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Mme Rozen Noguellou
Présidente du Conseil Supérieur de l'Agence France-Presse
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Madame President,

In accordance with article 5 of Loi n° 57-32 du 10 janvier 1957 portant statut de l'Agence France-Presse, SUD-AFP hereby addresses this saisine to the Higher Council, which under article 3 is charged with ensuring that AFP respects its obligations under Article 2.

SUMMARY

SUD-AFP believes that the fact-checking service that AFP provides for TikTok is not an editorial product and not part of AFP's core mission as defined by Articles 1 and 2 of its statute. As the activity is not part of AFP's core mission it should be carried out by a subsidiary in accordance with Article 13. The fact this activity is being carried out by the parent company poses risks to AFP's reputation for objectivity.

WHAT ARE TIKTOK FACT-CHECKS?

Under its contract with TikTok, the social media platform sends to AFP videos that may contain misinformation. An AFP fact-checker watches the video, identifies the potential misinformation, and then fact-checks the claims. The fact-checker then writes a brief summary of the claims made in the video and whether they are true or false. This is accompanied by several links to information (sometimes AFP stories) proving or disproving the claim. Finally, a rating is applied, such as: Misinformation, Unconfirmed/Disputed, Not Misinformation, or Opinion/Humor under the old system and False, Misleading, Unsubstantiated, Inconclusive, True or Out of Scope under the new system. In certain parts of the world, in the Asia-Pacific region in particular, these are entered directly by the fact-checker into TikTok's system without being checked by another fact-checker or editor.

Here is how management recently described TikTok fact-checks in response to a question by SUD-AFP:

If content that potentially conveys disinformation is detected, TikTok teams submit it to our journalists who conduct an independent assessment. If it is confirmed that a content is false, manipulated, or misleading, all the necessary information and evidence is transmitted to the social network – as in any fact-check that we publish....

Although they do not systematically result in the publication of a fact-check, this gives us a broad vision of the type of disinformation and the different fake news that circulate on the platform...¹

With this statement, management implicitly confirms that these fact-checks are not published in this form to other clients and are in fact produced on demand for TikTok.

To our knowledge, only a small number serve as the starting point for traditional fact-checks that are sent to clients or published on our own public fact-check website [AFP Fact Check](#).

These TikTok fact-checks are very different from our “traditional fact-checks”, or what management now likes to call digital investigations. Here is how these are described in the 2024-2028 Aims and Means Contract (Contrat d’objectifs et moyens or COM):

The work of digital investigative journalists consists of detecting and analyzing dubious, misleading or false information circulating online. This is real journalistic work that focuses on the facts, retraces all the stages of the investigation in an educational way, relies on several independent and identified sources to arrive at a conclusion, and places the information in its context....

Clients can subscribe to fact-checking articles in the same way they subscribe to the traditional AFP dispatch feed. But unlike the latter, all “Digital Investigation” production is accessible to the general public via dedicated websites, and the fact-checks are published directly on the platforms, in the languages of disinformation.²

Two examples of TikTok fact-checks are provided in the annex, on pages 10 and 11. An AFP Fact Check is provided on page 12. AFP’s Fact-Checking Stylebook explains why fact-checks have a longer format – longer than stories on the wire:

Readers should be able to understand how it was done and even follow the same steps themselves.... We should write clearly and concisely, but at the same time our fact-checks must be complete, so do not miss out important elements of your investigations to save two or three paragraphs of length. Also, context must be fully explained.³

Another important difference resides in the choice of subjects to verify. The document L’investigation numérique à l’AFP is very clear that when it comes to traditional fact-checks it is AFP journalists that decide.

The choice to cover this or that topic is the sole initiative of AFP journalists.⁴

ARE TIKTOK FACT-CHECKS AN EDITORIAL PRODUCT?

This is an important question because this determines (or should determine) whether the content must meet our editorial guidelines. SUD-AFP recently asked precisely this question and management unequivocally replied yes:

¹ RIC May 2024, question 13. Our translation.

² Page 18. Our translation.

³ Pages 7-8.

⁴ L’investigation numérique à l’AFP. Septembre 2023. Page 7. Our translation.

