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new south institute
Governance and Public Institutions

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

SIZIE CHIPEKA

The Third South African (SA) is growing, taking on new staff to consolidate the impact that we have recently made towards transforming South Africa's public administration.

Two new people have joined the Public Service Reform programme, which is headed up by Yakeme Nkomo. They will be joined shortly by a new Senior Researcher. To strengthen the organisation's core functions, we are recruiting a Chief Operations Officer and a Senior Communications Officer. We are also recruiting a Senior Researcher for the Institute's prestigious new destination, Afrodesia programme (see more details below). Highly sought after NSI Fellowship in Public Service Reform and the NSI Young Scholar programme are also underway.

In June, together with the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) and the Gauteng Institute of Business Science (GIBS), we hosted the Dr Thoko Tamela Conference, which was a tribute to the late Dr Thoko Tamela, who was a leading public intellectual, a committed activist, a passionate and outspoken feminist, and a dedicated public servant who embodied what it means to be a public intellectual. Approximately 150 participants in both audiences/panels were also launched and rebroadcast that reflect our work on global affairs, migration governance, as well as public service reform, being of public interest and relevance to society.

In addition, we also recently welcome members of parliament's Public Service and Administration Portfolio Committee, the Gauteng Provincial Legislature, and the Gauteng Provincial Government to our offices for a day of engagement on the Gauteng City Region and what we can make a deeper contribution to. I think the South Africa and the Africa.

We're pleased to share some of these developments with you in this edition of our newsletter.

Publications

NSI ANALYSES ON SOUTH AFRICA'S AGEING PUBLIC SERVICE

In May, the New South Institute (NSI) released a series on the ageing of South Africa's public service workforce, titled *Bracing the 2030 Generation of Public Servants*. The series, which highlights the ageing of the government's own data, reveals that South Africa's public service is ageing and that the government's own data underestimates the extent of your 2030 & now mapping the end of that ageing. It reflects on how these shifts impact efforts to transform the public service. The NSI's report, available on our website, also highlights key recommendations for policy and public service reform strategies. We launched it with a panel discussion on the 29th May, with panelists drawn from the Public Service Commission, the Departments of Health, and Basic Education, and the South African Police Services.

Download the report

MERGING VOICES: CRITICAL THINKING IN TIMES OF POLYCRISES

In May, we launched a new NSI initiative, a very ambitious one, called Merging Voices. Merging Voices is a platform for bold, other marginalised perspectives on the future of the global order, particularly in times of crisis. Merging Voices aims, the centre features exclusive conversations with leading thinkers whose voices are seldom amplified in the mainstream, and contributions from some of the different narratives around the international liberal order and the crisis surrounding it.

The exclusive interview features conversations with:

- Sergey Karaganov, one of Russia's most influential geopolitical thinkers
- Yuan Zhebing, a renowned international relations scholar
- Mitali Mishra, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Cape Town
- Shivalokee Pherson, one of India's most respected diplomats and strategic thinkers
- Anna Rosling, Associate Professor of Political Science.

THE MAKING OF A SETTLER COLONY: ISRAEL, THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, AND THE POLITICS OF THIRD WORLD SOLIDARITY WORKING PAPER

Our newest working paper, titled The Making of a Settler Colony: Israel, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Politics of Third World Solidarity, interrogates the historical foundations and evolving dimensions of Israel's settler colonial project, and the global order that inform and shape them. The paper, which is the first in a series of working papers, raises urgent and complex questions about when liberation processes become subject to moral or political contestation, and how the ethics of the liberation debate(s) about how the State of Israel is conceptualised and framed within competing normative and legal paradigms.

Read more

CONCEPTUALISING THE NEW GLOBAL CONTEST FOR POWER WORKING PAPER: PERSPECTIVES FROM INTERNATIONAL LAW

In another working paper, grounded in research, Dr Jamie Hitchen argues that the Global South's international law could play in shaping a future order that reflects the aspirations and interests of the Global South. The paper, available in the link below, scrutinises how international law might evolve to reflect the interests of the Global South, established powers but also its emerging ones, to addresses the structural inequalities in the international system and the dynamics of the underlying power dynamics. Most anyone that wants international law has often served to legitimise Western power, and the Global South has been hurtful concerned over neutrality. The paper argues that the Global South's emerging hegemonic hyper-hegemonic were mobilised to challenge unilateral and secret sovereignty.

Read more

MIGRATION TRENDS

We are proud to report that a chapter by NSI Senior Researcher, Dr Jamie Hitchen, on the trends in African migration, xenophobia, the refugee crisis, and Mediterranean crossings with a specific focus on Libya, Tunisia, and Morocco, is now volume on migration, available below.

Access the report

NSI participation in conferences, seminars and other fora

DEPUTY PRESIDENT MAMATELA BACKS PUBLIC SERVICE REFORMS

In May, Yolewa Mahlati, NSI Head of Public Service Reform, participated in a public service conference organised by the Presidency, on strengthening the political-administrative interface. The event, which was hosted by the Deputy President, Mr Paul Mashatile, who used his address to call for reforms to the political-administrative interface. He emphasised the need for a clear distinction between exceptionally administrative decision-making and committed to addressing these issues through the implementation of the Government's Reform Framework for Public Service Governance, which focuses on strengthening institutions, capacity building among, accountable institutions. We are pleased that many of the NSI's recommendations on the current amendments to the Public Service Act, among other pieces of legislation, whose presence in the conference indicated that they are positively supported and advocated by the NSI.

