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## AFRICA AEROSPACE AND DEFENCE REASSURES PARTICIPANTS: EXHIBITION WILL PROCEED AS PLANNED DESPITE MPOX PANDEMIC

The highly anticipated Africa Aerospace and Defence (AAD) Expo and Air Show which, takes place from 18-22 September 2024, is under no threat from the Mpox situation, according to the organisers of the event.

Mpox, formerly known as Monkeypox, has seen a resurgence in South Africa in 2024 after no reported cases in 2023. As of August 18, 2024, South Africa has recorded 24 cases, including three fatalities, 19 recoveries, and only two active cases currently undergoing home isolation. While the numbers are low, the re-emergence of Mpox underscores the importance of continued vigilance.

### Public Health Response:

The South African National Department of Health, in collaboration with international organisations such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), has taken robust measures to contain and manage the virus. These measures include enhanced testing, isolation protocols, and community engagement efforts to educate the public and reduce stigma

“Currently, there is no indication that the Mpox virus will significantly impact or pose a direct threat to the upcoming AAD Expo. The low number of active cases and the high recovery rate indicate that the situation is under control. We are closely monitoring developments to ensure the safety of all participants,” says Nakedi Phasha, the AAD Exhibition Director.

### Reassurance to Our Exhibitors and Public:

We want to emphasize that there is no need to panic. South African health authorities have effectively managed similar outbreaks in the past and continue to employ effective strategies, such as isolation, contact tracing, and appropriate medical treatment, to contain the virus. By following public health advice and maintaining awareness, the risk of a broader outbreak remains low.

We are committed to ensuring a safe and successful event for everyone involved. The AAD Expo 2024 will proceed with all necessary precautions in place, and we are confident that, with your cooperation, we can enjoy a productive and memorable experience.

Typically, Mpox presents with a range of symptoms that can vary in severity. The symptoms often appear within 7 to 14 days after exposure but can take up to 21 days to manifest.

“If you notice symptoms such as fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, swollen lymph nodes, and especially the characteristic rash associated with Mpox, it is crucial to isolate yourself immediately and seek medical attention for a proper diagnosis. Early isolation and treatment are key to preventing the spread of the virus and ensuring your health and safety,” said the Department of Health.

The department has also urged people who experience any of the Mpox symptoms, with or without international travel history to present themselves to a health facility for clinical observation and confine themselves to one place until their test results are available.

To address the Mpox outbreak in Africa, Africa CDC has set up a 25-member Incident Management Team based at the epicenter of the Mpox epidemic with mandate to support affected and at-risk countries. Africa CDC has also signed a partnership agreement with the European Commission’s Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA) and Bavarian Nordic to provide over 215,000 doses of the MVA-BN® vaccine—the only FDA and EMA-approved Mpox vaccine. Africa CDC will oversee the equitable distribution of these vaccines, prioritising local needs across the affected Member States.

**Affected Areas:**

This virus has affected various countries primarily in Africa, but outbreaks have also occurred in other regions. As of the latest updates, countries with reported cases include Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Nigeria, Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leon, United States, United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Canada, Australia, Germany and France

**For Media enquiries contact;**

Takalani Chipane

Marketing and Communications Manager

Mobile: +27 84 840 3215

Email: [marketingcomms@aadexpo.co.za](mailto:marketingcomms@aadexpo.co.za)

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### **About AAD**

*The Africa Aerospace and Defence (AAD) is an important event in the calendar of the defence industry. Hosted biannually, AAD is the only and largest aerospace and defence Exhibition and Air Show on the African continent. The event holds a flagship status in South Africa's, and indeed the Continent's, defence industry's calendar. The trade show has continued to grow with each edition and will once again bring together some of the world's major industry players to showcase the latest technological innovations in aviation, aerospace and defence industries as well as stage a platform to engage in dialogue and discourse on international defence, aerospace and other related best practices.*