

DEMOCRACY 2030

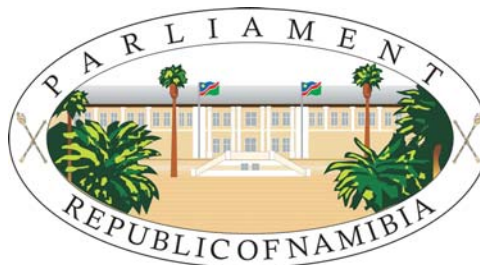
Record of the Parliamentary Debate on the International Day of Democracy 2016



DEMOCRACY 2030

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Contents

Foreword: Publication on the International Day of Democracy 2016	3
By HON. PETER KATJAVIVI, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Namibia	
Foreword: Democracy – quo vadis?	5
By THOMAS W. KELLER, Konrad Adenauer Foundation Namibia-Angola	
1 The perspective of the Electoral Commission of Namibia on the theme Democracy 2030, focusing on the future-oriented element – particularly online voting	7
By PROF. PAUL JOHN ISAAK	
2 Democracy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	12
By ANITA KIKI GBEHO	
3 The Importance of Democracy and Decentralisation	15
By PATRICK SAM	
4 Democracy 2030: Official Plans and Agreements to Support and Shape the Way Forward	22
By NED SIBEYA	
5 Democracy 2030: Focusing on Crowdsourced Laws Inherent in the Theme	31
By MAX WEYLANDT	
6 Closing remarks	35
By HON. MARINA KANDUMBU	
Synopsis of Discussions	37



CHAPTER 1 The Republic

Article 1 Establishment of the Republic of Namibia and Identification of its Territory

- (1) The Republic of Namibia is hereby established as a sovereign, secular, democratic and unitary State founded upon the principles of democracy, the rule of law and justice for all.
- (2) All power shall vest in the people of Namibia who shall exercise their sovereignty through the democratic institutions of the State.

– Constitution of the Republic of Namibia



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Foreword: Publication on the International Day of Democracy 2016

By

Hon. PETER KATJAVIVI

Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Namibia

On 15 September 2016, our Parliament commemorated the International Day of Democracy in the National Assembly Chamber, under the theme “Democracy 2030”, focusing on the following elements inherent in the theme:

- **Future-oriented:** How will our democracy change between now and 2030? Will people vote online in elections? Crowdsourced laws? Will the role of parliament be the same as it is today?
- **Youth-oriented:** How can our parliament ensure the political participation of young people and prepare the future of democracy? What progress has been made and what needs to be done?
- **Development-oriented:** How should we connect the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the democratic values of participation, inclusiveness and accountability? How do we ensure that democracy and development advance hand in hand?

The background to this important event is that the United Nations General Assembly acknowledged the resilience and universality of the principles of democracy in November 2007 by declaring 15 September the International Day of Democracy to celebrate democracy worldwide. Highly symbolically, the date coincides with the adoption in September 1997 of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Universal Declaration on Democracy. That Declaration affirms the principles of democracy, the elements and exercise of democratic government, and the international scope of democracy.

In 2008, approximately 50 parliaments each organised some form of event to mark this occasion. The Parliament of Namibia was one of the parliaments that initially started to commemorate the International Day of Democracy on 15 September 2008. Since then, our Parliament has placed this important day on its calendar, and has conducted various activities to commemorate 15 September at least every year.

The commemoration of this day in the Namibian Parliament comprised the following.

Students from the University of Namibia, the Namibia University of Science and Technology and the International University of Management, as well as learners from high schools in Windhoek and representatives of the National Youth Council – about 90 youth in total – participated in the debate. Representatives of government, civil society and the youth made presentations and debated the agenda items in the “order paper” of the day in a typical parliament-style debate. The public was encouraged to express views and make comments on the Facebook page (“Parliament-of-the-Republic-of-Namibia”) and on Twitter under the hashtag “#DemocracyDayNam2016”.

The discussions focused on how democracy may change between now and 2030; how Parliament can ensure young people’s political participation and prepare them for a democratic future; and how to connect the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the democratic values of participation, inclusiveness and accountability.

As a nation, we are taking proactive steps to ensure that we cultivate and groom leaders of tomorrow who will take the reins of responsibility to exercise their democratic rights as they shape the affairs of this country – your country. As leaders, we have created a vibrant democratic nation. We have systematic mechanisms of leadership that allow for periodical elections, and for leaders to come and go. We have systems and institutions which are functioning in a manner that checks and balances to ensure a system of transparency and accountability, and Parliament is at the centre of ensuring that we do precisely that.

As Speaker of the National Assembly, I would like to see that the matters discussed in the session held in the National Assembly Chamber on 15 September 2016 are developed to fit into the National Debate. What was put forward should culminate in implementable recommendations to fit in the overall national agenda.

It is my hope that the event contributed to the democratic culture in our society, where our youth, in terms of their rights, can work from the onset towards national development, and respect the rule of law. We have a Constitution, which is the supreme law of the land and guides activities related to the country’s democratic culture.

This publication, prepared with the kind sponsorship and assistance of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, should serve reflection as a record of the discussions that unfolded in the chamber. It should be used as a tool to shape the way forward regarding the role of Parliament in encouraging youth involvement in democracy – especially to participate in the democratic processes and activities of Parliament. I encourage the Honourable Members of Parliament, staff of Parliament, civil servants, lecturers, teachers, media practitioners, researchers, academics and the ordinary citizen to read this publication and use it as inspiration for animated discussion and dialogue.

I am pleased to acknowledge that the event received the kind sponsorship of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Namibia-Angola and the Ohlthaver & List Group of Companies. This is greatly appreciated. I encourage all Namibians to read this publication with keen interest.



Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi, MP
Speaker of the National Assembly

Foreword: Democracy – *quo vadis?*

By

Mr THOMAS W. KELLER,

Resident Representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Namibia-Angola

Dear valued reader,

Democracy is not a state; it's a process. From its origins in ancient Greece more than 2500 years ago to the vast variety of democratic systems implemented in the majority of countries all over the world today, democracy has come a long way already, yet the process is still far from complete.

On the contrary: Our ever-changing society, which nowadays possesses an abundance of new technologies and communication tools, offers innumerable new chances and challenges to the democratic system – which is true not only for Namibia, but on a global scale. The intensified use of digital information sources, communication platforms and the digitalisation of the media, to name but a few examples, has already changed our way of accessing information and forming political opinions, and is likely to alter them even more in the future.

New technical evolution and the intensified interconnectivity of individuals, groups and stakeholders from all walks of life will enable new levels of democratic participation. They will allow citizens to influence the lawmaking process, and are likely to even move the actual process of voting from the polling booth to our personal computers and cell phones one day. However, at the same time, we need to be aware of the fact that the usage of these new technologies and tools in the democratic process also come with new possibilities of misuse and manipulation, and therefore need to be closely monitored by governments, civil society organisations, NGOs and, of course, by the citizens themselves at all times.

As the fostering of a pluralistic democracy is one of the main goals to which the Konrad Adenauer Foundation devotes itself to and works towards, we consider the contribution to a healthy democratic process and democratic development as a mission of greatest importance. Therefore, we aim to contribute to this course by addressing recent and future chances and challenges in this context and through the information of the broader public on these issues. It is for these reasons that we decided on the introduction of a new publication series with the title “xx”, which will deal with a broad spectrum of current and projected democratic issues in Namibia.

This booklet, which will be the first of many and therefore serves as the prelude to this new series, dares to take a glance into the future of the Namibian democratic process. It is a compilation of

various presentations and speeches displayed at the Namibian Parliament during the International Day of Democracy, 15th of September 2016, and looks at topics and issues such as online voting, crowdsourced laws, and the importance of decentralisation, among many others.

