

**Introductory Remarks by Ms. Anna Wasserfall,
Programme Manager – Konrad Adenauer Stiftung at the
Launch of the Publication on “Democracy 2030 - Record of
Parliamentary Debate on the International Day of
Democracy 2016”**

Parliament Building

Windhoek, 14.09.2017

Good afternoon Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly,

Right Hon. Saara Kuukongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic and Leader of Government Business in Parliament,

Hon. Prof. Loide Kasingo, Deputy Speaker,

Hon. McHenry Venaani, Leader of the Official Opposition,

Hon. Leaders of Political Parties,

Hon. Chief Whips of Political Parties,

Hon. Members of Parliament,

Mrs. Emilia Mkusa, Secretary of the National Council,

Mrs. Lydia Kandetu, Secretary of the National Assembly,

Staff Members of the National Assembly and National Council,

Members of the Media,

All protocol observed.

Thank you very much for joining us today for the official book launch of the new publication “Democracy 2030”.

As has already been mentioned, my name is Anna Wasserfall, and I am the Programme Manager of Konrad Adenauer Foundation Namibia-Angola, in brief also referred to as KAS. KAS is a German political foundation that has been working in

close cooperation with the Namibian Parliament and other Namibian Institutions for many years in order to foster democracy and strengthen the rule of law.

Before this background, I am very happy to be able to add another chapter to this fruitful and longstanding cooperation today. The publication at hand, ladies and gentlemen, has come into being through joined efforts of the Namibian Parliament and KAS Namibia-Angola. It represents a Record of the Parliamentary Debate on the International Day of Democracy 2016, which took place nearly exactly a year ago in the National Assembly Chamber. The debate looked at various future-, youth- and development-orientated themes of great importance, such as

- the political participation of young people in the democratic process
- The changes that our democracy is likely to undergo until the year 2030
- And the connectivity between democracy and development

to mention only a few.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, this particular Parliamentary Debate last year has made one thing very clear once again: *Democracy is not a state – it's an ongoing process* that needs to change and adapt in order to serve the needs of a society that is also ever-changing and developing.

In this context, one current example comes to mind in particular which was also explored in more detail during the International Day of Democracy 2016: Our modern society now possesses an abundance of new technologies and communication tools that come with many great chances, but also with many challenges for our democracy. This is true not only for Namibia, but for all democratic nations around the world.

The accessibility of information through the internet, the digitalization of the media, private and public communication through platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp or the use of electronic devices in the voting process, to name only a few, have already changed the way in which we access information, form political opinions and participate in democratic activities. They therefore cannot be ignored in the law-making process or in the practical implementation of democratic processes, such as elections, in the future.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, after these issues of imminent importance were brought up during the Parliamentary debate by various experts in their respective field last year, it was felt that these contributions were simply too important and valuable to be limited to the International Day of Democracy 2016 only. The mutual decision was therefore made to summarise all the different presentations on topics such as *Online Voting, Crowdsourced Laws, Official plans that shape the way forward* or *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in the publication at

hand, and to make it available to you, ladies and gentlemen, as well as to the Namibian public.

We do hope that you might find it useful, and that it can contribute to the strengthening of future democracy by acting as a source of information and inspiration when it comes to the discussion and practical implementation of some of the above mentioned issues.

Furthermore, I sincerely hope that this important publication will only be the first of many that the Namibian Parliament and KAS Namibia-Angola will be able to make available through mutual cooperation, and would like to express our continued commitment for future partnership.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, as a last point, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all the speakers and presenters who made their presentations freely available for this publication. Furthermore, I would like to thank all staff members of the Namibian parliament who were involved in the finalization of this book. It was their dedication and countless efforts throughout the process which made the publishing of "Democracy 2030" possible in the first place. Last but not least, ladies and gentlemen, I would of course also like to thank all of you for being present here today and for expressing your interest in "Democracy 2030". Kindly note that the book is freely available at the KAS office in Sanlam Centre, should you be in need of additional copies at any given time.

Having said that, I would like to thank you very much for your kind attention and hand back to our Master of Ceremonies again. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.