The services provided to TikTok meet the same quality standards as what is transmitted on the wire or published on our fact-checking sites in 26 languages. The editorial standards are the same as in our editorial and ethical guidelines and the AFP Fact-Checking Stylebook.”⁵

When we looked at AFP’s editorial Charter we didn’t find any mention that our work must be edited/reviewed before being sent to clients. So we asked management. Their response:

As mentioned, one of the cornerstones of the Agency’s work is that each piece of content should be proofread by an authorized person before it is validated. This point is so obvious to the Agency’s journalists that the absence of a clear reference to it in the Charter has gone unnoticed until now. This oversight will now be corrected.⁶

And so management updated the Editorial Charter in March 2024 which included this unequivocal statement:

All production must be checked by an editor before being sent to clients or published online.⁷

But according to fact-checkers we have spoken with, in the Asia-Pacific region these fact-checks are no longer verified by editors before being submitted to TikTok. They are submitted directly by fact-checkers. As the volume of fact-checks under our contract with TikTok rose it became difficult for editors to keep up. So a new workflow was adopted in 2023 that allowed fact-checkers to directly submit their work to TikTok. The increased volume also led AFP to hire a number of short-term, part-time staff to do fact-checks, who are paid on a per-piece basis. The lowest rate we found was the equivalent of roughly \$2.50 per fact-check. These fact-checkers are given a few hours of training when they are hired and then work under the supervision of an editor who checks their work before submission for one month. Then they begin to submit their work directly to TikTok.

This clearly puts the TikTok workflow out of compliance with our editorial standards. A senior editor told a fact-checker concerned about the new workflow: *“I understand your concern about quality, but this is not your concern....we are responsible for the quality....So we set [the quality level] with TikTok, we say, okay, the bar is here, it’s not here...”*

This clearly runs counter to management’s statement above and – if we consider TikTok fact-checks to be an editorial product, implies that AFP’s editorial management countenances in practice variable quality standards.

The 2024-2028 Aims and Means Contract (COM) between the French state and Agence France-Presse references AFP’s obligation under Article 2.2 of its Statute to provide “exact, impartial and trustworthy information”. In addition to noting that quality standards are enshrined in the Editorial Charter, the COM lists four areas in which the Agency must be exigent to ensure the fulfillment of the obligation to provide trustworthy information, including:

- *The quality of production and editorial processes ensuring the accuracy of transmitted information,⁸*

⁵ RIC May 2024, question 13. Our translation.

⁶ RIC November 2023, question 11. Our translation.

⁷ AFP editorial standards and best practices, page 5.

⁸ COM 2024-2028, Section 2.2.4, page 14. Our translation.

The TikTok workflow may help AFP maximize production (and therefore revenue as we are paid by the fact-check) but it does not correspond to our Editorial Charter or the requirements set out in our COM with the French state and our Statute. Of course, this wouldn't matter (so much) if TikTok fact-checks aren't editorial content.

ARE TIKTOK FACT-CHECKS JOURNALISM?

This is another way of approaching the question of whether TikTok fact-checks are an editorial product by trying to find an objective way of answering. If TikTok fact-checks don't meet the criteria of journalism, then they can't be an editorial product.

There is apparently quite a debate among our fact-checkers whether what they do is journalism or not.

Some say yes, as the work entails the fact-checking that we do in our reporting and it aligns with our core mission of providing "*impartial and trustworthy information*". Others believe what we are doing for TikTok is not journalism but content moderation. We believe the answer lies with one particular element in the definition of journalism: publication.

Unless mistaken, there is no definition in journalism in France's media law. The Journalist Card Commission doesn't have one on its website and AFP's statutes and charters don't have one either. The International Federation of Journalists *Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists* describes the obligations of journalists without really ever defining explicitly what journalism is.

We asked management whether it had a preferred definition of journalism, and it refused to answer.⁸ For the sake of argument, let's take one used by the Ethics Advisory Committee of The Canadian Association of Journalists:

*Journalism is an activity that includes (1) the pursuit of truth for its audiences, (2) an act of creation and dissemination, and (3) a particular set of methods*⁹

The fact-checks on our website clearly tick all the boxes. They aim to elucidate the truth, use a particular set of methods, and are indeed disseminated to various audiences. They involve creation in the writing of the fact-check and its presentation.

Now, let's consider the TikTok fact-checks. While they are conducted in the pursuit of truth, are they published? Management said they are not "*not systematically published*"¹⁰, but according to our information they are never published in this form (and we know nothing of how they are used by TikTok).

AFP's statute includes most of the elements in the Canadian Association of Journalists' definition of journalism. Article 1 sets out our mission to seek out the truth for our audience and to disseminate it to them:

⁹ https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://caj.ca/wp-content/uploads/caj_what_is_journalism_dec_2021.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwiA1N65h_KGAxVUVqQEHQv4CdkQFnoECCQQAQ&usq=AOvVaw1_i5CfAplV97dskc0JC93f If the CAJ's definition doesn't please, the 2019-2023 COM is full of references to providing clients a full information service. See sections 1.1.1 and 1.2.

¹⁰ RIC May 2024, question 13.

1. *To seek out, in France as well as abroad, the elements of a complete and objective information service;*
2. *To place that information at the disposal of users in exchange for payment.*

Article 2 sets out requirements that can be considered methodology, particularly independence from outside influence, a worldwide presence and uninterrupted service:

1. *Agence France-Presse may under no circumstances take account of influences or considerations liable to compromise the exactitude or the objectivity of the information it provides; it may under no circumstances fall under the control, either de facto or de jure, of any ideological, political or economic grouping;*
2. *Agence France-Presse must, to the full extent that its resources permit, develop and enhance its organisation so as to provide French and foreign users with exact, impartial and trustworthy information on a regular and uninterrupted basis;*
3. *Agence France-Presse must, to the full extent that its resources permit, ensure the existence of a network of facilities giving it the status of a worldwide information service.*

Concerning methodology, fact-checking is an essential tool in the journalistic toolkit. We need to do it in order to meet the obligation of providing *exact, impartial and trustworthy information*. Review by an editor is an essential element in a process to ensure the quality of information AFP provides, and our TikTok service clearly fails the obligation set in our mission. But even if they are reviewed by an editor, our TikTok fact-checks fail in being journalism in that they are not published, notwithstanding the fact they have elements of journalism and. Our TikTok service is clearly **content moderation**.¹¹ This then begs the questions: should AFP be carrying out such an activity and should it be doing so from the newsroom?

PRODUCTION ON DEMAND AND THE DELINEATION BETWEEN AFP AND SUBSIDIARIES

The question of whether content moderation should be done by AFP and whether it should be from the newsroom should not be considered solely from the angle of whether or not this activity aligns with our mission but must respect the practice of housing production on demand services in subsidiaries to avoid conflicts of interest and protect the impartiality of the Agency.

AFP's statute states our core mission is providing "*impartial and trustworthy information*" and the 2019-2023 COM noted that the December 2018 law on combating disinformation recognizes the public interest in the access to reliable information by the public.¹² Thus, it certainly could be said that helping remove potentially dangerous disinformation from social media aligns with AFP's core mission. But in SUD-AFP's view the fact these TikTok fact-checks are not disseminated puts them outside of AFP's public interest mission. Not only does

¹¹ Without using the phrase content moderation, our website in fact describes this activity: "*AFP... is paid by TikTok in several countries in Asia and Oceania, Europe, the Middle East and Spanish-speaking Latin America to verify for internal moderation videos that potentially contain false information. The videos are removed by TikTok if the information is shown to be false by AFP teams.*"

¹² COM 2019-2023, section 2.2 page 15. Our translation.

Article 1 insist upon dissemination, so does Article 2.2.5 of the 2024-2028 COM, which specifies that:

AFP must be organized in such a manner to distribute information widely and continuously...

It is clearly the intent of AFP's statute that the Agency's core mission is to provide our clients with news for publication, and not production on demand. It seems evident that services rendered upon request for a private client are not part of our public interest mission.

Article 13 of our statute, which was amended in 2015 following the EU's state aid probe, specifically allows AFP to pursue other activities, but specifies that they must be conducted in subsidiaries.

Those activities of Agence France-Presse which do not involve general interest missions as laid down in articles 1 and 2 above are treated separately in the accounts.