I would like to extend my gratitude to all speakers and presenters who agreed to have their contributions published, and certainly hope that their ideas and valued input will invite you to engage in constructive and inspiring deliberations regarding the present and the future of democracy in Namibia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Keller', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Thomas W. Keller

Resident Representative, Konrad Adenauer Foundation Namibia-Angola

The perspective of the Electoral Commission of Namibia on the theme Democracy 2030, focusing on the future-oriented element – particularly online voting

By

Prof. PAUL JOHN ISAAK

Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN)

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, Namibians who were 18 years of age and older had direct experience of what we call “democracy”. On Friday 28 November 2014, the Presidential and National Assembly Elections were conducted in every corner of the Republic of Namibia. At the same time in the same year, national elections took place in 40 other countries. In India and Indonesia alone, almost a billion people cast their votes in national elections. In Europe, 28 Member States of the European Union cast their votes for the European Parliament. Also in 2014, mid-term elections took place in the United States of America. In Southern Africa, national elections took place in South Africa, Malawi, Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia. The populations of the countries voting in 2014 comprise an estimated 42% of the world’s population.

In the case of Namibia, allow me at the outset to state as loudly as possible the following, within the framework of my presentation on this International Day of Democracy: Namibians are in business to run and strengthen constitutional democracy, and to promote democratic electoral and referenda processes. In these processes our nation is guided by two fundamental documents: the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia and the Electoral Act, 2014 (Act No. 5 of 2014).

Article 94B of the Namibian Constitution (Third Amendment Act, 2014) states as follows:

“There shall be an Electoral Commission of Namibia, which shall be the exclusive body to direct, supervise, manage and control the conduct of elections and referenda The Electoral Commission of Namibia shall be an independent, transparent and impartial body.”

Section 3 of the Electoral Act states the following:

“The objectives of the Commission are to organise, direct, supervise, manage and control the conduct of elections and referenda in a free, fair, independent, credible, transparent and impartial manner as well as to strengthen constitutional democracy and to promote democratic electoral and referenda processes.”

Now, I have positioned myself to address, from the perspective of the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN), the given theme, “Democracy 2030”, by focusing on the future-oriented element inherent in the theme, particularly online voting. I shall concentrate on two key areas: first, running elections and strengthening constitutional democracy through specific outcome-oriented policies or the social progression as formulated in Chapter 5 of the Harambee Prosperity Plan; and second, the future-oriented element inherent in the theme, particularly online voting.

PART ONE

Running elections and strengthening constitutional democracy through specific outcome-oriented policies or the social progression as formulated in the Harambee Prosperity Plan

The Republic of Namibia is a democratic state that secures for all its citizens – regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, sex, religion, creed or social or economic status – justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. To deliver on this constitutional mandate, the Namibian State makes provision for regular elections to be conducted in a free, fair, credible and peaceful manner. By virtue of such provisions, constitutional democracy and development are happening. Let me briefly explicate.

Today, some people are questioning the value of regular elections in Namibia, and ask what they will gain from such exercises. This question deals with democracy and development. Do Namibians believe that participation in the democratic elections will bring development? Or in other words, as is often asked, “Will democracy bring us development?” Is there a relationship between good governance, democracy and development or service delivery?

Let us understand that development is not the mere construction of skyscrapers, endless roads, airports or hotels, or the statistical increase in Gross Domestic Product and Gross National Product indices, or the creation of new pockets of African elitism. Development must ultimately mean the qualitative and quantitative growth of the material and non-material pool of resources available to individuals and society for the fuller pursuit of their creative energies. Where development takes place, it registers in all areas of social life.

Through democratic elections, any government ought to bring around food to the hungry, proper and affordable housing to the homeless, clinics and hospitals to the sick, and a safe environment

in the prisons where those imprisoned are fully protected. I think of basic human needs – food, clothing, shelter, health care, and by implication the basic socio-political need for human dignity, human rights and integrity. Democratic practice, in turn, is a good basis for even and equitable development approaches.

Let me strengthen my statement by directly quoting our former President, His Excellency Hifikepunye Pohamba, as quoted in *New Era*, 13 May 2014, on elections and human development:

“You cannot talk about development if there is no peace in a country. In many African countries where there is conflict, obviously there is no development taking place ... In Namibia, we are brothers and sisters, we are not enemies ... Let all stakeholders, be they from political, church, traditional or NGOs ... rendered to government to help it maintain peace and stability since Namibia gained its independence in March 1990. One cannot claim that it is the government, or it is so and so, or it is political party A or B which kept peace and stability in this country of ours. It is us all as Namibians.”

In short, electoral integrity flourishes under the climate of democracy and development and service delivery. I now turn to the second aspect of my presentation.

PART TWO

Voting: today and tomorrow

At the outset let me state the most obvious: We are now living in the 21st Century. It is the century of technology. The future in almost any sphere of human endeavour lies in technological innovation. Many countries are currently considering introducing electronic voting (e-voting) systems, with the aim of improving various aspects of the electoral process. E-voting is often seen as a tool for advancing democracy, building trust in electoral management, adding credibility to election results and increasing the overall efficiency of the electoral process. The technology is evolving fast and election managers, observers, international organisations, vendors and standardisation bodies are continuously updating their methodologies and approaches.

I would like to highlight the fact that online voting is but one of many e-voting methods. Secondly, e-voting systems are fundamentally different. Today, e-voting at polling stations is in place in some of the world’s largest democracies, and so too in Namibia. For example, as you are aware, Namibia became the first country on the African continent to use Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

Currently online voting is used in only a few – mainly historically conflict-free – countries, in which access to internet facilities is available for almost the entire electorate. The essential characteristics of internet voting systems are that votes are transferred via the Internet to a central counting server, and can be cast from public computers or from voting kiosks in polling stations, or, more commonly, from any Internet-connected computer accessible to a voter.

However, let me cautiously add that in some countries, such as Germany in 2009, e-voting was declared unconstitutional. According to the German Constitution, all elections must be public, and the Constitutional Court ruled that this principle requires the key steps of an election – including vote casting and counting – to be subject to public scrutiny, which should not require any specialised knowledge. An independent method for detecting any computer errors was also deemed to be of

key importance. Likewise in the United Kingdom in 2005, after various local pilots it was concluded that e-voting systems were expensive, and did not bring about any increase in turnout, and lacked an adequate audit trail. Paper voting was more trusted. The latter point, however, is not always the case in most of the other democratic countries.

Today e-voting is often viewed as a tool for making the electoral process more efficient, and for increasing trust in its management. If properly implemented – as was the case in Namibia during the 2014 Presidential and National Assembly elections and the subsequent Regional Council and Local Authority elections in 2015 – I agree that e-voting solutions can indeed enhance the polling process, and in particular speed up the processing of results and make voting easier and the results of the elections more credible. It must also be noted that such modern technological devices are highly expensive. But, in the 21st Century, making use of e-voting is the option of the day. Therefore, the following key recommendations ought to be considered in the process of e-voting.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Define the goals clearly.

The reason for introducing electronic voting should be clearly defined. Clear goals make it easier to evaluate the advantages of possible e-voting solutions between alternative systems as well as against the existing or an improved paper voting system.

2. Be aware of the challenges.

E-voting is still a work in progress. Currently none of the available systems are perfect, and agreement has not been reached as to what a perfect e-voting system would look like. One can only decide to implement a solution that best fits the local context in terms of needs, urgency, costs and timing.

