

The State of Disaster is a disaster. End it now.

By [Marc Wachsberger](#)

18 Mar 2022

The Capital Hotels and Apartments is sorely disappointed that the South African Government has yet again taken the cowardly step of extending the State of Disaster that was put in place to address the Covid-19 pandemic.



Marc Wachsberger, managing director of The Capital Hotels and Apartments

It is a weak and lazy choice, particularly in light of the facts that South Africa has a comprehensive and widely available vaccination programme, that the virus's virulence has subsided so much that it's little more threatening than flu, and other countries all over the world have removed their disaster management measures completely.

They have done this so that their people can get back to living normally, and so that their economies can recover.

It's this last issue – the issue of the country's economic survival - that makes this spineless decision the most destructive, for the whole country, and the tourism and hospitality sectors in particular.

Lack of certainty and clarity

The lack of certainty and clarity on the way forward displayed by government does not instil confidence in tourists or business executives from abroad who may consider travelling to South Africa. They simply cannot choose a destination where it's unclear whether their movements will be restricted from one day to the next, or whether their flights to and from their destination will be able to take to the skies.

Local tourists have the same concerns and are reluctant to book local travel for fear of restrictions being implemented, without notice – we can already see how this has impacted bookings over the upcoming Easter holidays.

South African mass venues are standing empty and not earning an income or creating jobs while their counterparts abroad are home to sporting events and concerts that offer entertainment, earn revenue, and pay people for honest work.



National State of Disaster on Covid-19 extended

15 Mar 2022



Burden on already struggling fiscus

There has been feedback that the State of Disaster is being extended while government finds ways to continue ensure continuity with the social relief of distress grant, and how to migrate the Covid-19 no fault compensation scheme.

Those are noble intentions, but if the State of Disaster was lifted, and people could get back to work, rebuilding their businesses and creating jobs, these measures would not be necessary. The longer the State of Disaster continues, the greater the burden that these measures will put onto the country's already struggling fiscus.

With these factors in mind, we call on President Ramaphosa and the South African government to provide clarity and resolve on these issues:

- Easing or completely lifting restrictions on seating capacities for large venues – particularly open-air venues that, by their very design, allow for effective ventilation.
- Adjusting social distancing requirements in public spaces, such as restaurants, meeting rooms, and offices, where the number of people in a space can be controlled.
- Scrapping the PCR test requirement for travel into and out of South Africa. It is a costly and time-heavy requirement for travellers, who are likely to choose destinations that don't expect them to jump through administrative hoops that other countries have long abandoned.

The best solution would be to end the State of Disaster entirely so that South Africans can get back to work rebuilding the economy, creating jobs, and welcoming visitors and the foreign exchange that they bring to our businesses.

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