

**Youth Leadership Training Programme 2007
Module 7**

23-24 June 2007, FES Forum

Report

Theme: Democratic principles and reflections on democracy

Resource Persons: Prof Andre du Pisani

Objectives:

- Creating common understanding of democratic principles and why they are part and parcel of modern way of life
- The role of a leader within the democratic society
- What does democracy mean for Namibia (not only voting, but also pluralism, value system change, confidence levels)
- Democracy in Africa works – what works best
- Economic systems working for democracies and how do they relate with one another in the globalised world

Attendance: Out of the 18 (eighteen) participants, 12 participated fulltime, 2 participants attended half the module, 2 participants attended one quarter of the module and 2 participants failed participation completely.

Brief summary (please be referred to extensive information material provided for by the resource person):

The **first session** allowed the resource person to present various views on democracy, both from a political as well as social perspective. His emphasis was that initially a word needs to be understood etymological, before any further interpretations can follow. He presented the historical context and engaged widely in discussions around the value of democracy, the demand for democracy as well as the supply of democracy and its discrepancies.

In the afternoon, this was then further expanded with excursions into, better appreciating democracy as a possible concept for Africa. This allowed then for discussions on the leadership vacuum in Africa. It also elaborated on power relations in democracy and what power really means.

During the third session it was then explained what democratic principles on the ground are both for leaders, as well as for followers. And that it is related to responsibilities and duties, that the voting right in itself is not necessarily a democratic principle but that democratic principledness can best be measured against the manner in which the counting exercise was conducted. At last he offered to avail himself in an open debate to address issues of importance for the present Youth leaders. One main issue was the challenge to be accepted as youth leader by senior, well established leaders and he confirmed earlier considerations that a dialogue should be created between youth

leaders and senior leaders on specific topics, that these dialogues should be widely publicised to show that the different generations listen to one another and also have something to say to one another.

The **fourth session** once again offered the opportunity to establish progress in the *social projects*, and address shortcomings where they can be observed. It can be stated that some social projects are very well advanced, whilst others still struggle to find their feet. Some have not even started with the engagement process. Reporting requirements have been presented and must be repeated time and again.

During the concluding evaluation some participants expressed satisfaction that despite the topic being nothing extraordinary the facilitator added perspectives, which were not so commonly known. Some others felt that a more involved facilitation would have been helpful, with the Professor following a very class room like approach with no exercises built in. Overall people were very happy with the level of education enjoyed in this module.

Recommendations:

- A highly capacitated resource person, who should remain part of the programme in the one or the other fashion.
- The module must be more proactively used to practice democracy – in the following module a proposal was presented for the participants to witness the youth congress of one political party (SWAPO) only for representatives of two parties (RP and DTA) to reject this feature.
- This module should be closely linked to a module on economic systems.