3. Learn from previous, international experience.

Many pitfalls can be avoided by studying the kinds of systems available and used internationally. Get international experience on board and avoid taking the first steps in isolation.

4. Make sure that electronic voting is the most appropriate solution.

E-voting is only one option for resolving challenges in the electoral process. Make sure that you have evaluated alternative solutions and that e-voting is the best solution in your context.

5. Get key stakeholders to buy in.

As introducing e-voting is a trade-off of advantages and disadvantages, make sure that there is wide agreement among stakeholders, including political parties, that this technology is advantageous overall. Be aware that significant opponents of the system can and will come up with objections and weaknesses of the system and create distrust in the system and potentially in the entire electoral process. Even in the absence of genuine opposition to e-voting, the system can become disputed for purely political reasons.

6. Allow enough time for project implementation.

Usually the technical implementation of e-voting systems takes at least one year after awarding the tender. Quality, reliability and transparency will be affected by lack of time for project implementation. Also, enough time is needed to educate the electorate so that they accept the modern technological means of voting. For example, well-informed voters will not only find it

easier to use e-voting on election day, but also they will find it easier to trust a new system if they understand why it is being introduced, what benefits it brings and how the various security measures that are built in support the integrity of the election.

7. Consider sustainability issues and plan for the future, not only for today.

The cost of introducing e-voting can already be very high, but to remain secure and trustworthy, e-voting systems need continuous reviews, upgrades and replacement as well as adjustments to new requirements. When considering the costs of e-voting, it is important to consider the total cost of ownership over time rather than the one-time purchase costs.

8. Be aware that trust can take years to build but be lost in a day.

It can take a long time for an e-voting system to be socially accepted, whereas loss of trust can happen fast if there are serious technical problems or political disagreements. A badly implemented or failed e-voting solution can halt further development of this technology for years. In Namibia we are on course to build such trust in our electoral systems.

CONCLUSION

In Namibia it is our duty to rejuvenate democracy to meet the needs, aspirations and challenges of future generations. In doing so, we must harness the creativity, energy and enthusiasm of our younger generations. We cannot wait for another generation to act. Hence our young women and men in this 21st Century are called upon to assume leadership and lead us into the future of democracy while making use of electronic voting. The time to act is now. I thank you.

Democracy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

By

Ms ANITA KIKI GBEHO

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Namibia

Presented by

Ms MICAELA DE SOUSA

Country Representative, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Peter Katjavivi,
Chairperson of the National Council, Honourable Margareth Mensah-Williams,
Members of Parliament,
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

I am honoured that the UN has been invited to take part in the 2016 International Day of Democracy Celebrations.

This morning I will deliver the message of the UN Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki Moon, but before I read his message, I would like to say a few words on behalf of the United Nations Country Team in Namibia.

Last year UN Member States adopted a plan for achieving a better future for all, laying the path to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and protect our planet.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

The task of implementing and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires countries to work in close partnership with civil society.

Parliaments in particular have a critical role in translating the Agenda for Sustainable Development into concrete action by passing legislation, making budget allocations and holding governments accountable.

SDG 16 addresses democracy by calling for inclusive and participatory societies and institutions. It aims to *“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”*

Goal 16 is a crucial part of delivering sustainable development in all countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Events such as the electoral crisis in Gabon are a concern. The UN Secretary-General has called on that country’s government to restore communications, and for the country’s security forces to exercise the utmost restraint and to uphold international standards of human rights.

The political situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo is also being followed closely. The UN has reiterated the importance of a credible and inclusive political dialogue to ensure peaceful, credible, inclusive, transparent and timely presidential and legislative elections.

Namibia, however, has maintained political stability over the past 26 years, through strong governance structures, which stability is characterised by widespread media freedom and respect for human rights.

Namibia’s Constitution has a strong Bill of Rights and promotes a multi-party democratic system, while also ensuring transparency and accountability through structures such as the Judiciary, the Legislature, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Anti-Corruption Commission.

The 2014 Presidential and National Assembly Elections were declared free, fair and credible. The electronic voting machines were successfully introduced to enhance the election process and to reduce the amount of time it takes to count and verify results.

Namibia is widely considered to be one of Africa’s most successful democracies and a model for many emerging democracies around the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although the “Land of the Brave” is a shining beacon in this regard, issues of structural inequality (including income and access to essential services) and poverty are potential threats to continued peace and stability.

Gender inequalities, rising levels of gender-based violence and challenges with good governance are also of concern.

We must therefore continue to strive for inclusive policies and mechanisms that create conducive environments to encourage and support transparency and accountability.

In addition, the challenge of generating jobs and sustainable livelihoods means that innovative ways to promote economic growth that creates employment must be prioritised, if the current levels of income inequality are to be reduced.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To remain valid for the people of Namibia, democracy must mean more than the mere act of voting. It should mean the improvement or valid promise of ensuring improvement in human welfare and opportunities for leading a meaningful life.

Democracy, transparency and accountability must therefore be the foundation of socio-economic development. For the nation it means opportunity for education, jobs, better housing, health care and access to key services such as electrical power, water and sanitation. Democracy must be seen to work, in terms of strengthening national unity and cohesion through a more equitable distribution of national wealth.

The United Nations in Namibia is committed to working with all stakeholders in government, civil society and the private sector for the development, adaptation and implementation of legislative frameworks, policies and practices which will contribute to good governance, the rule of law, accountability and the realisation of human rights in Namibia.

Now allow me to read a message on behalf of the UN Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki Moon.

A year ago, the world's Governments agreed on an ambitious sustainable development agenda for the next 15 years. They recognized that what people want is not so complicated – but that it does require a transformation of how our economies and societies work.

People want food and shelter, education and health care and more economic opportunities. They want to live without fear. They want to be able to trust their Governments and global, national and local institutions. They want full respect for their human rights and they are rightly demanding a greater say in the decisions that affect their lives.

Each of the Sustainable Development Goals on its own reflects fundamental desires shared by people everywhere. Together, the 17 Goals make up an intricate tapestry of challenges, choices and opportunities that people encounter in their everyday lives. Delivering a better tomorrow will require integrated responses to interconnected challenges.

Democratic principles run through the Agenda like a golden thread, from universal access to public goods, health care and education, as well as safe places to live and decent work opportunities for all. Goal 16 addresses democracy directly: it calls for inclusive societies and accountable institutions.

The Goals demonstrate an important dynamic: effective democratic governance enhances quality of life for all people; and human development is more likely to take hold if people are given a real say in their own governance, and a chance to share in the fruits of progress.

Our new Agenda aims to leave no one behind, which means we must reach those who are rarely seen or heard, and who have no voice or group to speak on their behalf. The implementation of the Goals must be underpinned by a strong and active civil society that includes the weak and the marginalized. We must defend civil society's freedom to operate and do this essential job.

On this International Day of Democracy, let us rededicate ourselves to democracy and dignity for all.

3

The Importance of Democracy and Decentralisation

By

Mr PATRICK SAM

Former Executive Director of the Namibia Institute for Democracy

“In a government where democracy is allowed to work, one of the principles that are normally entrenched is a feedback system, a discussion in other words between those who formulate policy and those who must perceive, accept, or reject policy.”

– Steve Bantu Biko

Democracy is a system of governance in which all the people of a state are involved in making decisions about its affairs. Namibia adopted democracy as the political system to govern its society. A society is formed by people who share a common culture, ideals, language and similar traditions, and who live within a specified territory. A government is established to organise people living in a society. An important aspect of society is to regulate the lives of individuals. To do this, a political system with laws is adopted to regulate interaction within the social structures. To enforce laws in society, the state employs government services. The government services are there to deliver on the needs and aspirations of the citizens of the state. A process is required to achieve these defined national development goals. The process of decentralisation brings government services closer to the people through the establishment of subnational structures.

