

## MEDIA STATEMENTS

### Classification of Severe Weather Events as a National Disaster

Following heavy torrential rains that continue to batter some parts of South Africa, there has been flooding which has led to the destruction of property and important infrastructure.

The National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) is working closely with provinces and all affected organs of state and continues to receive reports on the extent of the damages caused by the recent torrential rains.

After consultation with all provinces and other relevant role-players on the extent of the damages caused by the storms and heavy rains, the NDMC has decided to classify (not declare) the severe weather events occurring in parts of the Republic that resulted in the loss of life and damage to property, infrastructure and the environment caused by flooding, strong winds, sink holes, landslides etc, as a NATIONAL DISASTER in line with the mandate of the Head of NDMC under section 23 of the Disaster Management Act, 57 of 2002.

This classification is done to confirm that the situation is regarded as a disaster and is of a magnitude that exceeds the capacity of affected municipalities and Provinces to deal with. It further assigns primary responsibility to the national sphere of government for the coordination and management of the disaster and enables organs of state in all spheres to assist in dealing with the disaster and its consequences.

The classification will activate the provisions of section 19 (6) of the Division of Revenue Act 2021 to enable all affected accounting officers to redirect/repurpose their allocations and to access Department of Cooperative Governance disaster grants to deal with the effects of the disaster.

Members of the public are further urged to continue observing weather warning as issued regularly by the South African Weather Service and also to practice safety measures in the face of continuing rains and resultant storms and flooding incidents. A special plea is particularly made to those who are located in low lying areas to take precautionary measures including relocation away from those risky areas.

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