AFP's management recently reaffirmed this division in response to a union question on AFP's strategy of developing more business in the segment it calls "Companies and Institutions":

Companies and institutions are a category of customers today covered by two channels: our diversification subsidiaries on the one hand, and AFP on the other, which sells its "wire" to companies and institutions as it does for its media clients. This is what the sentence says, which uses the expression "core business" to show that it is a question of selling the AFP wire as opposed to the production on demand of the subsidiaries. This "core business" activity is indeed information, not communication.¹³

Mr. Fries also confirmed this during the July 2024 CSE meeting:

Représentant de Personnel – ... la production à la demande pour augmenter le chiffre d'affaires hors média se fera-t-elle toujours au travers de Factstory et des autres filiales ?

Fabrice FRIES – Oui, bien sûr, c'est très clair. Dès lors qu'il y a une production à la demande, c'est filialisé.¹⁴

The work we do for TikTok is clearly production on demand. It is TikTok who sends us the videos to be fact-checked¹⁵ and the completed fact-checks are provided to TikTok. They are not published in that form to any other client. It is not part of our "core business" of our news wires. The service we provide TikTok should therefore be done in a subsidiary to ensure that there is no possibility of the French state subsidizing TikTok and to guard against potential reputational risks.

¹³ RIC March 2024, question 4. Our translation.

¹⁴ Transcript of July 5, 2024 meeting of the CSE. Page 8. Our translation.

¹⁵ While it is possible for fact-checkers to propose fact-checks, the fact they are paid by the piece makes this unattractive. TikTok fact-checkers explained to SUD-AFP that in order to pitch a fact-check to editors they need to actually do the fact-check. Thus they need to do the work without any guarantee they will be paid. Furthermore, they indicated that editors were very responsive to pitches and that often they received no response at all.

AFP also does content moderation for Meta, which is also production on demand. This, however, is done via the Factstory subsidiary.

REPUTATIONAL RISKS

SUD-AFP believes that the lack of editorial control over our TikTok service combined with running it out of the newsroom creates potential reputational risks for AFP.

TikTok calls upon AFP and other news organizations to do fact-checking in its place as this shields it from accusations that it is biased in its content moderation. This is what happened in the United States to Twitter and Facebook and their supposed suppression of right-wing voices through fact-checking. Instead TikTok can (and does) point to the fact that determination of whether content is misinformation is in the hands of independent and impartial media organizations.¹⁶ TikTok is making use of our reputation for impartiality, integrity and independence.

The 2024-2028 COM recognized some of the dangers inherent in this for fact-checkers:

Fact-checking is seen by the most media-distrustful audiences as censorious, aggressive, and preachy (a feeling reinforced by using graphics such as “red cross” or “true/false”, and by messages from platforms in the event of moderation which sometimes cast fact-checkers in a bad light rather than taking responsibility for their moderation).¹⁷

Thus, when AFP does fact-checking and/or content moderation the Agency’s reputation is on the line. And our reputation is on the line when we defend TikTok’s reputation while getting paid by the platform. This isn’t just ensuring TikTok can pass muster with regulators on combating misinformation or angering some anti-vaxxers.

TikTok asked us to fact-check a video that claimed people should delete TikTok because China uses the app to spy on people (page 20). Clearly AFP has a financial conflict of interest that should prohibit it from fact-checking claims about TikTok similar to financial conflicts of interest that would require its journalists to withdraw from covering a story.¹⁸ Article 2 of our statute states that:

Agence France-Presse may under no circumstances take account of influences or considerations liable to compromise the exactitude or the objectivity of the information it provides; it may under no circumstances fall under the control, either de facto or de jure, of any ideological, political or economic grouping;

It is obvious that AFP hasn’t fallen under the control of TikTok and it would be hard to prove that TikTok influences our work. But appearances also matter. The Higher Council has previously recognized this in its February 2020 decision concerning AFP-Services (now Factstory), saying that the reputational risk posed by the work that the subsidiary conducts for firms is “*more linked to the appearance of impartiality of the Agency than to the actual impartiality of the information produced by its journalists.*”

¹⁶ <https://www.tiktok.com/transparency/en-us/combating-misinformation/>

¹⁷ Page 19. Our translation.

¹⁸ AFP Editorial Standards and Best Practices. Page 13.

In that case the Higher Council accepted the argument of management that it had put into place procedures to:

...regularly monitor the absence of conflicts of interest for its subsidiary, to avoid any form of confusion between its activities and those of AFP-Services and to ensure that no suspicion of the impartiality of the information can reasonably be based on the activities of AFP-Services.