At the same time, citizen participation as a concept is a crucial element of law and policy making, because it consolidates and entrenches support for democracy, whilst legitimising and strengthening the institutions that maintain and give expression to it, as these interventions enhance the accountability of the state (Luckham, 2000). The concept of public participation in governance is arguably the fundamental pillar in the promotion and protection of democratic governance, as it ensures a feedback system to the citizen, making the state accountable to the citizen. The Namibian democratic order is relatively new, and Namibia could be classified as a democratic state in transition and therefore in the process of democratisation.

In the interest of promoting democracy, the necessary laws, policies and institutions need to be implemented into ensuring the provision of services. The Decentralisation Enabling Act, 2000 (Act No. 33 of 2000) was adopted by the Namibian Parliament, acknowledging that decentralisation is an integral part of the national development process. An effective approach between central government and subnational authorities, involving citizen participation, is a prerogative which ensures that development takes place throughout the country.

The decentralisation policy has the following objectives:

- Extend, enhance and guarantee participatory democracy.
- Ensure and safeguard rapid and sustainable development.
- Transfer power to regional and local authorities.
- Improve the capacity delivery of services for their constituents.

Participatory democracy is defined as the opening up of core activities of the state to societal participation in order to improve accountability and governance of the state (Taylor and Fransman, 2004). To understand how citizens can participate in the activities of the state to improve accountability, the concept of participatory engagement provides a theoretical as well as practical framework to enhance citizen participation. Participatory engagement is a theory that states that the process of broad participation is a prerequisite for how the state functions (Taylor and Fransman, 2004). In other words, the level of citizen participation determines the level of accountability of the state; therefore, occurrences like corruption are reduced with greater citizen participation.

Although participatory engagement enhances accountability of the state, particular concerns exist. Citizen participation is not inevitably, more inclusive or more pro-poor; therefore, the achievement of equality is not guaranteed (Manor, 2004). Nevertheless, the participatory engagement increases the possibility of achieving equality. It's important to note that within the realms of governance, reducing poverty and inequality depends on the nature of the power relations that surround and permeate potentially democratic spaces (Manor, 2004). Hence, even when citizens participate in the activities of the state, they have to be aware that the nature of citizen participation is not easily captured by elites. Therefore, participation must occur on equal terms with equal rights and opportunities for all to express their interests. Participants in decision making must not be in position to coerce or threaten others into acquiring certain proposals or outcomes.

In Namibia, the process of decentralisation requires citizen participation through the establishment of development committees. Development committees are collaborative bodies that facilitate the decentralisation process by ensuring that people are represented and developed through targeted strategies (Töttemeyer, 2014). Development committees are composed of citizens who represent the constituency at local and regional level. Constituency Development Committees (CDCs), for example, are made up of representatives of governmental agencies, traditional authorities, civil society organisations and political parties.

Namibia has development committees at different levels:

- Settlement Development Committee (SDC)
- Village Development Committee (VDC)
- Local Authority Development Committee (LADC)
- Constituency Development Committee (CDC)
- Regional Development Coordinating Committee (RDCC)

These various development committees are to ensure the involvement of civic participation. In 2015, the Namibia Institute for Democracy conducted a study entitled “The Current State of Development Committees in Namibia”, which was an assessment of development committees in order to have a better understanding of the plans and actions taken by development committees to effect the regional and local development agendas. The RDCCs are in charge of ensuring overall regional coordination over development committees, and for this reason the RDCCs were the focus of the study. The assessment indicates the current state of development, while stating that development committees need to be strengthened through systems that support bottom-up involvement in the process of development.

At the time of the study, Namibia had 14 regions but 13 regional councils, with Kavango East and Kavango West administered by the Kavango Regional Council. It’s important to note that the questionnaire was given to all regional councils, but only 11 of them responded – 2 were unable to provide responses. With regard to the function and effectiveness of RDCCs, 10 out of the 11 regions that responded have had an established RDCC since 2014. At the same time, 9 RDCCs met 4 times a year, which shows how regularly the platform is utilised.

The following graph illustrates the challenges faced by RDCCs.

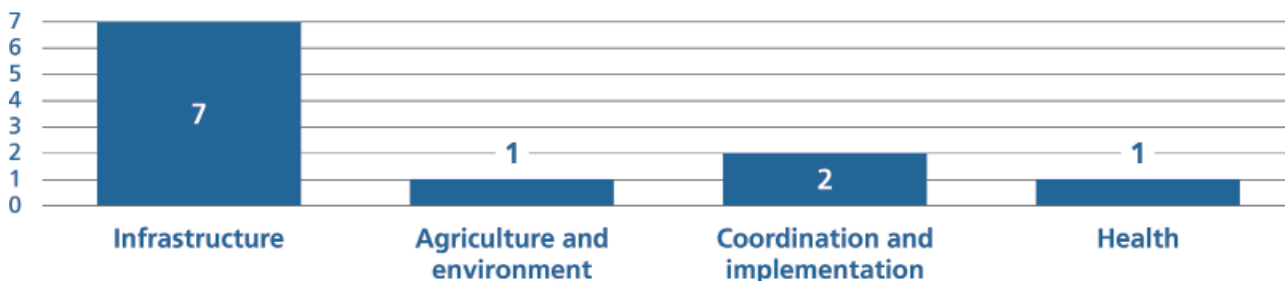
Graph 1: Challenges faced by RDCCs in Namibia



RDCCs face various challenges. Out of the 11 regions, 5 felt that capacity and lack of authority was an obstacle in the RDCC. Other factors that were identified by other regions range from attendance and transport to financial issues. These challenges inhibit the effective functioning of RDCCs.

In terms of assessing the successes, 11 RDCCs stated that the most common success factor was that they had established strategic plans and were in the process of executing actions as outlined in the plans. The following table illustrates the priorities of the RDCCs.

Graph 2: Development priorities of the RDCCs

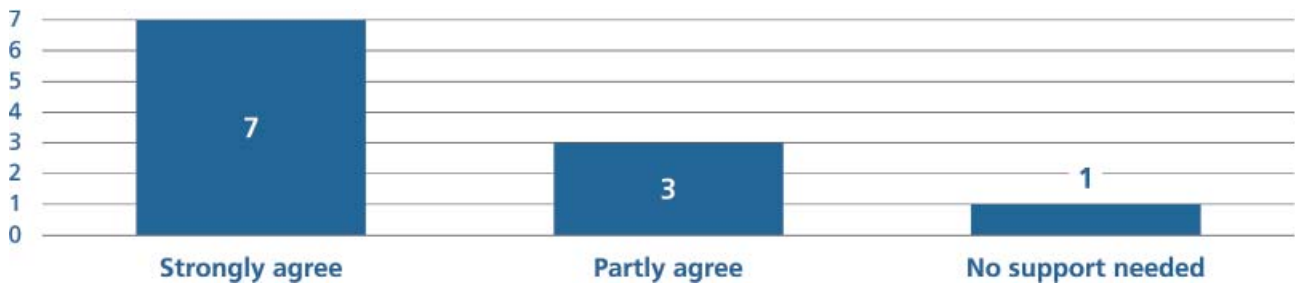


Seven RDCCs indicated that infrastructure is one of their development priorities, with 2 of them, namely //Kharas and Khomas, noting that coordination and implementation are a priority for them.

Zambezi underscored that agriculture and environment were a major issue in their region, and Oshikoto stated that support in the health sector was the major topic in their region.

