

MEDIA RELEASE

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Africa Aerospace & Defence 2024 is officially launched.

Dr Phillip Dexter, chairman of Armscor, lead partner for South Africa's Africa Aerospace & Defence exhibition, yesterday (12 September 2023) in London officially launched the 12th edition of AAD2024.

Speaking to a gathering of industry, military, and diplomatic guests on the South African national pavilion in the ExCel Centre in London, he said the exhibition will be hosted from 18 to 24 September 2024, once again at AFB Waterkloof in Pretoria.

"In our considered view, the exhibition theme, exploring new paths, sharing solutions, showcasing innovation and capabilities, expresses the vision for all our valued participants and encompasses a plethora of possibilities for all," he said. "Bear in mind such possibilities as presented by our special innovation hubs: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), Space, General Aviation, Energy."

Dexter said a subject gaining importance, not only in the military but also in government, corporates, academia, financial institutions, and civil society, was Cyber Security. This is critical due to the deleterious impact of malicious hacking, to which could be added Artificial Intelligence (AI) that was revolutionising much of how we go about our daily lives.

Armscor as lead partner aims to bring together a record number of local and international exhibitors. Many of them have already approached the organisers to accommodate them in a national pavilion.

The entity was also inviting greater numbers of foreign delegations that would include defence ministers and chiefs of the various arms of the military.

"In fact, we have received positive responses to our initial approaches, which augurs well for attendance and the ultimate success of AAD2024," Dexter said.

He noted that in September 2022 the revived AAD event, held at its usual base of AFB Waterkloof in Pretoria, proved a success, albeit with slightly reduced numbers.

"That was only to be expected, considering the global lockdown lasting many months that ravaged the entire world, and which prompted us to cancel AAD2020. But that is now behind us; we cast our eyes ahead for better times and are now focusing on our rebound."

He said the world is now in a different space: the global aviation industry, and indeed the defence industries of the world, were on an upward trajectory.

Dexter said it was incumbent on all nations to seek peace and security. Only in peaceful and secure circumstances can countries develop optimally to ensure progress and advancement of their people.

“This is the philosophy that undergirds South Africa’s stance on the world stage. And it is the philosophy upon which we as AAD are building the upcoming event,” he stated.

He said attention was also focused on conferences and seminars, as well as capability demonstrations, which afforded visitors and delegations a first-hand opportunity to see some of the equipment in action. Capability demonstrations and the live aerial displays have become very popular, especially for public visitors who attend the show in numbers over the weekend after the three trade days.

“Let me be clear, for next year’s event we aim to generally surpass the 2022 attendance figures and exhibitor numbers. AAD2024 is reaching new heights,” Dexter concluded.

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