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South Africa in February 2018, Fake News It's Not

Presentation to UFS/ Osaka conference

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The more things change...

- One year ago I introduced my presentation with a reflection on
 - Trends in democratic political systems
 - The coming policy conference of the ANC
 - The coming elective conference of the ANC
 - The problems in governance
 - The challenges to opposition political parties
- Is it any different in February 2018?
- We know much more than a year ago – everything?
- It is complex!

Where are we in Feb 2018?

- Economic stagnation
- Institutional & governance decay
- Alienation & fragmentation of society
- Environmental crisis
- Leadership transition
- Continental & global drift
- Democracy index
 - SA ranked at 41
 - 22nd flawed democracies
 - Ranked 4th in Africa

How can we make sense of this?

- Myths
 - the good story
 - the real story
- Contradictions
 - available resources & positive outcomes - potential
 - negative consequences – history & choices
- Realities – what now?
 - Where we come from!
 - Where we want to go?

Changes influencing South Africa

- Global changes – political & socio-economic
- South Africa is changing rapidly
 - a growing/ young population
 - urbanised vs rural
 - socio-economic changes
- Demographic trends & governance
 - migration – 2 provinces
 - urbanisation – 61% increasing to +70% & +80%
 - population growth – institutional & service requirements
 - Decline in levels of participation

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- ANC & government
 - developments within the ANC and alliance
 - policy challenges & uncertainty
 - outcomes of leadership elections of December 2017
- developments in other political parties
 - DA – especially the WC & Cape Town
 - EFF
 - Other parties
- Increasing importance of civil society & media
 - Role of business?

Key issues affecting South Africa

- Tensions resulting from poor governance
 - party and state
 - policy & ideology = the NDP?
 - local & provincial government
 - corruption & scandal
- Weakening institutions
 - decay in capacity of government & institutions
- Political parties
 - weakening dominant elite & elite fragmentation
 - leadership
 - plan/ vision?
 - questionable decisions
 - accountability?
 - approach to constitution/ institutions?

Immediate (& future) threats?

- Potential for conflict (violence?) in SA
 - access to positions/ resources
 - control of government/ distribution of resources
 - alienation & fragmentation
- Weakening democracy & the constitution
 - increasing conflict in parliament
 - delink from citizens
 - challenges to norms and values
 - Government in conflict with citizens – Life Esidimeni?
 - multiple “conflicts” in society – race & identity
- politics of cooperation & moderation or radicalism & violence?

Trends in democratic systems

- Distress & decline in democratic systems
 - declining confidence in
 - political parties
 - parliaments
 - politicians & “the political class”
 - capacity & competence of governments
 - availability of information – fake & real
 - control of agenda – what comes on/ when/ how
 - criteria for evaluation
 - performance of representative institutions

Conclusion

- * Immediate challenges
 - * constitutional governance
 - * leadership
 - * policy
 - * institutional development
 - * citizenship
- * Democratic consolidation
- * The will to make this work?
- * The ability to make this work?

Thank you

Challenges to South Africa

- Democracy - decline
- unemployment/ inequality/ demographic realities
- capacity of government
 - local government
 - electricity & water
 - chaos in state owned enterprises
- policy uncertainty
 - National Development Plan
 - new ANC leadership & *radical* policies?
 - populist politics
 - domestic policies - redistribution of land/ economy/ sport/ employment...
 - migration
 - transformation
 - fragmentation of society
 - education & employment