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PRESIDENTIAL ROUNDTABLES
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Source: <https://aidc.org.za/legalisation-zama-zamas-mean-paper-reality-implications/>

Professor Thokozani Majozi,
President, Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

cordially invites you to

the 14th ASSAf Presidential Roundtable Discussion

The Underground Crisis: How Governance Failures Fuelled South Africa's Illegal Artisanal Mining Epidemic

Date: 14 April 2026
Time: 13:00 – 15:00
Platform: ZOOM Webinar
Registration: Click [here](#) to register (You will receive a joining link immediately after registration)
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(@ASSAf_Official @dsigovza #SA_Illegal_Mining_Epidemic #Zama_Zama #ASSAf_PRT)

South Africa's mineral wealth, historically the engine of our economy, now lies at the heart of a deepening crisis. The proliferation of illegal artisanal mining, or “zama zama” (meaning “those who try their luck”), has evolved from a sporadic criminal nuisance into a widespread, organised epidemic. This webinar will move beyond simplistic law-and-order narratives to dissect this issue as a direct manifestation of systemic governance failures.

This roundtable will bring together senior government officials, industry leaders, and esteemed academics, including: Dr Pontsho Ledwaba (Director of Wits Mining Institute, Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, Wits); Prof Hanri Mostert (SARChI Chair in Minerals and Energy, Faculty of Law, UCT) and the Department of Petroleum and Mineral Resources (DPMR). Together, they will address the specific policy gaps, enforcement breakdowns, and socio-economic drivers that have enabled this crisis. By examining international best practices and fostering a collaborative dialogue, the webinar aims to develop actionable, evidence-informed recommendations for a sustainable path forward.

The ASSAf Presidential Roundtables (PRT) on Science, Scholarship and Society are evidence-based dialogues that bring together high-level experts and stakeholders to address critical issues affecting society at large and are of interest to a broad audience. The roundtables are hosted bi-annually by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) and are moderated by the President of the Academy.



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