The following graph indicates whether the RDCCs receive adequate support from the Central Government through the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development (MURD).

Graph 3: Central Government support of RDCCs



As Graph 3 indicates, 7 regions confirmed that their RDCCs are strongly supported by the MURD. Zambezi, Hardap and Ohangwena only partly agreed, and stated that the support from the MURD could be improved. In Khomas, however, the opinion was that the RDCC does not depend on the support of the MURD in terms of strengthening the RDCC. The RDCCs identified multiple areas in which they had or might receive additional support from partners, such as the provision of travel allowances, equipment support, transport, training to assist with implementation, and financial support.

It is clear that the challenges facing development committees are not specific to any one type of committee; all types face the same challenges. It can be said that the state of affairs of an RDCC affects the state of affairs of the CDCs, LADCs, VDCs and SDCs associated with that RDCC. This means that to achieve functional effectiveness of development committees, stronger focus has to be placed on the RDCCs so that the effectiveness can trickle down and be guided to the other development committees in their respective regions. The strengthening of RDCCs requires political will to support decentralisation initiatives that focus on developing the institutional as well as the personnel capacity of development committee members.

Decentralisation allows for the establishment of representative institutions and processes to support democratic government. By doing so, both new opportunities and new challenges arise, which call for commitment to the strengthening of the country's democratic ideals. Both governance and the law-making process have an institutional dimension that creates space for public participation. The process of creating this space extends beyond the granting of rights to vote and the constant exercise of such rights at election time: it extends to the adoption of strategies and practices that would make public participation and consultation an ongoing process in the formulation of public policies and legislation (Luckham, 2000). These constitutional provisions seek to ensure that the legislative and policy-making processes are transparent, effective and accountable to the people of Namibia.

Participatory engagement tends to advocate more involved forms of citizen participation and greater political representation than traditional representative democracy. Many democracies adopt a political system that shapes the nature of the state and government operations. Hence, a democracy that encapsulates participatory engagement is imperative as it enables the state to be accountable to the citizens. A deliberative democracy involves participatory engagement, and therefore entails

the type of democracy that enhances citizen participation and governance (Bessette, 1980). Within a deliberative democracy, citizens are encouraged to participate in the core activities of the state, because their involvement contributes to national development.

A deliberative democracy is defined as one in which an attempt is made to reach consensus among free and equal participants (Bessette, 1980). Democracy is deepened where collective actors not only express their preferences and interests, but also engage with each other on how to balance these in the context of inclusive equality. The deliberative democracy framework enables states, particularly developing states with inequalities, to intersect the ideals of democracy with the state's development needs (Bessette, 1980). Deliberative democracies enable citizens to use legitimate channels in engaging the state. A deliberative democracy promotes citizen participation at various levels. Multiple factors contribute to a democracy being classified as a deliberative democracy. The following are the norms of a deliberative democracy:

- a highly inclusive level of political participation;
- voting equality, meaning political equality under the law;
- meaningful and extensive competition, including the right of political leaders to compete for support;
- civil and political liberties;
- accountability of the state and responsiveness of government to the preference of the people;
- the constraint of executive power by other government institutions; and
- unrestricted access to alternative sources of information.

These democratic norms provide a framework for citizens to understand how a democratic state is intended to function. Moreover, citizens are able to hold the state accountable on the basis of these democratic norms in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. For these reasons, effective decentralisation is important for the optimisation of Namibia's democracy.

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A few of the participants in the "Democracy 2030" discussions on 15 September 2016



The session in progress in the National Assembly Chamber



Hon. Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly



The participants included about 90 youth representatives, some of whom made presentations.

4

Democracy 2030: Official Plans and Agreements to Support and Shape the Way Forward

A PowerPoint presentation by

Mr NED SIBEYA

Deputy Chief of National Development Advice

Directorate of Development Partners Cooperation

Department of Monitoring, Evaluation and Development Partner Coordination

National Planning Commission

Namibia became an independent state on 21 March 1990. During a meeting of the Constituent Assembly in 1989, Namibia's leaders decided that democracy would be the political system in the country. The newly formed government subsequently signed and ratified several national and international instruments and agreements that support this democratic system. Democracy is defined by Abraham Lincoln as "*the government of the people, by the people, for the people*". Namibia's Constitution was thus written and enacted to protect basic human rights and freedoms, the protection of the environment and Namibia's natural resources, the acceptance of Namibia's international borders, the repeal of the Apartheid laws and the establishment of government agencies, ministries and offices. One of these institutions is the National Planning Commission (NPC). The NPC was constituted by an Act of Parliament (Act No. 2 of 2013). One of the NPC's main tasks is to monitor, evaluate and report on government performance at national and sub-national level.

The Namibian state is divided into three branches:

- Executive – President and his/her Cabinet
- Legislative – Parliament's two houses, namely the National Assembly and the National Council
- Judiciary – Magistrate, High and Supreme Courts

Different government institutions have the task of implementing the national and international treaties and goals.

Namibia is a signatory to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals succeeded the Millennium Development Goals, which had to be achieved in the years 2000-2015. There were 8 MDGs, whereas there are 17 SDGs to be achieved by the year 2030. Namibia's own Vision 2030 is the country's long-term development plan, aimed primarily at transforming Namibia into an industrialised nation by 2030. Vision 2030 is implemented through the National Development Plans (NDPs), starting with NDP2. In 2016 President Hage Geingob introduced his presidential plan, namely the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP), aimed at improving performance and service delivery in Namibia. The HPP is based on five pillars:

1. Effective Governance
2. Economic Advancement
3. Social Progression
4. Infrastructure Development
5. International Relations and Cooperation.

The Afrobarometer Survey once established that *“Namibia has more to offer on Democracy and its instruments than what Namibians demand from Democracy.”* The citizens need to make efficient use of the local and international instrument and treaties to ensure that the Constitution is a living document. Participatory democracy needs to be a way of life to ensure that future generations of Namibians can benefit from the foresight of the national leaders who brought about Independence. The current political leaders, international solidarity and UN Resolution 435 brought political freedom to Namibia. The current generation of young leaders, civil society, academia and other relevant stakeholders are challenged to take this baton and enshrine political freedom and the implementation of the NDPs and SDGs for the benefit of the Namibian community and the SADC region, and to be a shining example of democracy in Africa.

PowerPoint Presentation ►

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DEMOCRACY



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Ned Sibeya

OUTLINE

1. Democracy 2030
2. National Planning Commission
3. Sustainable Development Goals
4. Vision 2030
5. Harambee Prosperity Plan
6. Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5)
7. Conclusion

DEMOCRACY 2030

- * U.S. president Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) defined **democracy** as “Government of the people, by the people, for the people”.
- * **Development** is the process of economic and social transformation that is based on complex cultural and environmental factors and their interactions.
- * Democracy from the development-oriented element calls for people’s participation in the development process.

NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

- * Article 129 of the Namibian Constitution establishes the National Planning Commission (NPC), and the NPC Act, 2013 (Act No. 2 of 2013) mandates the NPC to plan and spearhead the course of national development.
- * The NPC monitors, evaluates and reports on government performance at the national and sub-national levels.
- * The NPC ensures coordination and a participatory planning approach.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

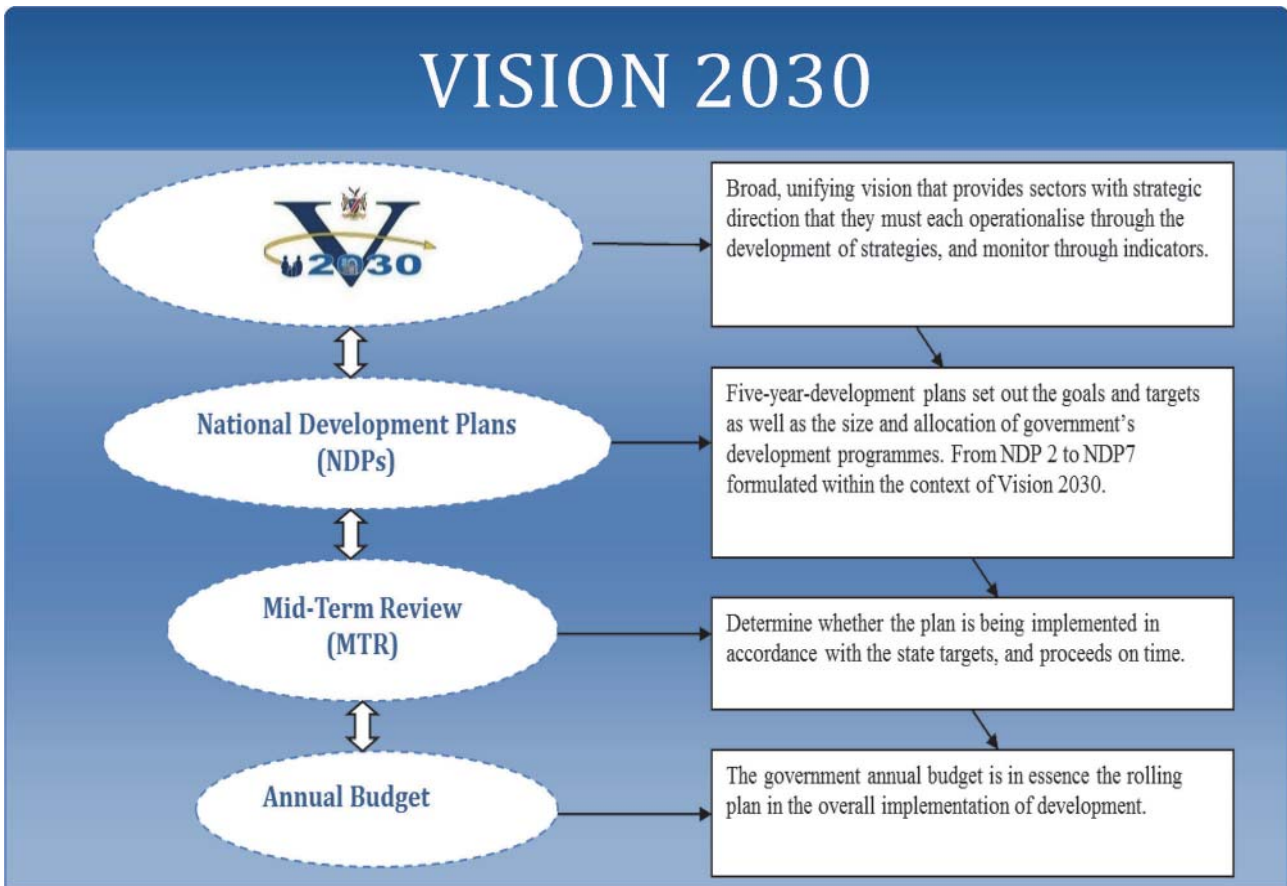


SDGs cont.

16. “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”, through, inter alia:

- 1) reducing all violence and related death rates everywhere;
- 2) ending abuse, exploitation and trafficking of all vulnerable people;
- 3) promoting the rule of law;
- 4) reducing illicit financial and arms flows and combating organised crime;
- 5) developing effective and accountable public institutions;
- 6) reducing corruption and bribery; and
- 7) ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making in all public affairs.

VISION 2030



VISION 2030 cont.

Vision 2030 is a long-term development perspective described as a prosperous and industrialised Namibia developed by her human resources enjoying peace, harmony and political stability by the year 2030.

HARAMBEE PROSPERITY PLAN (HPP)

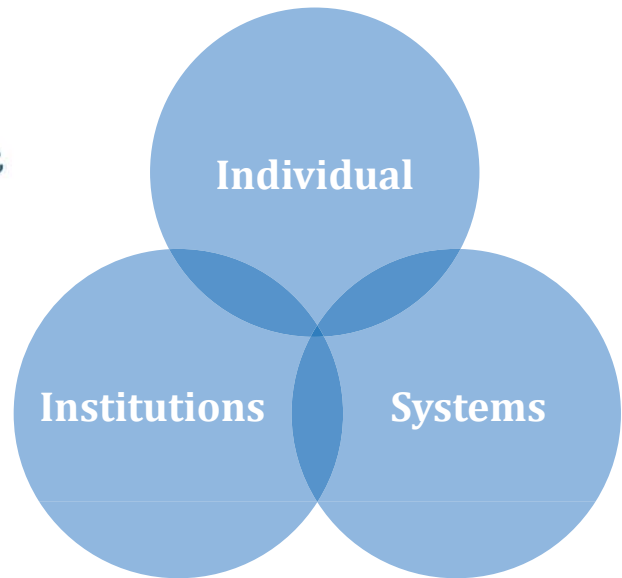
- * Chapter 3 of the HPP identifies effective governance and service delivery as preconditions for sustainable economic development.
- * Namibia continues to be rated favorably on governance by international agencies such as the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, Transparency International and Afro-Barometer Surveys, and Reporters without Boundaries.
- * There are, however, still some challenges, and the following are among the strategies identified to address them:
 - Accountability and Transparency
 - National anti-corruption strategy and action plan
 - Income and asset declaration
 - Access to public information
 - Whistleblowers protection
 - Responsible social media deployment

HPP cont.

- Improved Performance and Service Delivery
 - Signed off performance agreements
 - Annual citizen satisfaction survey
 - Annual customer satisfaction survey by business community
 - Performance rewards

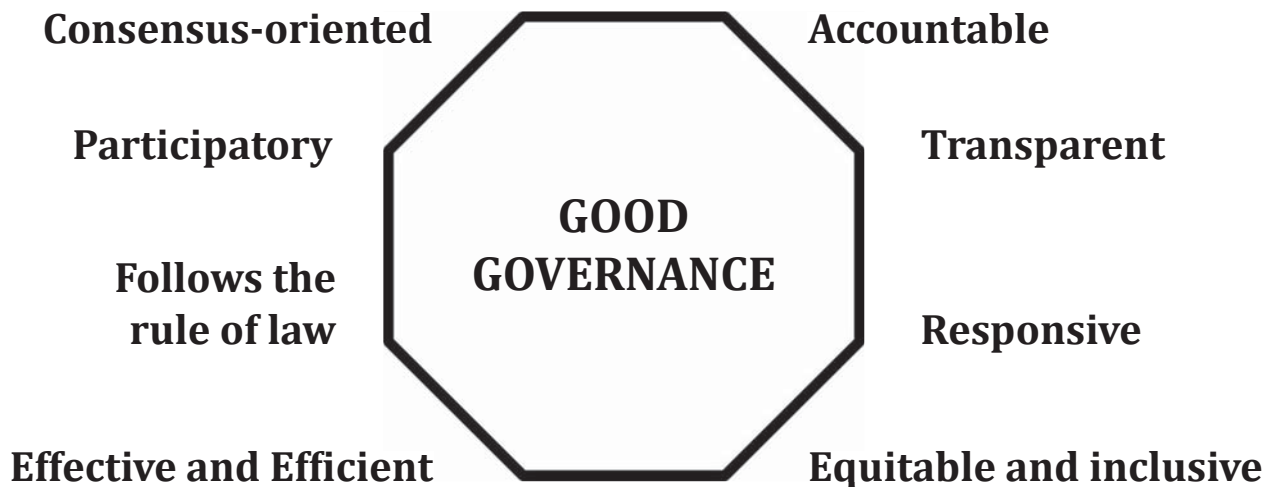
NDP5

- * Global, continental and regional developmental frameworks will be domesticated.
- * Implementation tool for all development frameworks
- * Wider issue-based consultations
- * Partnership → Government, Private Sector, Non-State Actors
- * Good governance has been proposed as a binding thread for the three spheres, with sub-pillars being:
 - Decentralisation and Participation
 - Regional and Rural Development
 - Peace, Security and Rule of Law
 - Accountability



NDP5 cont.

