

### ECONOMIC COMMENTARY - DR. FRANCOIS STOFBERG

#### 2026 Budget: A little relief, a lot of responsibility

The most important number in this year's Budget is R21.3 billion, representing the upward revision of gross tax revenue compared to 2025's estimate. It is also the number that bought Treasury room to withdraw the previously pencilled-in R20 billion tax increase, restore inflation relief, and present a Budget that feels less punitive than many feared. That is not the same as saying that South Africa (SA) suddenly has fiscal abundance. It means that Treasury got a temporary revenue cushion and chose to use it to steady the mood.

For households, the Budget matters immediately. After two years without full inflationary relief, bracket creep is no longer doing all the work for the South African Revenue Service. The tax-free annual investment limit rises from R36 000 to R46 000, and the retirement fund deduction cap increases from R350 000 to R430 000. These are sensible signals: Save more, build resilience, and rely less on the state. But investors should not confuse tax relief with higher real prosperity. Relief from fiscal drag helps cash flow; it does not create income growth.

And the Budget quietly claws some of that relief back. The General Fuel Levy rises by 9 cents a litre for petrol and 8 cents for diesel. On top of that, the Carbon Fuel Levy and Road Accident Fund Levy also rise. Tobacco and alcohol excise duties go up, too. In practice, this means that many households will 'feel' the Budget less through their tax tables and more through transport costs, distribution costs, and the slow spread of higher living expenses. That is the real story for households: Not a fiscal gift, but a slightly softer squeeze.

For small businesses, the most practical move may be the increase in the compulsory value-added tax registration threshold from R1 million to R2.3 million. This is meaningful: It reduces compliance pressure on smaller firms, preserves working capital, and removes a layer of admin. It may not create a boom, but it could improve survival at the margin: And, in SA, margins are where many businesses live or die.

At a national level, the Budget is clearly about stabilisation, not escape velocity. Treasury projects real gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 1.6% in 2026, with growth averaging 1.8% over the medium term. The consolidated Budget deficit narrows to 4.5% of GDP in 2025/2026, while gross debt stabilises at 78.9% of GDP before easing. Treasury also plans to table a principles-based fiscal anchor in the Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement. These are all good signs. But they do not change the deeper reality: SA is still trying to become fiscally safer faster than it is becoming economically stronger.

The real limit remains growth. Debt-service costs still rise in nominal terms to R420.6 billion in 2026, and they absorb 21.3% of main Budget revenue in 2025/2026 before gradually declining. That is the hidden tax in this Budget: The cost of old mistakes. Every rand spent servicing debt is a rand not spent fixing municipalities, expanding productive infrastructure, or strengthening the state's capacity where it actually matters. Fiscal credibility has improved, yes, but fiscal freedom has not.

Government is also still heavily redistributive: The social wage remains more than 60% of non-interest spending. That protects the floor under society, and rightly so. But it also tells investors something uncomfortable: This Budget is better at preventing deterioration than generating lift.

Economist Dawie Roodt captured the mood well when he said that SA is "probably not going to get poorer, but certainly will not be getting richer". And that is the real verdict on the 2026 Budget: It lowers the risk of a fiscal accident. It gives households and businesses a bit more breathing room. Subtly, it also reinforces a core financial well-being truth: Resilience will still have to be built largely at the household and business levels, not outsourced to Treasury. For investors, this is a Budget to respect, not celebrate. It improves the base case. It does not yet change the long-term one.

#### IN CLOSING

Attached, please find our latest update on global indices, currencies, and commodities, as provided by Efficient Private Clients.

Kind regards  
**Marius du Toit**  
 Managing Executive: Efficient Benefit Consulting



## YOUR MONTHLY ECONOMIC UPDATE

5 March 2026

t: 021 007 1550 | t: 087 944 7999  
 e: info@efcorporate.co.za

Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd is an authorised financial services provider, FSP 48026.

