



3 September 2021

Ms F Muthambi, MP, Chairperson:

Parliamentary Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

Dear Madam,

Proposed amendments to the Disaster Management Act of 2002

Kindly see attached submission on behalf of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, its members, and supporters.

In the class interest of workers and broader society, we make the following submissions:

We note that the proposed amendment to section 27 of the Disaster Management Act would permit the National Assembly to extend the State of Disaster for no more than 3 months at a time. However, the National Assembly is not required to consult with organised labour, NEDLAC or the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum before doing so.

1. We strongly oppose this amendment, for the reasons set out below.
2. The state of disaster disproportionately affects the rights and interests of our citizens.
3. The middle class are more easily able to survive the impact of the state of disaster on their incomes and livelihood while the poor, unemployed and the working class on the other hand are forced to beg or borrow to survive.
4. The state of disaster must be strictly circumscribed and limited given the impact of a state of disaster on the exercise of constitutional rights such as freedom of movement, the right to dignity (through, for example, earning a living), the right to protest, and the right to strike.
5. The extension of a state of disaster by up to 3 months at a time constitutes a serious intrusion into the constitutional rights of citizens. In this event, consultation must first be required.
6. We cannot comprehend why, before extension of the state of disaster, the National Assembly is not required to consider representations from citizens or their representatives who are directly affected.
7. The assumption that members of the National Assembly fairly evaluate all interest groups, such as labour, does not consider that business interests are frequently elevated. Nor does it take into consideration that

members of parliament are not impoverished and do not experience the daily realities and struggles of the working class.

8. Accordingly, at the very least, before the extension of the state of disaster, the National Assembly must be required to consult with:
 - a. The National Disaster Management Advisory Forum, which includes organised labour, alternatively
 - b. NEDLAC, and any other trade union federations which are not members of NEDLAC.

*From the Preamble of the South African Constitution
"Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country"
The South African Constitution!*

Issued by,
The National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA)