

## PRESS STATEMENT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
TO ALL MEDIA AGENCIES**

### **URGENT CALL TO ADDRESS ILLEGAL MINING: NEW AND DEDICATED LEADERSHIP NEEDED FOR COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT OF GHANA'S MINERALS AND MINING REGIME**

**Accra, March 7 2025:** We, the undersigned civil society organizations, environmental advocates, and concerned citizens, hereby issue this press statement to urgently address the escalating issues of illegal mining, environmental degradation, and the failure of regulatory enforcement in Ghana. The developments surrounding L.I 2462, the abuse of the tributary mining lease allocation regime, and the rampant encroachment on critical ecological zones demand immediate action from the government and relevant authorities.

Below are our key demands and recommendations:

#### **1. REVOKE LI 2462 NOW**

The Environmental Protection (Mining in Forest Reserves) Regulation, 2022 (LI 2462), has created a legal framework that permits mining in Ghana's forest reserves, ushering in an unprecedented state sponsored target and assault on forest reserve undermining decades of conservation and sustainable management of forests in Ghana. Previous and present government's agree that L.I 2462 is counterproductive to our sustainable development and must be revoked. There is therefore no reason why this law continues to exist in our statutes books. Legislative Instrument 2462 must be revoked with immediate effect and all mining concessions issued for forest reserves in Ghana revoked as well.

#### **2. BAN TRIBUTER MINING LEASE ALLOCATION REGIME AND REVOKE NON-COMPLIANT MINING LEASES**

The tributer mining regime has not benefited from critical monitoring and scrutiny and therefore there is widespread misuse and abuse of tributer mining regime. There is therefore urgent need for improved monitoring and compliance for all mining licenses that permit tributer arrangement. We are also calling for the online publication of all tributer mining permits with accompanying tributer tokens and codes so that communities in mining hotspots can do their own verification to improve mineral and mining governance in Ghana.

In line with this, the Minerals Commission and the Environmental Protection Authority should assess the current activities of Nawara and Akooko Mining Companies as to whether they are operating the tributer mining regime while also addressing concerns about encroachment within the Bunso area, with activities posing significant risks to the water supply systems as well as academic and research facilities situated in the area.

### **3. ARREST OF FORESTRY OFFICERS COUNTER PRODUCTIVE TO THE FIGHT AGAINST GALAMSEY**

The recent arrest, manhandling and detention of a Forestry Commission staff, a member of the Rapid Response Task Force of the Forestry Commission for undertaking actions to prevent the illegal mining in the Atewa Forest around the Obuoho area, constitute an abuse of power and demoralises other state agencies with supportive functions to act to secure other critical national assets and public goods. These are public officers exercising their legally mandated duty to take all necessary steps to protect forest reserves in Ghana.

The shocking aspect of this operation was how the police force in Kyebi traversed jurisdictions, to effect an arrest of another public officer acting against galamsey impunity when they have consistently failed to address the unprecedented illegal mining activities within their jurisdiction. This misuse of law enforcement undermines the rule of law and emboldens those engaged in environmental destruction.

### **4. NEW LEADERSHIP NEEDED FOR EASTERN REGIONS COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT TEAM**

The failure to enforce effectively laws against illegal mining in parts of the Eastern Region is a clear indication of poor leadership and complacency by both the Divisional and Eastern South Command all located at Kyebi in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

We also note with regret that, communities and CSOs have struggled without success to stop the pollution of River Densu and River Birim as well as several other streams within the Atewa landscape, despite consistent collaboration with the law enforcement agencies in the landscape.

We are therefore calling for a more proactive law enforcement and effective leadership by asking for the replacement of Eastern-South Police Commander DCOP George Boadi Bossman and ACP Reynolds Sam Divisional Police Commander for their inability to curb illegal mining activities in the region. We demand their immediate replacement with dedicated officers who will prioritize the enforcement of the minerals and mining regulations and halt the escalating

impunity by illegal miners in the Akyem Abuakwa traditional area and within the Atewa Landscape.

## **5. RESOURCE FORESTRY COMMISSION TO CONFISCATE EXCAVATORS USED IN ILLEGAL MINING ACTIVITIES IN FOREST RESERVES**

The debate over whether to burn or not to burn excavators used in illegal mining is complex, given the significant vested interests and influences at play. However, considering Ghana's weak compliance regime and lived experiences, the burning of excavators remains the most effective deterrent against the impunity of illegal miners destroying forests and rivers nationwide.

To eliminate the need for burning excavators as indicated by HE John Dramani Mahama, the government must provide the Forestry Commission with the necessary tools, resources, and financial support to effectively monitor, regulate, and combat illegal mining activities. This includes enabling the Commission to seize, remove, manage, and process confiscated equipment efficiently. Without such investment, efforts to curb illegal mining in forest reserves will remain ineffective and a drain on public resources.

## **6. THE MINERALS COMMISSION NEEDS A NEW AND SUSTAINABILITY ORIENTED LEADERSHIP**

The current leadership of the Minerals Commission has failed to ensure responsible mining practices that safeguard social and environmental protections across the country. We call on the government to, as a matter of urgency, replace the Chief Executive Officer of the Minerals Commission with a visionary leader who will usher in a new era of responsible mining.

This new leadership must prioritize transparency, accountability, and the enforcement of regulations that prioritise the social and environmental safeguards of all citizens and protects communities from the adverse effects of exploring Ghana's rich mineral deposits.

## **CONCLUSION**

The fight against illegal mining (galamsey) in Ghana has come full circle, from its escalation under an NDC-led government to the unfulfilled promises of the erstwhile NPP administration. Now, with the baton back in the hands of an NDC-led government, it is clear that we cannot win this battle using yesterday's strategies, failed leadership, or kid-glove approaches. The sympathetic posture toward individuals driving this crisis has brought Ghana to the brink of environmental collapse, with polluted food and water systems posing severe health risks for future generations.

To address galamsey effectively, our actions must be bold, decisive, and uncompromising. The ruthless impunity of illegal miners, who hold farmers, families, and the entire nation hostage through their destructive activities, must be met with zero tolerance. This includes holding all agents, within and outside government accountable.

The time for half-measures is over. We demand a new era of leadership in key agencies, robust enforcement of laws, and a relentless commitment to safeguarding Ghana's environment and future. Anything less will perpetuate the cycle of failure and further worsen the plight of communities upstream and downstream affected by illegal mining.

**END**

Signed

A Rocha Ghana  
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