**For every one to attain financial well-being**



### UPDATE

Global Indices, Currencies and Commodities, 5 March 2026

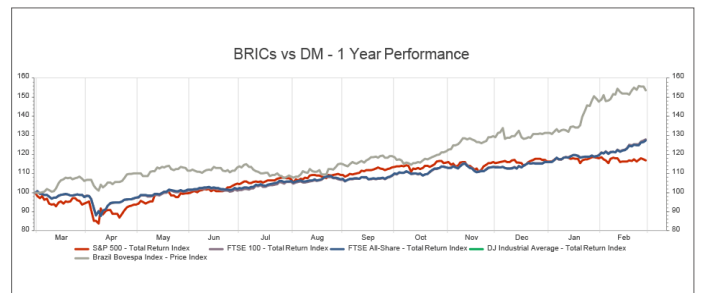
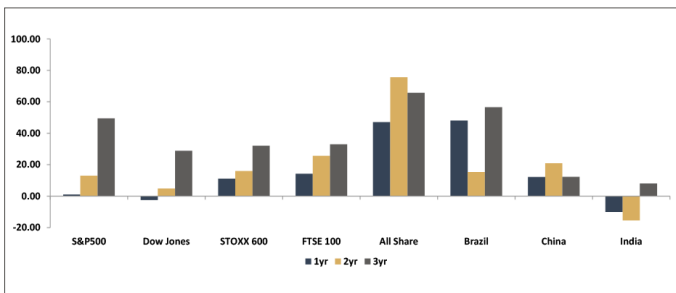
#### GLOBAL INDICES

South Africa	Close	1M %	1 Year %	2Y Ann %	5Y Ann %
All Share	128455.68	4.1%	47%	33%	14%
Top 40	120296.28	4.0%	51%	34%	15%
Mid Cap	126711.09	2.2%	46%	29%	13%
Small Cap	114600.88	3.5%	30%	26%	18%
Resource 20	158709.7	6.6%	168%	78%	19%
Industrial 25	132835.67	-2.0%	6%	14%	9%
Financial 15	27493.07	7.3%	34%	26%	18%

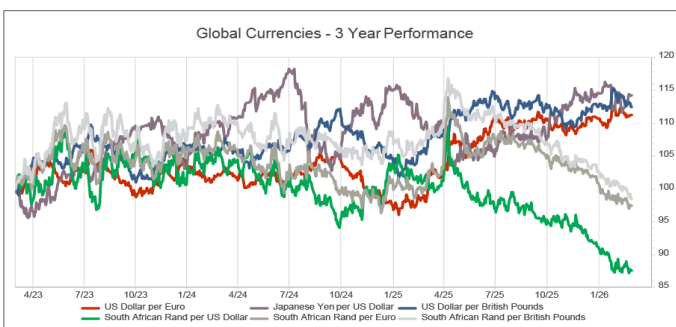
Europe	Close	1M %	1 Year %	2Y Ann %	5Y Ann %
FTSE 100	10910.55	6.9%	25%	19%	11%
DAX 30	25284.26	1.6%	12%	20%	13%
CAC 40	8580.75	5.2%	6%	4%	9%
STOXX 600	633.85	3.4%	14%	13%	9%

Asia	Close	1M %	1 Year %	2Y Ann %	5Y Ann %
Nikkei 225	58850.27	10.3%	54%	22%	15%
Hang Seng	26630.54	-1.8%	12%	26%	-2%
Shanghai	4162.8813	0.6%	23%	17%	3%
India SENSEX	81287.19	-0.7%	9%	5%	11%