Management subsequently acquiesced to a long-time demand by trade unions to change the name of AFP-Services to reduce the possibility of confusion between the activities of AFP and AFP-Services.

The Higher Council also made clear to management the importance of protecting the Agency's reputation.

It will be up to it, in the use of the control instruments with which it has equipped itself (in particular in decisions on contracts concluded by AFP-Services and decisions on the employment of AFP journalists), to demonstrate constant vigilance, not only with regard to the impartiality of the information it produces, but also with regard to the protection of its reputational capital.

The Higher Council has thus recognized the danger of appearances of conflicts of interest and the importance of putting into place procedures to avoid them. In the case of our TikTok service there appears to be severe shortcomings in the procedures (if indeed there are any in place) to avoid any conflicts of interest or appearances of conflicts of interests. The fact-checker who received a TikTok-China spying claims video said they had no instructions on how to handle claims involving TikTok.

The fact that the claim was labeled as opinion and decent context was provided should be of only limited consolation – it should not have been fact-checked at all and shows a failure of training and internal editorial controls. If this fact-check somehow became public it would be damaging to AFP's reputation of impartiality as the fact-checking operation is being done by the Agency directly. It would also likely put AFP in a delicate situation versus the French state, which doesn't allow public servants to install TikTok on their work phones.

This case may not be a daily occurrence, but it is not the only time TikTok has sent us videos that contain claims about it. It demonstrates the importance of why we shouldn't be doing content moderation directly under our own name, but under a separate subsidiary (if at all). We need the "ethical wall" – weak as it is – that a subsidiary provides to help insulate AFP's reputation. Management has on numerous occasions reassured trade unions that it regularly reviews the work of the subsidiary to ensure that it doesn't create any appearances of conflicts of interest with AFP's reporting.

Doing content moderation for TikTok out of a subsidiary would also help insulate the Agency from appearances of conflicts of interest from any fact-checks concerning businesses (clients in particular) and politicians. Fact-checkers said they had no instructions to flag any sensitive fact-checks to senior editors.

The TikTok contract raises questions about management's performance in avoiding possible conflicts of interest with commercial contracts: (1) it chose to conduct a production on demand

activity in AFP itself rather than in a subsidiary, (2) it hasn't set clear rules for TikTok fact-checkers on not rating assertions concerning TikTok, and (3) it doesn't have sufficient monitoring in place to ensure this doesn't happen (or worse, it knew and didn't care).

Equally disturbing is that at least two journalists who raised concerns about the weakened editorial standards for the TikTok fact-checks were subject to retaliation and forced out of the company.¹⁹

As management developed the current organization and has defended its utility, management cannot be trusted to carry out on its own a "reflection" and reorganize the activity. There is a need for the Higher Council to issue a clear ruling that – at a minimum – content moderation such as we do for TikTok is production on demand and insist that it be carried out in a subsidiary, as is the content moderation we do for Meta.

We also call on the Higher Council to insist that management demonstrate effective training and controls are in place to minimize reputational risks with our content moderation activities. Given that management is elaborating guidelines for charitable foundations sponsoring our journalism, it is not unreasonable to require management to put into place stronger controls over content moderation activities.

Finally, we call on the Higher Council to reaffirm that AFP must meet the quality and impartiality standards that it has been set and that the Agency itself cannot lower those for the sake of one client.

Paris, September 30, 2024

For the delegation SUD-AFP,

XXXX XXXX, délégué syndical

¹⁹ One fact-checker who was forced out had pointedly asked Phil Chetwynd during the 2023 global Q&A Teams session when fact-checkers could hope to get permanent contracts. When the new workflow was implemented he tried to ask if they would get additional pay for the additional responsibility of submitting fact-checks directly. The other fact-checker was disciplined after expressing misgivings about the submitting fact-checks directly to TikTok and was eventually forced out.

