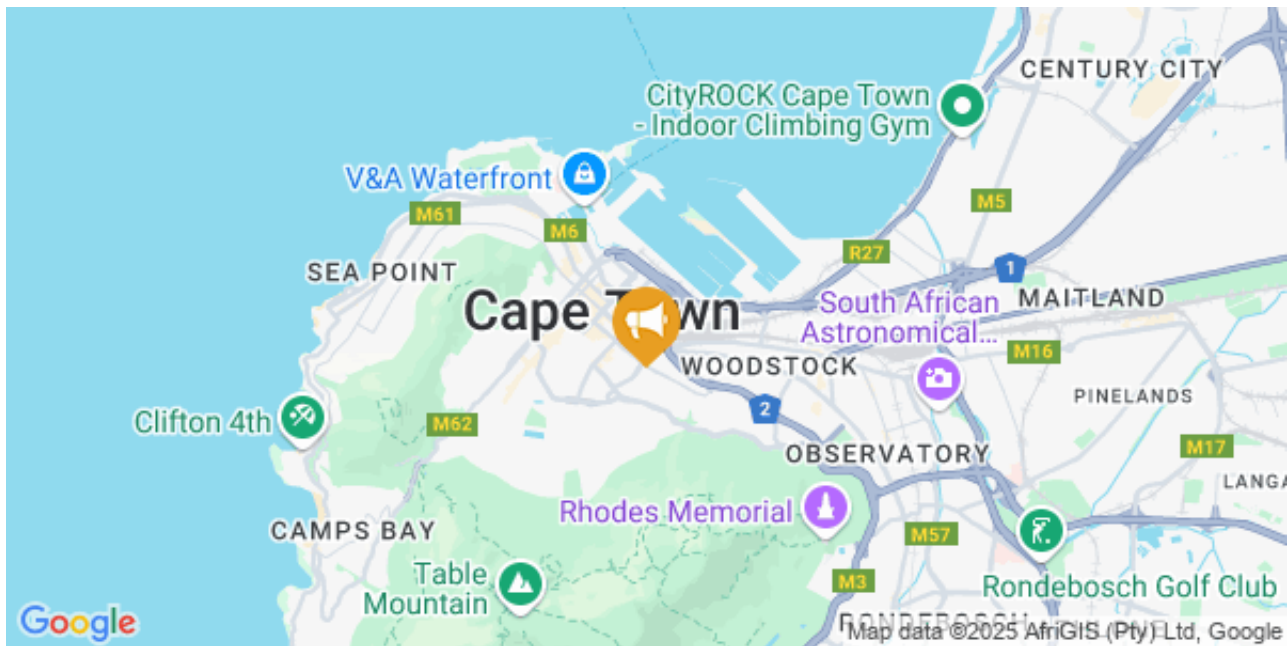


Protest

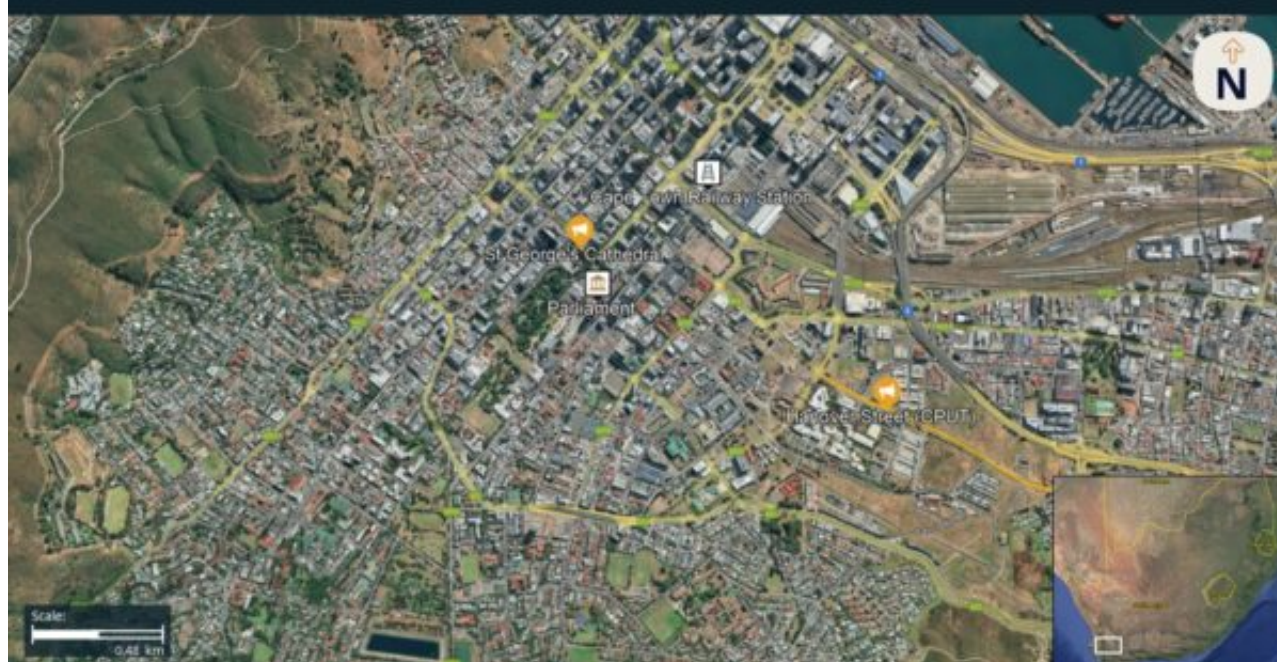
**17**FEB
4:45 UTC

South Africa Tactical: COSATU scheduled to hold two protests in Cape Town on February 18-19; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation

- According to official notices, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) along with affiliated trade unions and other civil society organizations will hold two gatherings in Cape Town on February 18 and 19.
- On February 18, participants are invited to gather at St George's Cathedral from 16:00-19:30 (local time) for an event labeled "People's Budget Assembly".
- On February 19, participants will gather at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and march along Hanover Street from 10:00.
- The events are being held to denounce the expected austerity measures and call for what they label as the "People's Budget" ahead of the Finance Minister's announcement of the 2025-2026 budget at 14:00 on February 19.

LOCATIONS OF SLATED PROTESTS IN CAPE TOWN ON FEBRUARY 18-19



Source: [COSATU statement](#)

Assessments & Forecast

1. This comes amid heightened tensions ahead of the government's announcement of the planned budget for the upcoming fiscal year. This also comes after COSATU recently issued a statement rejecting any possible increase in taxes imposed on the working class, demanding the government increase the economy to three percent growth. The planned gatherings and the participation of multiple and prominent trade unions and civil society groups underscore their frustration with the government. The deliberate planning of protests in parallel to the finance minister's speech is likely intended to draw bolstered political and media attention.
2. **FORECAST:** Given heightened frustrations and the mobilization capabilities of the organizers, the protests will likely be well attended with participation ranging in the mid-to-high hundreds of protesters. Given the sensitive nature of the upcoming budget announcement and the planned protests in central locations, a bolstered security presence is expected around St George's Cathedral and along Hanover Street to monitor the proceedings. The precedent suggests that the protests are expected to transpire peacefully. However, there remains a latent potential for some participants to engage in acts of unrest considering the elevated frustrations associated with the protests' agenda. In such cases, the security forces would utilize forcible measures of dispersal. Traffic disruptions should be expected in the vicinity of both protest activities.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Cape Town on February 18 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of St George's Cathedral during the evening hours due to the planned gathering.
2. Those operating or residing in Cape Town on February 19 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and along Hanover Street during the late morning hours due to the planned protest.