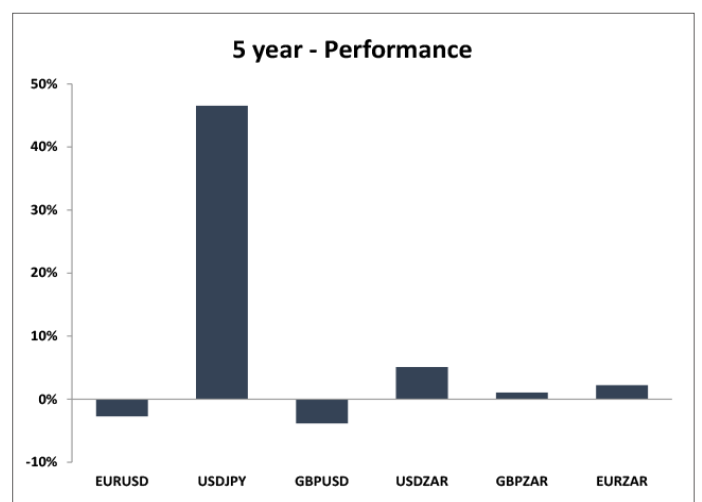
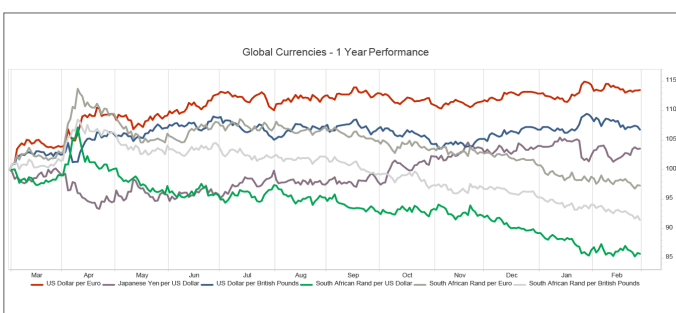
Americas	Close	1M %	1 Year %	2Y Ann %	5Y Ann %
Dow Jones	48977.92	-0.1%	13%	12%	10%
S&P 500	6878.88	-1.4%	17%	16%	13%
Nasdaq	22668.213	-4.8%	22%	19%	11%
Brazil Bovespa	188786.98	3.8%	51%	20%	11%



#### CURRENCIES

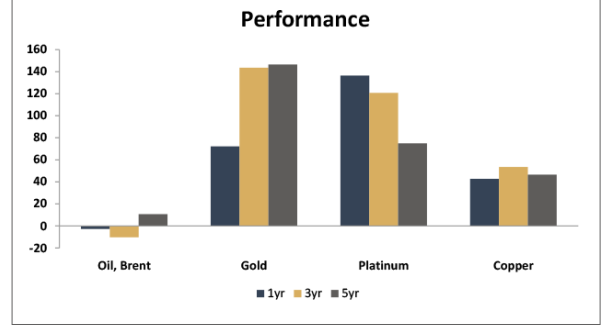
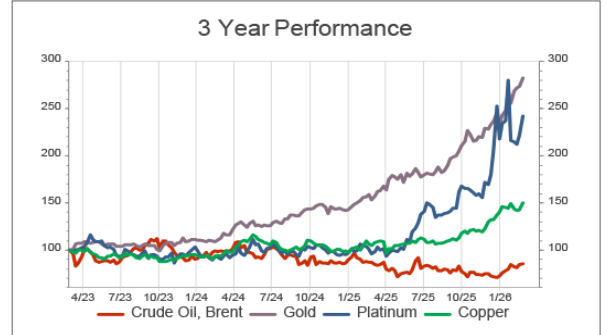
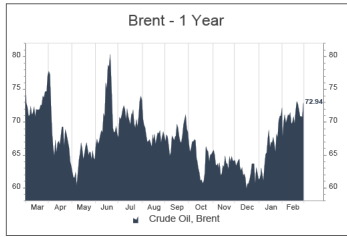
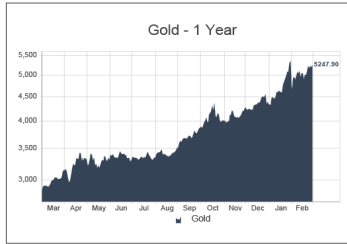