Example of TikTok fact-check (1)

Example TikTok fact-check (2)

Example of an AFP fact-check

<https://factuel.afp.com/doc.afp.com.36EV67N>

[Élections américaines 2024 Mpox Politique américaine](#)

Partager sur :



Non, ces images ne montrent pas une file d'attente liée à un dépistage du mpox

- Publié le 28 août 2024 à 10:22
-
- Lecture : 7 min
- Par : [Nahiara S. ALONSO](#), [AFP Etats-Unis](#), [AFP France](#)
- Traduction et adaptation : [Océane CAILLAT](#)

Le 14 août 2024, l'OMS a déclaré le statut d'urgence de santé publique de portée internationale concernant l'épidémie du virus mpox. Dans ce contexte, des internautes ont relayé sur les réseaux sociaux des images qu'ils présentent comme une file d'attente pour un dépistage du mpox aux Etats-Unis. Or, cette interprétation est fautive puisque ces images montrent en réalité des personnes qui patientent pour assister à un événement électoral de Tim Walz, le colistier de Kamala Harris dans le Nebraska.

"Longues files d'attente pour les tests de monkeypox à Omaha, Nebraska On dirait que le C-19 nous a rien appris... De plus, les masques, les tests PCR, les confinements

et les vaccinations peuvent reprendre et les gens courront avec plus de désir", écrit sur [X](#) un internaute dans une publication postée le 20 août 2024 et depuis partagée des centaines de fois.

L'utilisateur relaie une vidéo de 9 secondes. On y voit des centaines de personnes former une longue queue en patientant debout à l'extérieur devant des bâtiments.

Image



Capture d'écran d'une publication X, réalisée le 27 août 2024.

Cette affirmation et ces mêmes images ont aussi circulé sur Instagram, ainsi que dans d'autres langues comme en [anglais](#), [allemand](#) et [espagnol](#).

Or, cette allégation est fautive et repose sur une vidéo décontextualisée.

Une vidéo prise en amont d'un meeting de Tim Walz

Réaliser une recherche d'images inversées à partir de captures d'écran effectuées sur la vidéo permet de savoir si ces images ont déjà été diffusées auparavant sur internet.

Pour cette vidéo, les résultats montrent que des images de cette même queue ont été diffusées à partir du 17 août 2024. Or, les légendes qui accompagnent ces images n'ont rien à voir avec le mpox. Les internautes évoquent en effet une queue pour assister à un événement de campagne électorale de Tim Walz, le co-listier de Kamala Harris, candidate démocrate engagée dans la course à la Maison Blanche.

La vidéo devenue virale a été retrouvée par l'AFP. Elle a été postée par John Jankovich sur [X](#), le 17 août 2024 (archivé [ici](#)). L'utilisateur indique en légende "*I can't capture that does this turnout justice for the Tim Walz rally here in Omaha, NE.*" (en français, "*je n'arrive pas à saisir un instant qui rende justice à ce rassemblement de Tim Walz ici à Omaha, NE.*").

Contacté par l'AFP, John Jankovich a assuré avoir enregistré cette vidéo le 17 août 2024.

"*J'ai attendu presque deux heures dans la queue pour assister au meeting de Tim Walz*" a-t-il déclaré à l'AFP, le 22 août.

Tim Walz se trouvait effectivement à proximité d'Omaha, le 17 août, dans le cadre de la campagne électorale démocrate. Il tenait un meeting dans la salle de concert The Astro de La Vista situé à quelques kilomètres d'Omaha, dans le Nebraska.

Ce retour dans son Etat natal a été rapporté par différents médias américains comme l'[agence AP](#), [USA Today](#) ou encore le quotidien [Omaha World-Herald](#) (archivés [ici](#), [ici](#) et [ici](#)). De plus, une retransmission en direct de cette venue est d'ailleurs toujours disponible sur [le compte X](#) de Tim Walz (archivé [ici](#)).

De surcroît, la comparaison entre les images capturées à partir de la vidéo virale avec celles disponibles sur Google Street View montre bien que les bâtiments que l'on voit en arrière-plan correspondent avec ceux situés à proximité de la salle de concert où se tenait ce rassemblement démocrate.

Image



Capture d'écran d'une publication X, réalisée le 27 août 2024, avec ajout d'encadrés colorés.

Image



Capture d'écran de Google street view, réalisée le 27 août 2024, avec ajout d'encadrés colorés.

De plus, quelques minutes après avoir partagé cette vidéo John Jankovich a posté une photo où apparaît la façade du [La Vista City Centre](#) dans lequel se trouve la salle de concert The Astro (archivé [ici](#)) .

