

**MEDIA RELEASE
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**SOUTH AFRICA'S PREMIER AFRICAN AEROSPACE DEFENCE AND TRADE
EXHIBITION 2024 SET TO EMPOWER YOUTHS FROM MARGINALISED
COMMUNITIES**

The African Aerospace and Defence (AAD) trade exhibition and air show taking place from 18 to 22 September 2024 at the Air Force Base in Waterkloof, in the City of Tshwane is set to empower the youth through technology used in the defence sector.

Through its Youth Development Programme (YDP) - one of the unique and critical pillars – AAD, seeks to empower youths from disadvantaged and marginalised communities in the areas of Mathematics, Science and Technology.

According to the Chairperson of the Youth Empowerment Programme (YDP), Mr Kholisile Khumalo, the expo offers South African youth various opportunities, including job creation and being in the inside of an aircraft for the first time in their lives. He believes that based on the planning, this year's shows would live up to the theme: **“Exploring New Paths, Sharing Solutions and Showcasing Innovation and Capabilities.”**

“The defence sector plays a critical role as a catalyst in reducing youth unemployment in the country. It is important that AAD has support from all countries in the world and the continent, including all provinces, government departments, municipalities in the country,” said Khumalo.

Khumalo added that in 2022, AAD hosted over 9,000 learners through its YDP Initiative and during this year's event, about 12,000 learners from all nine provinces are expected to attend so that they benefit from this impactful and empowering programme.

He expressed appreciation to the defence industries and embassies operating in South Africa for contributing to job creation and providing opportunities for young people to study in their respective countries.

The 12th edition of the biennial trade exhibition and air show is hosted by AAD, in collaboration with the Aerospace Maritime and Defence Industry Association (AMD), the Armaments Corporation of South Africa (Armcor), Commercial Aviation Association of Southern Africa (CAASA), and the Department of Defence and Military Veterans.



The event will be officially opened by the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Angie Motshekga on September 18, 2024.

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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.