Characteristics of Good Governance



CONCLUSION

To connect the 2030 agenda with people's expectations, the country should:

- * Unpack the new paradigm of sustainable development: SDG 16 can give more roles for different players, and calls for inclusivity and sustainability in patterns of production, consumption and provision of public services.
- * Focus on addressing inequalities to achieve peaceful societies. This requires revision of social and economic policy choices.
- * Prioritise human rights and democracy as values, and regard security as a tool to protect these values.
- * Foster political participation, inclusion, citizen empowerment and engagement.
- * More democracy will then instil a sense of belonging and ownership of the development activities in the surroundings.

I THANK YOU.

5

Democracy 2030: Focusing on Crowdsourced Laws Inherent in the Theme

By

Mr Max WEYLANDT

Institute for Public Policy Research

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Assembled Dignitaries,

Many thanks for granting to me the privilege to address you today. The chamber in which we find ourselves truly inspires awe – it is a remarkable place; heavy with history, yet full of promise for the future. This chamber is arguably the single most important place for any Namibian citizen, for it is here that decisions are made that affect every moment of our days.

Unfortunately, there isn't enough time or space for every Namibian to be in this chamber and to address it on matters affecting them, giving their input into legislation that will so crucially shape their lives. Seeing as space is limited, we have to think a little bit outside of the box – and I have been asked to give an introduction on one approach that could see an unprecedented number of ordinary Namibian citizens take part in shaping the laws that affect their lives.

Crowdsourcing, in general terms, means using the input from as many people as possible when completing a task, and in these days it usually involves using the internet as the central technology through which participants contribute. Usually everyone is invited to contribute to a project, without limitations. The best example is probably Wikipedia – it is completely written by anonymous volunteers from over the world, and already shows the strengths of crowdsourcing. If you look at a traditional encyclopaedia like the *Britannica*, written in London, you will find very little information about Namibia, but because Wikipedia allows everyone to contribute, you have pages and pages on our country, our history and our politics – including pages on many people present in this room!

Crowdsourcing has been used for a while now to strengthen democracy and help governments do their job better. In Kenya and Tanzania, an app called Ushahidi lets any citizen report irregularities at the polling station, which are then passed on to law enforcement agencies. Also in Kenya, there is an app that lets people give feedback on the service they have received. This makes it a lot easier for government to identify which areas need strengthening, as they have a real-life picture of what is going right and what needs more work.

Should a tsunami ever hit Walvis Bay, people could turn to a free tool from Google to report that they are okay – and their family could see on the same page that they are fine. And software that automatically scans Facebook and Twitter could let emergency responders find out where the damage is worst so that help could first go to those who need it most.

These are some examples of the situations in which it makes sense to rely on information submitted by everyday citizens.

The question is, does this make sense for crafting laws? The Members of Parliament in attendance will know better than most that laws are very complex things. They are full of technical language, and interact in complicated ways with existing laws, policies and regulations. Crafting an excellent law is a tough task. Will adding more voices to the process not be a case of too many cooks spoiling the broth?

Evidence from around the world suggests that this is not the case, and that involving the crowd makes for better laws that better address the needs of citizens.

What would it look like to crowdsource a law?

It can start small. Either individual MPs or Parliament as a whole can ask their followers on Facebook or Twitter for input. That is already a form of crowdsourcing.

Or you could simply ask citizens for an impetus. Lawmakers can try hard to keep their ear on the ground to try to find out what the people need, but it is impossible to hear everyone's voice. New technologies mean that we can bring citizens' voices to Parliament. In the UK and in Finland for example, there are websites where people can bring up issues. If one of these issues – or a draft bill – receives a certain number of signatures, Parliament has to discuss it. This has already led to the passage of a law in Finland. As you will all know, we already have a system for petitions here in Namibia where people can bring up concerns for Parliament to discuss. Surely it cannot be too difficult to update this system for the modern era, to enable citizens to more easily connect with their representatives?

Other countries have tried more complex systems. In Finland, legislators tested a new system by reaching out to citizens for three stages of a new law regulating snowmobiles (luckily not a law we will need here any time soon). First, they asked them about general issues that the law should address. Then, they asked people how they would solve these issues. Finally, they had people vote on the different ideas, and legal experts then used this input to draft the actual legislation. For other laws, there have been websites that look a lot like Wikipedia, where people can simply log in and edit the document.

These are just some ways in which citizens have contributed to the process of making actual laws. And so far, evidence suggests that this process has been very effective. Studies after the fact found

that the vast majority of inputs from citizens were constructive and useful. In addition, most crowdsourcing initiatives attracted a number of experts on the topic who added crucial information and expertise to the process.

This is not to say there are no challenges with crowdsourced legislation. The most obvious issue is that of representation. Especially if the main technology used is the internet, any crowdsourcing project will exclude those who do not have access to a computer or smartphone. But these are also often the people who need to have their voices heard the most. I do believe, however, that if we put the bright minds of Namibians to this task, they will be able to find a system that manages to avoid this pitfall to a great extent.

And the benefits of crowdsourcing legislation by far outweigh the shortcomings of the approach.

Many Namibians still think that laws are something that comes from above to impose rules on them. Encouraging people to take part in drafting laws would empower them to see themselves as active participants in Democracy. This shift in thinking will go beyond their involvement in making laws: the more people think that government is something they can participate in, the more they will find ways to do so – whether it's by being more active in engaging their representatives or starting conversations with other Namibians about important challenges our nation faces. Crowdsourced laws, and the broader idea of engaging citizens in government decisions, can be a key part of the puzzle when it comes to creating a Namibia where participatory democracy is the order of the day and everyday citizens feel empowered to speak up and take a role in determining the future direction of their nation.

Another benefit that should not be discounted is that citizens' voices are actually useful in improving legislation. Even the most educated expert on a certain topic cannot have lived all the experiences that a broad range of contributors can bring to the table. If a system is designed in such a way that a broad cross-section of society can contribute to the discussions, then it is virtually guaranteed that the law that comes out at the end of the process will be better than if it had been drafted by only a few persons considered to know best about a subject. The guiding idea behind a democracy is that the people know what is best for them. Crowdsourcing laws put this belief into action to actually empower the people to make their own laws.

None of this means that Members of Parliament have to fear for their jobs, of course. Namibia is a representative democracy; our MPs will not be replaced by a bunch of people on the internet. But our Parliament has already shown its commitment to hearing people's voices, and crowdsourcing using new technologies offers a way to hear from even more citizens.

Crowdsourced legislation has made appearances not just in places such as Finland or the United States, but also in Brazil, where citizens recently helped draft a law that clarified consumers' rights on the internet. These ideas are spreading fast around the world, but we are still in the beginning stages of learning about how best to engage people in making laws. This means that Namibia can be a leader not just in Africa, but world-wide, and show the way forward in coming up with innovative ideas on how best to create systems that really engage most citizens, especially those who do not usually get a chance to give an input into the law. Our cellphone and radio coverage is exceptional for a country of our size, and we have many brilliant young people who have the technical knowledge to do this sort of thing and would love to prove their worth. So when thinking about democracy in 2030, we should plan to have a democracy where MPs can solicit feedback from the people and get it virtually in real time. A system where MPs can ask citizens what issues

matter to them, and can bring them up in the chamber to address these issues. A system where, when a law is being drafted, people who have unique insight into the topic – whether they are highly educated or whether they have personal experience – can contribute something that no one had previously considered. A system where the promise of democracy is an everyday reality as average citizens get to directly shape the laws that govern their lives.

Thank you.

6

Closing Remarks

By

Hon. MARINA KANDUMBU,

Deputy Chairperson of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) National Group Namibia

Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly (in absentia),
Ms Michaela De Sousa, UNICEF Country Representative,
Hon. Steve Biko Booys, Member of Parliament,
Prof. Paul J. Isaak, Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN),
Mr Max Weyland, Research Associate, Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR),
Mr Patrick Sam, Acting Executive Director of the Namibia Institute for Democracy (NID),
Mr Ned Sibeya, Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Economic Planning,
Student representatives from NUST, UNAM and IUM,
Representatives of the National Youth Council,
Learners from senior secondary schools in Windhoek,
Our sponsors Ohlthaver & List and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation,
Representatives of the media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to join you in closing this session commemorating the International Day of Democracy. We have decided to bring our Youth closer to Parliament or to bring Parliament closer to the Youth through the hosting of the official programme in this august Chamber.

Today we have the presence of approximately 90 students and youth, not as visitors but as participants sitting in the comfort of the seats of Honourable Members of Parliament. The objective is to give our young people a feeling of the Parliament Chamber and also to rejuvenate Parliament.

Your Parliament is one of the leading parliaments in the world and family of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) commemorating the International Day of Democracy each year since 2009. We need to commend ourselves for taking the lead in honouring this important day.

In the same vein, as citizens of this country, we, and particularly our youth, should embrace the values of democracy – not only on a day like this but every day – at home, at tertiary institutions, and in our social interactions and engagements. We are also aware that we cannot eat democracy,

therefore we commend our Government for tackling the challenges of poverty eradication. To be a prosperous and industrious nation, there is a constant need to improve our education system in the areas of science and technology, innovation and vocational training.

During the session this morning, various representatives shared their perspectives on the theme “Democracy 2030”, focusing on the elements of the Future, the Youth and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We have been briefed on the UN’s perspective on the SDGs; the statement of the Secretary-General of the UN, Mr Ban Ki Moon, was delivered; and perspectives on the future outlook of our electoral system, in particular online voting, were shared with us. Interesting presentations were made on crowdsourced laws, which is a new concept; democracy and decentralisation; the SDGs and the Harambee Prosperity Plan, NDP5 and Vision 2030.

We have also heard an overview of the IPU Conference of Young Parliamentarians held in Lusaka, Zambia, during March 2016.

The debates were interactive and thought-provoking.

The way forward for this special session is to ensure that the presentations and statements made, views and comments expressed, are compiled in a report that should be discussed in both Houses of Parliament. Once adopted, we need to work on the important aspect of implementation.

Allow me to express my deepest gratitude on behalf of the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Chairperson of the National Council and the Members of Parliament, to the students, learners and young people who have made time to be present here. We are indeed proud of our youth!

Equally, I express gratitude to our presenters who have sacrificed their valuable time to share their expertise on the agenda items of the day.

I also express my thanks to our sponsors, Ohlthaver & List and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

I would like to thank my brother, Mr Kazembire Zemburuka, for directing and moderating this special session.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the organising committee who have worked tirelessly to make this day a success.

In conclusion, as the youth of this contrasting beautiful and diverse nation, we have to be resilient against social evils such as crime, alcohol abuse and drug abuse, and focus our attention and energy on nation-building, peace, harmony, stability, poverty eradication and prosperity.

It is now my honour, as Deputy Chairperson of the IPU National Group, to declare this official session commemorating the International Day of Democracy, officially closed.

I THANK YOU.

Synopsis of Discussions

Based on contributions from students, learners and the presenters who participated in the session, the following is a synopsis of the discussions:

1. The Namibian youth, like other young people in the world, face challenges such as unemployment, poverty, lack of quality education, structural inequality, insufficient access to essential services, escalating crime, drug and alcohol abuse and gender-based violence, among others.
2. Participants concurred that there is no doubt that Namibia is a democratic country and that all Namibians have a right to a dignified and good life.
3. Taking note of the theme “Democracy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, it is important for the Government and the nation at large to take proactive steps to cultivate and groom young people to be leaders of tomorrow in all spheres of society.
4. Young people should take personal responsibility by championing their own self-development, shaping their own thoughts and being motivated to be active participants in the democratic processes.
5. The relevant Ministries should introduce the importance of democracy and “Democracy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” into education at primary and high schools and through tertiary institutions.
6. There was a general emphasis on the notion that sustainability is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Participants therefore felt that sustainability is feasible if young people are groomed and introduced to parliamentary systems and other systems of governance.
7. Young people need some form of quota to have seats in Parliament, as well as representation in local authorities and regional councils.
8. There is a need to consolidate and build the ‘Namibian House’ on the basis of inclusivity, i.e. to enable all citizens in the country to feel that they are part of that house.
9. Nation-building, unity, fair distribution of wealth, peace and stability should be the hallmarks of the advocacy of the youth.
10. The Namibian youth should be encouraged and sensitised on the principles and values of democracy, through various means including involving them in discussions on governance and democracy.

11. The youth should actively participate and get involved in all spheres of government, i.e. at the constituency, village council, town council and regional council levels, in particular through development committees. If these committees are inactive, the youth should demand that the authorities start activating development committees and include young people. It is the responsibility of young people to hold these committees to account and to ensure service delivery.
12. The youth should actively involve themselves in the lawmaking process of the Legislature by participating in the discussions of both the National Assembly and the National Council, and by lobbying Members of Parliament on bills, policies and matters on the floors of the two Houses of Parliament. This would strengthen the youth agenda and Democracy 2030 as policies and laws passed affect the youth.
13. There is a need for non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, legislation and mechanisms that create a conducive environment for young people in order to encourage and support transparency and accountability in governance.
14. Awareness and education on corruption and its impact on society, including the youth, should be encouraged at schools, universities and colleges. Any form of corruption should be dealt with using punitive measures.
15. Considering Namibia's rapid adaptation of ICT, ways and means should be found to do more research on crowdsourcing laws as a way to engage young people to participate in decision-making through the use of technologies.
16. Education and awareness of the importance of elections and the responsibilities of voters are paramount for the consolidation of democracy and should be encouraged.
17. Laws enacted in Parliament should seek to narrow the high income inequality gap with due consideration that Namibia is one of the countries in the world with the highest or worst income disparity.
18. The decentralisation initiative should continuously be encouraged as there cannot be democracy without the involvement of rural communities in the remote areas and corners of the country.
19. The youth should have unrestricted access to information in order to facilitate incisive participation in national issues.
20. Government efforts to promote the youth's agenda should be strengthened and given the necessary support to ensure successful implementation of such efforts.
21. The youth are invited and encouraged to participate in the activities of the National Youth Council – which is a statutory body in terms of the National Youth Council Act, 2009 (Act No. 3 of 2009) – and the statutory constituency youth forums to continue the discussions on “Democracy 2030” and the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.



Konrad
Adenauer
Stiftung

