

## Media Release For Immediate Release

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### SA ASSURES COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN THE 2024 AEROSPACE DEFENCE AND TRADE EXHIBITION OF A BIGGER AND BETTER SHOW

The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the Africa Aerospace and Defence (AAD) trade exhibition is set to be the biggest and better show when it kicks-off between 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 at Air Force Waterkloof in Centurion, Pretoria with more than twenty countries participation in this year's showpiece.

Briefing military attaches from different countries participating at the exhibition about the state of readiness on Wednesday, AAD Executive Committee Chairperson, Ms Segomotso Tire, assured participating countries, exhibitors and the public that the show will be bigger and better.

"This 12<sup>th</sup> edition of AAD couldn't have come at a better time as it coincides with South Africa's 30 years of democracy. It also underscores the importance of government-to-government collaboration," Tire assured delegates from countries such as Kenya, Botswana, Senegal, Morocco, Senegal, South Korea, China, United Arab Emirates, Türkiye, Singapore, Armenia, India, Pakistan, Soumi (Finland), Germany, Czech Republic, France, Netherlands, Italy, Albania, Russia, Belgium, USA, Canada and Brazil.

She briefed the attaches that 87 percent of the invited delegates have confirmed their attendance. They include Ministers of Defence, Deputy Ministers, Secretaries of Defence, Chiefs of Defence, Chiefs of Air Armies, Chiefs of Air Forces, Chiefs of Navies and Surgeon Generals.

Another initiative feature of the AAD exhibition is its Youth Development Programme (YDP). This sees youth from disadvantaged and marginalised communities exposed to opportunities in science and technology disciplines and related career opportunities.

Tire urged the military attaches present to encourage their businesses in their home countries to take the existing exhibition space.

The Chairperson of the YDP, Mr Kholisile Khumalo acknowledged the positive role of the foreign missions in South Africa in youth development and contributing to the country's economy.

"In the midst of high unemployment rate in South Africa, the embassies are giving hope to our youth by creating training and mentorship opportunities in their home

countries, especially in the fields such as engineering. Not only do they train them, but they hold their hands while they are finding their feet in these critical fields,” said Khumalo.

He implored foreign missions and consulates to continue investing in South Africa’s education, especially on Math and Science.

In 2022, AAD hosted over 9,000 learners through its YDP initiative and this year’s event more than 12,000 learners across all nine provinces are expected to descend on the base to benefit from this impactful programme.

The show has an enormous impact on the country’s economy with more than 1 350 jobs created during the duration of the exhibition, with international visitors contributing over R135 million to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while public and trade visitors generated a staggering R150 million in revenue and with R65 million of taxation revenue.

## ENDS

### **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.*

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