

The Institute for Development Studies (IDS), in collaboration with the African Leadership Centre (ALC), the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi and the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala (NAI) launched a book on new constitutional order.

The book, *Kenya: The Struggles for a New Constitutional Order*, is a study of Kenya's constitution, conducted under the leadership of Nordic Africa Institute. It is jointly edited by Godwin Murunga (IDS), Duncan Okelo and Anders Sjogren (NAI). The authors are Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, Sammy Gakero Gachigua, Njoki Wamai, Raymond Muhula, Stephen Ndegwa, Wanjala S. Nasong'o, Yash Pal Ghai, Godwin R. Murunga and Mutuma Ruteere.

The book has two sections. The first section is entitled "Contexts and actors in the laying of the new constitution." This section provides the background history of constitution making in Kenya. The second section is entitled "The content, challenges and opportunities of a new constitutional order." According to renowned book reviewer Dr Tom Odhiambo of the Literature Department, University of Nairobi, "the book is a stirring invitation to reflect on the journey that the Kenyan Constitution has travelled today."

The book launch ceremony was presided over by Chief Justice Dr Willy Mutunga at the University of Nairobi on 11th December 2014. Also present at the launch were the Swedish Ambassador to Kenya Johan Borgstam, South African MP Thoko Didiza, East African Legislative Assembly MP Zein Abubakar and former Constitution of Kenya Review Commission chair Prof Yash Pal Ghai. The Principal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Prof Enos Njeru, represented the Vice Chancellor, Prof George Magoha, while the IDS Associate Director Prof Karuti Kanyinga represented the Institute.

In his welcome address, the VC described the book as a great piece of writing. He said every university prides itself by the products of its faculties and institutes and the most important that can be produced is a research product which can impact the society. He congratulated IDS and ALC for leading the book production process.

The CHSS Principal Prof Njeru said discourse on constitutionalism is a very important process that should involve everyone. He thanked Dr Mutunga for agreeing to officiate at the function. "We have a Chief Justice who dialogues with the high and mighty as well as grassroots communities to discuss constitutional issues," he said.

Dr Mutunga welcomed the new book, saying that it would make a great contribution to the new constitutional order. The Chief Justice called for an all inclusive process on constitutional issues. While acknowledging that some members of the Judiciary are averse to criticism, he said that criticism is very important especially when it comes to interpretation of the constitution.

Dr Murunga, who is also a Senior Research Associate at IDS, observed that the new book is aimed at provoking thinking on key constitutional issues and pose the challenge back to the general community. "It should not be that the academics did nothing. It should be that the community rejected what the academics provided," he said.