any problems here, why would you want to go?” asked Neville van der Merwe, a 78-year-old pensioner in Bothasig near Cape Town.

“There hasn’t been any really bad [people] taking over our land, the people are carrying on like normal and you know, what are you going to do over there?”

The act signed by Ramaphosa seeks to address racial land ownership disparities – which have left three-quarters of privately owned land in South Africa in the hands of the white minority – by making it easier for the state to expropriate land in the public interest. President Ramaphosa has defended the policy.

White people represent 7.2 percent of South Africa’s population of 63 million, statistics agency data shows. The data does not break down how many are Afrikaners.

Before South Africa’s independence, its British colonial rulers handed most farmland to whites. In 1950, the apartheid-era National Party seized 85 percent of the land, forcing 3.5 million Black people from their homes.

Ramaphosa’s African National Congress (ANC), the biggest party in the ruling coalition, says Trump is amplifying misinformation propagated by AfriForum, an Afrikaner-led group.

The group, which lobbied Trump’s previous administration regarding its cause, said it was not taking up the offer. “Emigration only offers an opportunity for Afrikaners who are willing to risk potentially sacrificing their descendants’ cultural identity as Afrikaners. The price for that is simply too high,” AfriForum CEO Kallie Kriel said on Saturday.

Separately, the Solidarity Movement – which includes AfriForum and the Solidarity trade union and said it represents about 600,000 Afrikaner families and two million individuals – expressed commitment to South Africa.

“We may disagree with the ANC, but we love our country. As in any community, there are individuals who wish to emigrate, but repatriation of Afrikaners as refugees is not a solution for us,” the Solidarity Movement said.

Representatives of Orania, an Afrikaner-only enclave in the heart of the country, also rejected Trump’s offer. “Afrikaners do not want to be refugees. We love and are committed to our homeland,” Orania said.

South Africa’s land policies since the end of apartheid have never involved the forced seizure of white-owned land.

Still, some said they appreciated Trump’s offer. “I think it’s a very nice gesture from Donald Trump to offer us asylum over there,” said Werner van Niekerk, 57, a carpenter in Bothasig, without saying whether he would be migrating to the United States.

Others saw the funny side. “Some questions: is there a test to determine your Afrikanership? Must you hold AfriForum membership? ... Will Elon help with some startup cash on the other side? ... Are there

bakkies (pick-up trucks) in the U.S.?", author Pieter du Toit wrote on X, making a reference to South African-born billionaire and Trump aide Elon Musk, who has accused Ramaphosa's government of "openly racist ownership laws."

[SOURCE: REUTERS]

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