NSI CONTRIBUTES TO GLOBAL DISCUSSION ON MIGRATION AND PUBLIC POLICY

In May, Michael Mahoney participated in an international conference on migration, held in Brazil, on the theme of Migration and Public Policy. Hosted by Estudos Migratórios (CEMI), an organisation dedicated to research, training, and knowledge on migration. The 3rd International Conference on Migration and Refugee (ICMR) was held at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte, Natal, and Dakar Novak on the Mind". Michael spoke at a roundtable on public policies for mobile populations, alongside Dr Jamie Hitchen, Philippines, Mexico, and Brazil. Michael presented again in a roundtable focused on human mobility in Africa, the Mediterranean crossings, and the role of African governments towards migration and ways to humanise African migrants.

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM IN FOCUS AT CONTINENTAL GATHERING IN ADDIS ABABA

Dr Siphe Chipeka attended the 15th Continental Virtual Public Service Day in Addis Ababa. She participated in a session focused on legal and institutional reforms. The session highlighted how Ethiopia rolled-out the NSI position on reform for impact. Her remarks highlighted, amongst other things, the NSI's recommendations on the Ethiopian Constitution (Article 2 in our SCI report), as well as the broader challenges and opportunities associated with the professionalisation of the public service.

MIGRATION POLICY UNDER REVIEW

My colleague, Alan Hirsch, who leads the Migration Governance programme, and I, representing the NSI, recently spoke at a virtual discussion hosted by the Southern African Centre Offices, alongside representatives from the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Home Affairs. During the discussion, we discussed the Draft Migration Policy and MDRA report (South Africa's Country Study: Migration Governance and Migration Governance Governance), while the authorised. We provided a critical analysis of the draft migration policy, highlighting the need for a more inclusive and broader political context in which it is being developed.

NSI organised or partnered events

THE ON THOMI TAMELA CONFERENCE COMES TO AFRICA

For the first time, the On Thoki Tamela Conference, which is hosted by the Institute of Business Ethics, GIBS, was proud to be one of the official partners of this year's conference. The event brought together academics, practitioners, and representatives from countries for a dynamic exchange of ideas. Over two days, the programme featured an impressive lineup of keynote speakers, panel discussions, sessions, and ample opportunities for networking and meaningful engagement.

On the first day, participants engaged in sessions exploring the power of coalitions in driving strategic strategies for turning evidence into impactful interventions. The second day featured a series of workshops provided practical training on the role of international cooperation in strengthening more effective and accountable institutions.

The concept for Thoko Tamela emerged from the impact of Thoko Tamela in challenging systems, institutions, and ideas, and in mentoring generations, being a training grounds for cultivating future policy leaders and offered advice for young professionals entering the sector.

GLOBAL LESSONS ON STATE CAPTURE SEMINAR

We concluded the On Thoki Tamela Conference on a high note with a seminar on state capture, led by Convenorus Kelen Nel, on state capture.

This event brought together a distinguished group of speakers to explore three central themes:

- Global perspectives on state capture
- The role of civil society organisations in responsd to the legacy of state capture
- Lessons for other countries navigating similar challenges

The panel featured Daniel Kaufmann, who helped develop the concept of state capture and is currently working on a global State Capture Index, Professor Mzukisi Qobo, Zanele Cammissioner-president Nadine Paul Pretorius, and Zubea Rasdian from the Special Investigating Unit.

Watch the video

NSI AND STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY HOST LECTURE ON GLOBAL STATE CAPTURE

Together with Stellenbosch University's School of Public Leadership, we hosted a lecture on state capture, featuring Daniel Kaufmann, who created called Indicator Index state capture research on the global state capture Index.

Kaufmann's presentation, which was attended by over 150 of our colleagues, the media, and international pressures can play in countering state capture before it becomes entrenched, and the lessons and experiences of recognising and addressing state capture as a necessary step towards meaningful reforms.

Read more

Our media presence

FOCUS ON PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM AND GOVERNANCE

Actively engaged with several television media outlets, giving expression to our work on public service reform and governance, and the ongoing NSI series, as well as foregrounding some of our recommendations.

Some of our recent media engagements include:

- Interview on eNCA
- Interview on Newzroom Afrika
- Discussion notes
- Newsdrive video

OUR LATEST OP-EDS ON GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

Hitchen's opinion piece, published by City Press, 'A Tale of Two Cities', on the ongoing crisis in Joburg's governance, focusing on the practices the Democratic Alliance (DA) has implemented in amendments. The piece also offers a contextual analysis of the DA's governance approach, and the public hearings on the BE. This analysis is informed by our direct involvement in the process, including our submission to the hearings and presenting formal submissions.

My piece, published by Sunday Times, shows on our recent report looking at the ageing public service workforce in South Africa. It highlights the need for a deeper analysis of the implications of ageing public servants, whose institutional memory has made contributions for change. My piece is available here.

UPCOMING WORK

Coming Soon

Coming Soon

Coming Soon