

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **High-speed satellite broadband internet extends COVID-19 vaccination rollout to rural, underserved communities in Mpumalanga province**

Mbombela, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa – A bold socio-economic development partnership between Eutelsat Communications (“Eutelsat”), the largest satellite communications operator in Africa, and Aspen Pharmacare (“Aspen”), South Africa’s largest pharmaceutical company, is accelerating the Mpumalanga Department of Health’s COVID-19 vaccination drive in the eastern province’s predominantly-rural municipalities.

Eutelsat this week commenced the rollout of high-speed broadband internet access at thirteen vaccination centres located in the underserved communities. Co-funded by the two multinational companies, Eutelsat’s Konnect satellite broadband connects DoH’s electronic vaccination data system (“EVDS”) which pre-registers, admits and discharges vaccination clients at the vaccination centre.

Konnect’s ubiquitous coverage of South Africa helps extend the EVDS-enabled vaccine rollout to rural-resident senior citizens and people living with comorbidities, who are current target recipients of the government vaccines. This close proximity eliminates arduous and costly trips to and from the urban-based vaccination centres – often up to 50 kilometres away.

Local clinical professionals have welcomed the satellite-connected EVDS system in the rural municipalities as a potential accelerator of the nascent vaccine drive. Approximately 70 percent of the Mpumalanga province’s 4.4 million people live in underprivileged and underserved communities. Only 1.7 percent of rural households in Mpumalanga have access to the internet, according to Statistics South Africa’s General Household Survey 2020.

“This initiative presents another arrow in the quiver of Government to fight the COVID pandemic and to assist in saving lives. The initiative is highly consistent with Aspen’s ongoing commitment to supporting local efforts that mitigate the impact of the pandemic and assist in ensuring safe and sustainable communities,” said Stavros Nicolaou, Aspen Senior Executive: Strategic Trade.

“Through this partnership with DoH and Eutelsat, we are bringing a novel solution to health challenges using cutting edge technology. Connecting rural vaccination centres will reduce the burden, freeing up much-needed public resources into other critical functions,” added Mr Nicolaou.

Mr Michel Azibert, Deputy CEO of Eutelsat, met with Ms Dudu Mdluli, DoH’s Acting Head, to formally commence the rollout of the satellite broadband network. Mr Azibert’s delegation also

visited Rob Ferreira Hospital in the provincial capital of Mbombela, where COVID-19 vaccinations were in progress.

"We are optimistic about the long-term potential of South Africa and, for that matter, Africa. The success of South Africa against the pandemic is our own success," said Mr Azibert. "We are honoured to play a modest role by leveraging our company's global satellite resources and reach to enhance the rural penetration of the vaccination programme," he added. Mr Azibert was part of French President Emmanuel Macron's delegation during the recent state visit to South Africa aimed at further strengthening cooperation between the two countries.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, Konnect – by far the largest and most powerful satellite over Africa – is rolling out 4G-equivalent public and enterprise services. Fifty percent of the satellite's capacity is dedicated to 40 African countries.

#### **About Aspen**

Headquartered in Durban, South Africa, Aspen is a leading global specialty and branded multinational pharmaceutical company in both emerging and developed markets.

With an acknowledged presence of more than two decades in the pharmaceutical sector, Aspen improves the health of patients in more than 150 countries through its high quality, affordable and effective healthcare solutions. The Group's key business segments are Manufacturing and Commercial Pharmaceuticals comprising Regional Brands and Sterile Focus Brands that include Anaesthetics and Thrombosis products.

Aspen employs approximately 9 800 people and has 70 established business operations in over 50 countries. The Group operates 23 manufacturing facilities across 15 sites and holds international manufacturing approvals from some of the most stringent global regulatory agencies. Its manufacturing capabilities are scalable to demand and cover a wide variety of product-types including steriles, oral solid dose, liquids, semi-solids, biologicals and active pharmaceutical ingredients. For more information visit [www.aspenpharma.com](http://www.aspenpharma.com)

#### **About Eutelsat Communications**

Founded in 1977, Eutelsat Communications is one of the world's leading satellite operators. With a global fleet of satellites and associated ground infrastructure, Eutelsat enables clients across Video, Data, Government, Fixed and Mobile Broadband markets to communicate effectively to their customers, irrespective of their location. Over 6 600 television channels operated by leading media groups are broadcast by Eutelsat to one billion viewers equipped for DTH reception or connected to terrestrial networks.

Headquartered in Paris, with offices and teleports around the globe, Eutelsat assembles 1,200 men and women from 50 countries who are dedicated to delivering the highest quality of service.

Eutelsat Communications is listed on the Euronext Paris Stock Exchange (ticker: ETL). For more information visit [www.eutelsat.com](http://www.eutelsat.com)

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