Image

Capture d'écran d'une publication X, réalisée le 27 août 2024. (Océane CAILLAT)

Image



Capture d'écran de Google Street view, réalisée le 27 août 2024.

La vidéo n'a donc aucun lien avec l'épidémie de mpox qui sévit actuellement en Afrique contrairement à ce que suggèrent les internautes.

Des cas surtout concentrés en Afrique

Le mpox, "monkeypox disease" en anglais, est une maladie infectieuse transmissible liée à un virus de la famille des poxvirus. Anciennement appelée "variole du singe", son nom a été

changé par l'Organisation mondiale de la Santé (OMS) en novembre 2022 étant donné que cette appellation donnait lieu à des stigmatisations racistes et homophobes, notamment en Afrique.

La maladie a été identifiée pour la première fois en 1970 en République démocratique du Congo et est longtemps restée circonscrite à ce pays et aux territoires voisins. Mais en 2022, elle a commencé à s'étendre au reste du monde avec près de 100 000 cas.

Ce virus se caractérise par "*une éruption cutanée qui peut durer deux à quatre semaines*" semblable "*à des cloques ou à des lésions*" qui peut s'accompagner notamment "*de fièvre, de maux de tête, de douleurs musculaires, de douleurs dorsales*" indique l'OMS sur [son site](#) (archivé [ici](#)).

Les virus dits mpox se classifient en deux grandes familles : le clade 1, plus virulent et mortel et endémique en Afrique, et le clade 2 endémique en Afrique de l'Ouest. Or, une recrudescence récente de cas d'un variant du clade 1 nommé 1b en République démocratique du Congo et dans les pays voisins a incité l'OMS à déclarer [une urgence de santé publique mondiale](#), le 14 août 2024 (archivé [ici](#)).

Image



Présentation des clades ou sous-clades 1a, 1b et 2 du mpox (AFP / Nalini LEPETIT-CHELLA, Sabrina BLANCHARD)

Mais aucune opération de tests à grande échelle n'a été mise en place aux Etats-Unis contrairement à ce que sous-entend l'internaute.

Sur [le site](#) du département de la Santé et des services sociaux du Nebraska, il est indiqué que les tests sont recommandés pour les personnes "*présentant une éruption cutanée*" (archivé [ici](#)).

Contacté par l'AFP, un porte-parole des Centres de contrôle et de prévention des maladies (CDC) a par ailleurs déclaré le 22 août au sujet du clade 1, qui circule actuellement en République démocratique du Congo et dans les pays voisins, que le risque pour les Etats-Unis "*est considéré comme faible*".

"*Les CDC ne recommandent aucun test de dépistage du mpox au grand public*", a-t-il ajouté. De plus, les CDC rappelaient dans une note mise à jour sur leur site le 26 août 2024 qu' "*aucun cas de clade 1 mpox n'a été signalé aux Etats-Unis à ce jour*".

Concernant la vaccination, l'OMS n'a pour l'instant fait appel à aucune vaccination massive à échelle planétaire. Si des vaccins sont bien disponibles, l'organisation précise que le vaccin est surtout recommandé pour les "*personnes à risque*", en l'occurrence : les agents de santé exposés au virus, les hommes ayant des rapports sexuels avec des hommes, les personnes ayant des partenaires sexuels multiples et les travailleurs du sexe.

En ce qui concerne l'Europe, le risque global d'infection par le clade 1 du mpox "*est actuellement considéré par le Centre européen de prévention et de contrôle des maladies (ECDC) comme faible*", peut-on lire sur [le site](#) du ministère français de la Santé (archivé [ici](#)).

En Europe, un premier cas de mpox de clade 1 a été détecté en Suède, le 15 août.

Au sujet de la France, "*aucune contamination par le clade 1 n'a été recensée*" indique le ministère dans une note mise à jour le 26 août. Le 20 août, le Premier ministre démissionnaire Gabriel Attal a indiqué l'ouverture de 232 sites de vaccination et une promesse de 100 000 doses de vaccins aux pays les plus touchés.

L'épidémie de mpox fait l'objet de beaucoup de désinformation. L'AFP a déjà réfuté des affirmations fausses ou trompeuses à ce sujet comme [ici](#) ou [ici](#).

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Problematic TikTok fact-check: