



**African Centre
for Citizenship & Democracy**



INVITATION

3 December

10 am-12 midday - for media, civil society and activist NGOs

2pm -4pm – for activist researchers, including international allies

WEBINAR:

The development proposition of the Musina-Makhado Special Economic Zone – the energy and metallurgical hub for the region

What is at stake in promoting the Limpopo Province Special Economic Zone and its significance for South Africa in the “Global South”: the MMSEZ as part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); with critique of the initial Environmental Impact Assessment process.

**Professor Lisa Thompson - African Centre for Citizenship and Democracy at the University of the Western Cape, with
Hazel Shirinda - Environmental Scientist and activist and
Meshack Mbangula - Mining Communities United in Action (MACUA)**

South Africa’s President Ramaphosa announced the Musina-Makhado Special Economic Zone (MMSEZ) on his return from the Forum for Africa and China Cooperation (FOCAC) in September 2018. Two years later the first ‘high level’ Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), was released for public comment. Crucial to understanding the government’s rationale for such a project and the larger developmental context is that the Zone forms part of a BRICS and Global South development strategy driven by the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

The webinar presentation will unpack how the MMSEZ mega-project forms part of China’s Global South development “going out” policy as a way of addressing domestic economic challenges such as over-capacity and increasing financialisation. It will also report on recent research into government’s efforts to justify this type of value-chain-led growth through an extractivist megaproject, which is seeking massive new investments in coal with concessions (subsidies) provided for in South Africa’s 2014 SEZ legislation. It will also consider the EIA public participation process, including lack of local community engagement and of oversight of EIAs in general and those located in SEZs in particular.