The African Union’s health agency, the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), declared a public health emergency on August 13th in response to a rapidly spreading new strain of Mpox.

Scientists are particularly concerned by the speed of transmission of this new variant.

“With a heavy heart,” said Africa CDC Director Jean Kaseya, “we declare Mpox a public health emergency of continental security.” He emphasized the devastating impact, stating, “Mpox has crossed borders, affecting thousands… families have been torn apart…”

As of August 4th, Africa CDC data reveals over 38,000 Mpox cases and 1,450 deaths across the continent since 2022.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been hit the hardest, with over 13,700 cases and 480 deaths. Other affected countries include Burundi, Central African Republic, Kenya, and Rwanda.

Kaseya stressed, “This declaration is not just a formality; it’s a clarion call to action.” He urged a proactive and aggressive approach to contain and eliminate the threat.