Currencies	Close	1M %	1 Year %	2Y Ann %	5Y Ann %
USD/ZAR	15.92	-1.3%	-14%	-9%	1%
GBP/ZAR	21.40	-2.6%	-8%	-6%	0%
EUR/ZAR	18.79	-1.2%	-3%	-5%	1%
AUD/ZAR	11.34	1.3%	-2%	-5%	-1%
EUR/USD	1.18	0.1%	14%	4%	0%
USD/JPY	156.13	0.3%	4%	2%	8%



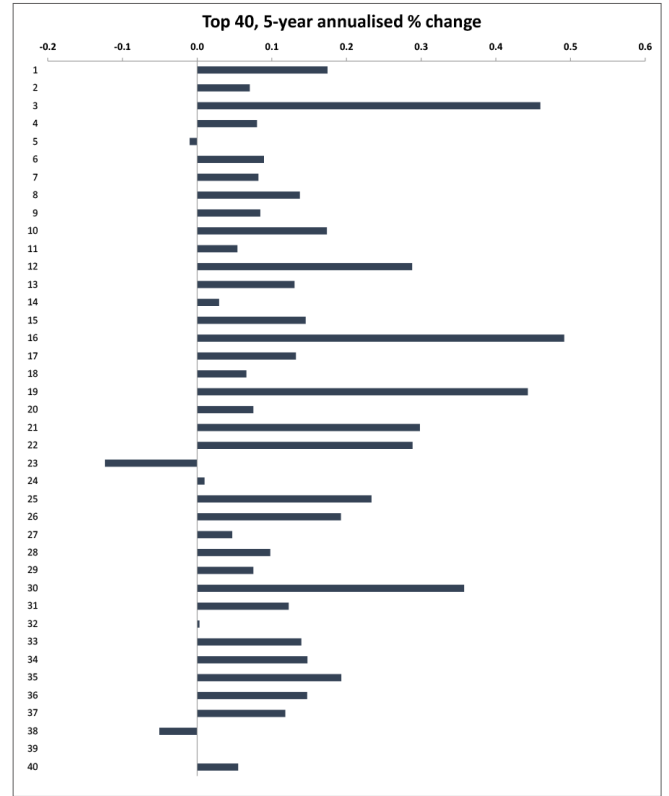
#### COMMODITIES

Commodities	Close	1M %	1 Year %	2Y Ann %	5Y Ann %
Gold	5247.90	2.5%	72%	52%	15%
Platinum	2373.50	-6.5%	136%	55%	9%
Silver	93.29	-12.6%	176%	92%	17%
Brent Crude	72.94	3.8%	-3%	-7%	-1%
Copper	13439.50	3.5%	43%	27%	6%



