

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

IVOR CHIPKIN

2024 has been a year of dramatic change. In the May election, the African National Congress lost its majority in the national assembly and was forced into a coalition arrangement to remain in power. Under the Presidency of Cyril Ramaphosa, the party agreed to form a Government of National Unity with the Democratic Alliance, the Inkatha Freedom Party and several other small parties. They roughly share a broad commitment to South Africa's constitutional democracy. There are strong forces in the ANC, however, ambivalent about the constitution and open to autocratic and authoritarian models of government. They are joined by opposition parties and authoritarian movements in 'civil society' too. The challenge is compounded by events globally and the election of Donald Trump as the next US President in particular. Social democrats and liberal democrats are being squeezed from the left and the right.

In this quarterly newsletter, we share perspectives on democracy and the ongoing struggle to uphold the democratic nature of the public domain. This raises critical questions about who should - and who shouldn't - determine which voices are heard in the media and public spaces.

We launched the African Global Dialogues, our signature, annual event, which brought together global experts to grapple with narrative conditions towards peace in the Middle East. We also facilitated discussions on migration governance frameworks across three African countries, hosting webinars, media engagements, and contributions to research projects.

NSI's partnership with parliament took a major, exciting turn and there will be some important announcements in the new year, including for staff for a Cape Town office.

We hosted workshops on actionable strategies for improved governance in South Africa, and held a webinar focused on empowering civil society to take the lead on public service reform. This quarter we launched a new paper and policy brief on public service reform. We have also developed a consolidated programme of public service reform, which we will launch in the new year. Alan Hirsch was appointed to the Presidential Economic Advisory Council.

We strengthened our partnerships with highly regarded institutions such as the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). We look forward to jointly hosting one of the most prestigious gatherings of global thinktanks from around the world in 2025.

Without giving away too much, the NSI will be looking to fill several roles in a growing and dynamic organisation. We will be looking for a deputy director, for a programme manager and senior analysts for the Public Service Reform programme and for the new Global Affairs programme, as well as a senior journalist in residence.

As the holiday season approaches, we extend our warmest wishes for a safe period. A huge thank you to our growing community of NSI friends and supporters for your incredible contributions. We look forward to continuing this journey together in the new year.

TOP NEWS



NSI TO DOCUMENT THE HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NATIONAL TREASURY

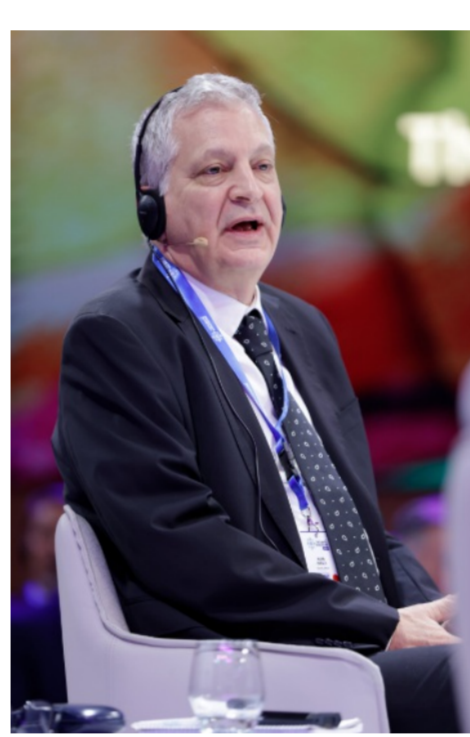
After a long process of engagement, the NSI has been appointed to write the history of the National Treasury, with unprecedented access to the institution's physical and digitised archives. This project presents a unique opportunity to tell the story of post-apartheid South Africa from the perspective of the State, focusing on institution-building, financial governance, and the fight against state capture. This development highlights the NSI's mission of strengthening state-building in South Africa and beyond.

Learn more about this important project by clicking [here](#).

NSI AT THE 13TH ATLANTIC DIALOGUE IN MOROCCO

The Policy Center for the New South hosted its 13th Atlantic Dialogues conference in Rabat, Morocco, from 12-14 December. Alan Hirsch, NSI Senior Researcher and leader of our MIGRA programme, participated in the opening panel discussion, addressing the theme **Interdependence and Solidarity in a Fragmented World**.

Hirsch delivered a presentation on the multiple economic challenges and austerity policies impacting global solidarity, sharing the platform with fellow experts from Brazil, St. Lucia, Uruguay, and Morocco.



NSI WEBINAR: MIGRATION GOVERNANCE REFORM IN AFRICA

On November 12, the NSI hosted its annual Migration Governance Reform in Africa (MIGRA) webinar, shining a spotlight on migration trends, governance reform, and challenges in South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya.

NSI researchers, Alan Hirsch, Victor Amadi and Michael Mutava presented evidence-based findings and lessons learned from their respective country studies. The event also featured discussions led by Amanda Bisong, Policy Officer in the Migration and Mobility team at the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), and Caroline Wanjiku Kihato, Visiting Fellow at the University of Oxford's Department of International Development.

If you missed the event, you can watch the video recording [here](#), or access the presentations on our website by clicking [here](#).

INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

In October 2024, the Global Changes Center at the Faculty of Philosophy, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia, hosted the international conference titled **"Cooperative Multipolar System: In Quest for a New World Order."** The event convened scholars and experts to engage on pressing global issues. NSI research fellow, Radmila Nakarada presented on the deep-rooted causes of global conflict looking at factors beyond Cold War ideological divides.

At the conference, I delivered an online presentation on multipolarity, strategic considerations, and dimensions of foreign policy in the Global South.



NSI RESEARCHER REAPPOINTED TO PRESIDENTIAL ECONOMIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

We are excited to share that Alan Hirsch, NSI Senior Researcher and Director of our MIGRA research programme, has been appointed to the Presidential Economic Advisory Council (PEAC) by President Cyril Ramaphosa. Alan joins other leading experts to advise the 7th administration on significant global and domestic developments, focusing on policy issues.



NSI INTERVIEW WITH BROWN UNIVERSITY'S PROF. VLADIMIR GOLSTEIN: RUSSIA'S ROLE IN GLOBAL POLITICS

As part of our South-South Dialogues programme, our NSI researchers, Jelena Vidojević and Radmila Nakarada, engaged with Brown University's Professor Vladimir Golstein. The discussion provides an analysis of Russia's position in global politics, the Global South and BRICS.

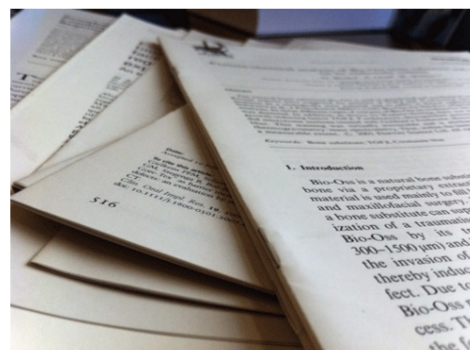
The discussion, which looks at key political dynamics, was published by **News24**, a leading online news platform. You can read the full text of the interview on our website by clicking [here](#).

DEBATING THE DEMOCRATIC PUBLIC SPACE

The NSI's intellectual arguments continue to gain traction across media platforms. An article published in the Mail and Guardian on November 4 highlights attempts to suppress the African Global Dialogues conference which took place in September, in Johannesburg.

In the piece, I argue that true democracy thrives on pluralism, embracing opposing and unpopular ideas. That upholding democracy requires vigilance against authoritarian tendencies that try to silence opposing voices.

Read the full article [here](#).



UPCOMING REPORTS AT NSI

An Analysis of Migration Governance Frameworks in West Africa: Focus on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a new report by NSI research fellow, Victor Amadi, focusing on migration governance frameworks within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This will look at the multifaceted approach ECOWAS takes to address migration challenges, while highlighting the importance of harmonising migration policies and protecting migrant rights across the region.

Another major academic contribution from NSI researchers, Rommy Morales Olivares, Jelena Vidojević and Ivor Chipkin, is an essay looking into welfarism as a response to the ongoing crisis of capitalism in South Africa and Chile. This paper explores the aspirations and limitations of South Africa's developmental state, alongside the neoliberal constraints faced by Chile. The comparative analysis provides perspective into the barriers to building inclusive welfare states in both nations.

Please keep an eye on our website and digital platforms for updates on these upcoming reports

We thank you again for your interest in and support of our work