

Dear President de Klerk,
Advocate Madonsela,
Mr. Gordhan,
Dr. Cronje,
dear friends from the FW de Klerk Foundation,
dear Members of Parliament, Representatives from State institutions,
diplomatic missions, from civil-society and academia,
dear Ladies and Gentlemen,
all protocol observed,

On behalf of the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you. It is a pleasure to be here with you today participating in the opening of this prestigious annual event, which always gathers so many outstanding individuals. A special welcome goes to this year's guest speakers, who are not only highly esteemed, but also without doubt very competent, experienced and demonstrated an exceptional record of integrity throughout their professional life. Therefore I cannot think of anyone more eligible to speak on the conference's topic which is "South Africa beyond State Capture and Corruption".

Accountability and transparency are two crucial elements of good governance. The fight against corruption is essential in a democratic society. Nonetheless one has to note that corruption and misuse of public funds is taking place since governments and public administration exist. The Roman statesman and philosophe Cicero already stated that – and I quote –

"There is no sanctuary so holy that money cannot profane it, no fortress so strong that money cannot take it by storm."

By citing Cicero's saying I do not want to qualify current developments in South Africa as something minor. Rather the contrary: I would like to

point out that fighting against corruption and misappropriation of public funds is constant work. In ancient Rome, Cicero fought his life-time against those politicians who wanted to take advantage of their power for their individual benefit. Although not successful, Cicero's fight for the *res publica* against the seizure of the total power by Julius Cesar is known in history as one of the first battles against a kind of state capture. But I do not want to bore you with stories from ancient Rome. My father is a former Latin teacher so maybe that is why the historic struggle between Cicero and Cesar first came into my mind when I heard about the so called "state capture".

The lesson learnt is definitely that a democratic state can only be successful and to the benefit of the majority of the people if there are enough checks and balances: We need a vital, enlightened and well organized civil society. We need independent and strong institutions which fulfil their constitutional role in the proper way and implement it with sufficient self-confidence. We need a free press which has the proper means to be the real watchdog of society. And we need a parliament which is aware about its legislative powers and should be the core of the political system whereby MPs are elected directly and represent the will of the people. In this regard the discussion about a possible electoral reform is interesting, nevertheless useless if the voters won't hold their elected politicians accountable from one election to the next. It is in the hands of the voters, if they elect members of parliament who serve the interests of those they represent instead of their own private interests.

A famous quote from the former German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer brings it to the point: "Every political party is there for the people and not for itself." Therefore the role of a political party is quite clear. But it is about the voter's responsibility to sanction the candidates which proved to put private interest first and to reward the candidates who have a clean record and gave priority to the collective interest. A democracy only can self-correct itself if the people believe in the mechanisms of self-correction, in other terms: they have to believe in the power of their vote and political change by elections.

The great report on "state of capture", compiled and drafted by Advocate Madonsela, is only the tipping point. The great job she had done should

remind us that perpetual effort by every citizen is necessary in order to construct the democracy, which President Mandela, President De Klerk and all the other great individuals had in mind during South Africa's historic transition.

The whole world admires South Africa for the manner in which it handled the transition peacefully and drafted such a progressive constitution. The South Africans can be proud of that and they should defend the constitutional values and principles as much as they can. Although there might be some political developments to worry about at the moment, I am deeply confident that this nation will overcome the challenges they are facing. In the past there have been brave South Africans who fought for the right cause and so there will be many of them in the future. We must just not forget about the vision which the great South African authors of the constitution were dreaming of: a peaceful, democratic and prosperous society, of which every citizen is part of regardless of his or her background. I am optimistic that the story which South Africa is telling to the world is that of how inclusive democracy will succeed and not fail.

Dear ladies and Gentlemen,

The Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation like many other German political foundations and foreign organisations is promoting democracy in South Africa since many decades. We do so by always taking the partner principle into consideration. That means we do not act on our own, but always work together with local partners, due to the fact that the best and most sustainable ideas are mostly coming from within every society itself and not from the outside. In this regard we are very delighted that one of our partners in South Africa is the FW De Klerk Foundation and I would like to thank President de Klerk, Theuns Eloff and his staff.

Meneer President, baie dankie dat u ons aan boord geneem het vir hierdie groot konferensie. Ons waardeer dit regtig. We really appreciate the cooperation between our two foundations. With these words I would like to conclude my remarks. I wish you all an interesting conference with good thoughts and even better discussions.

Thank you very much for your attention.