#### TOP 40

Top 40		Close	1M %	1 Year %	2Y Ann %	5Y Ann %
1	ABSA GROUP LTD	271.30	6.4%	43%	28%	17%
2	ANGLO AMERICAN PLC	799.12	5.9%	48%	38%	7%
3	ANGLO GOLD ASHANTI	2007.89	19.5%	267%	137%	46%
4	ANHEUSER-BUSCH INBEV	1288.20	15.1%	17%	4%	8%
5	ASPEN	135.41	20.7%	-18%	-16%	-1%
6	BHP Group Limited	652.24	18.7%	42%	9%	9%
7	BID CORP LTD	420.14	4.0%	-9%	-3%	8%
8	BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO PLC	996.00	4.5%	40%	32%	14%
9	BIDVEST GROUP LIMITED	252.49	7.3%	2%	4%	8%
10	COMPAGNIE FINANCIERE	3256.72	2.3%	-12%	5%	17%
11	CLICKS GROUP	318.21	-1.3%	-9%	3%	5%
12	CAPITEC	4743.54	7.8%	52%	54%	29%
13	DISCOVERY	261.36	13.7%	25%	39%	13%
14	EXXARO RESOURCES LTD	197.80	5.0%	26%	4%	3%
15	FIRSTRAND	99.19	6.7%	39%	23%	15%
16	GOLDFIELDS LTD	928.47	7.6%	174%	96%	49%
17	GLENCORE PLC	114.50	4.0%	54%	13%	13%
18	GROWTHPOINT	18.81	8.0%	46%	26%	7%
19	HARMONY GOLD MINING	358.83	-3.8%	90%	82%	44%
20	IMPLATS	353.67	-1.5%	286%	130%	8%
21	INVLTD	136.88	3.7%	13%	7%	30%
22	INVESTEC	137.51	3.3%	13%	7%	29%
23	MONDI PLC	188.90	-3.6%	-33%	-25%	-12%
24	MR PRICE GROUP LTD	183.19	6.7%	-24%	4%	1%
25	MTN GROUP	207.57	13.4%	77%	52%	23%
26	NEDBANK	315.00	20.5%	13%	20%	19%
27	NASPERS -N	885.28	-14.7%	-4%	17%	5%
28	NEPI ROCKCASTLE PLC	148.04	1.2%	8%	5%	10%
29	OLD MUTUAL LTD	16.54	8.5%	28%	18%	8%
30	OUTSURANCE	73.47	5.2%	4%	33%	36%
31	PEPKOR HOLDINGS LTD	26.60	0.8%	3%	19%	12%
32	PROSUS NV	822.00	-14.5%	0%	19%	0%
33	REMGRO	193.89	6.3%	32%	15%	14%
34	REINET INVESTMENTS SCA	562.75	-0.2%	22%	7%	15%
35	STANBANK	321.33	7.1%	45%	25%	19%
36	SHOPRITE	264.52	-0.4%	-4%	1%	15%
37	SANLAM	106.18	2.4%	20%	22%	12%
38	SASOL	145.31	27.5%	71%	-1%	-5%
39	Sibanye Stillwater Ltd	70.00	-10.0%	380%	87%	0%
40	VODACOM GROUP LIMITED	162.74	7.3%	37%	32%	5%



Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd is an authorised financial services provider, FSP 48026.

**Disclaimer:** This material is not suitable for retail clients. It is for professional investors and financial advisors only. Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd defines 'professional investors' as those (e.g. investment managers, trustees, and financial intermediaries) who have the appropriate expertise and knowledge with regards to investment markets and current strategies. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the content, Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd accepts no liability in respect of any errors or omissions contained herein. The forecasts stated in this content, if any, are the result of statistical modelling, based on some assumptions. Forecasts are subject to a high level of uncertainty regarding future economic and market factors that may affect actual future performance. The forecasts are provided for information purposes as at the publish date of this content. Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd assumes no obligation to provide updates or changes to this data as assumptions, economic and market conditions, models or other matters, change. The data contained in this content has been sourced by several investment managers and research professionals trusted by Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd. The content cannot be construed as financial advice and do not confer any rights whatsoever, enforceable against any party and do not replace any legal contract or policy which may be subject to terms and conditions. Past performance is no guarantee of future performance. Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd retains the right to amend any information at any time and without prior notice. Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd, its affiliates and individuals associated with it, may (in various capacities) have positions or deal in securities (or related derivative securities), financial products or investments, identical or similar to the products and securities stated, but do not hold material positions, nor seek to profit from the report. Should a conflict of interest between your interests and those of Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd be identified, Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd will use reasonable endeavours to disclose such conflict, together with details of any measures taken to avoid or mitigate the conflict situation. Such disclosure will include, but not be limited to, details of any ownership or financial interest (apart from those considered immaterial) that Efficient Corporate Solutions (Pty) Ltd may have or may become eligible for. Such disclosure will be made in sufficient detail for there to be a reasonable understanding of the nature of the relationship or interest and the resulting conflict of interest.