

Democracy and the Quest for Responsible Governance in Southern Africa

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ABSTRACT The clamour for democracy worldwide is premised on the fact that it allows citizens' active involvement in the way they are being governed. Being a representative system of government, democracy is expected to make political leadership responsive and responsible to the entire citizenries of the state. However, experiences in the Southern African region have shown the institutionalisation of democracy without responsible governance. By responsible governance, we mean the conscious effective and efficient management of the state human, natural and financial resources in order to bring about sustainable national development. The absence of this has brought about below capacity development of the region. Even though, "Southern Africa needs a developmental and capable state for socio-economic progress and sustainable democracy", this cannot be achieved without responsible political leadership, which would be responsive to the yearnings of the people. So, in this paper, we are presenting a position that it is only responsible governance, which can make democracy meaningful, as democracy without responsible governance is meaningless.