

COMMUNIQUÉ

Issued at the end of the High-Level National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Mobilising Citizens Consensus on Solutions to the Galamsey Crisis in Ghana

Venue: Eastern Premier Hotel, Koforidua

Date: 28–29 October, 2025

Preamble

We, the participants of the High-Level National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Solutions to the Galamsey Crisis in Ghana, convened at the Eastern Premier Hotel in Koforidua from 28–29 October 2025. The Dialogue brought together representatives from government, parliament, civil society, academia, religious and traditional leadership, the private sector, and the media.

The Dialogue featured five thematic panel discussions and plenary exchanges designed to examine the crisis from multiple perspectives — legal, ecological, socio-economic, governance, and security.

United by concern for the devastating impacts of illegal mining (galamsey), we affirm our shared commitment to developing sustainable, inclusive, and citizen-driven solutions to safeguard Ghana's natural resources and collective future.

Why We Came Together

Participants affirmed that the galamsey crisis is a matter of national urgency and moral responsibility. Several speakers noted that their presence at the Dialogue was not driven by institutional obligation, but by conviction — a recognition that no challenge is insurmountable when citizens act with purpose and unity.

Emerging Issues

1. Legal and Governance Challenges

- Weak enforcement of mining regulations due to overlapping mandates, logistical constraints, and institutional fragmentation.
- Legal frameworks that enable rather than restrict harmful mining, such as the continued existence of the retrogressive LI 2462.

- A perceived lack of political will and accountability, despite well-known destructive ramifications of illegal mining.

2. Environmental and Ecological Degradation

- Accelerated destruction of water bodies, forests, and biodiversity.
- Proliferation of heavy machinery and toxic substances like mercury, with little oversight.
- High costs and limited availability of remediation technologies.

3. Livelihoods, Agriculture, and Rural Economies

- Communities, particularly youth, remain dependent on galamsey for income due to limited alternatives.
- Agricultural land and productivity are being lost, with implications on national food security and food sovereignty.
- Resistance to enforcement actions due to the absence of viable, sustainable economic alternatives.

4. Social Disruption and Cultural Dislocation

- Erosion of traditional authority, community cohesion and trust, and discipline — including in schools, political and religious spaces.
- Youth wealth from illegal mining disrupting social hierarchies and social cohesion.
- Lack of active engagement by some traditional and religious leaders, despite their influence and their moral authority and ability to exact compliance from their subjects.

5. National Security and Rule of Law

- Galamsey is increasingly linked to organised crime, conflict over land, proliferation of arms, child labour, human and sexual trafficking.
- Community tensions are rising between enforcers, miners, and residents — with potential for escalation.
- The gap between public rhetoric and enforcement realities is a widening distrust, and promoting flagrant disregard for the rule of law.

Recommendations

A. Legal and Regulatory Reform

- Repeal LI 2462 and expedite cross-sectoral mechanisms and actions to guarantee protection for forests reserves in Ghana.
- Review and harmonise mandates of regulatory agencies (Minerals Commission, Environmental Protection Authority, Forestry Commission, Water Resources Commission) with built synergies to eliminate duplication and conflict.
- Introduce legal instruments that hold public officials accountable for regulatory failures.
- In line with the Minamata Convention on Mercury (2013), repeal all laws that permit the use of mercury in mining, and adopt safer alternatives.
- Require parliamentary vetting for mineral right allocations in ecologically sensitive areas, and mandate public disclosure of all mining licenses.
- Enforce a **minimum 200-metre buffer zone** between active mining areas and water bodies to reduce contamination and siltation.
- Create a dedicated **Mining Ombudsman Office** to receive, investigate, and resolve community complaints about mining operations.

B. Enforcement and Institutional Capacity

- **Impose a temporary moratorium** on the issuance of new mining licences to allow for a comprehensive audit of existing operations and environmental conditions, and strengthen social and environmental safeguards in minerals and mining governance framework
- Institute a mandatory, performance-based accountability framework for all regulatory, compliance, and enforcement agencies involved in the natural resource and environmental governance.
- Mandate that convicted illegal miners participate in **community-based land reclamation** and environmental restoration as part of sentencing.
- Develop a **public league table system** to rank Districts, Metropolitan Municipality and District Assemblies (MMDAs), and traditional authorities based on performance in mining governance.
- Strengthen inter-agency operations by investing in shared logistics, digitised permitting systems, and interlinked enforcement dashboards.

C. Community Engagement and Leadership

- Deepen sustained engagement with traditional leaders, religious bodies, youth associations, and women's groups as co-leaders in anti-galamsey campaigns.
- Establish legal and customary pathways to **sanction or destool chiefs** who facilitate or protect illegal mining operations. And name and shame their funders. Reward communities stepping away from and saying no to Galamsey.
- Embed **mining governance education** into school curricula and civic outreach programmes via National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE).
- Support **community vigilance committees** with training and legal backing to monitor illegal mining and report to authorities.
- Encourage **interfaith platforms** to coordinate moral messaging against galamsey across religious traditions.

D. Sustainable Livelihoods and Inclusive Development

- Institutionalise **primary engines of sustainability framework** to legally prioritise and protect water, food, health, and forest systems as non-negotiable foundation for all national economic planning and natural resource governance.
- Expand access to **state-backed agricultural revitalisation programmes** in affected areas, especially through irrigation and inputs subsidies.
- Support sustainable **alternative livelihoods** such as bamboo farming, aquaculture, shea butter processing, and ecotourism initiatives tailored to local contexts.
- Formalise and support **women-led artisanal cooperatives**, particularly in non-mechanised mining zones.
- Develop partnerships between academia and vocational institutions to pilot **green jobs** training programmes in mining-impacted districts.
- Provide **start-up capital or risk insurance** for youth enterprises that commit to land restoration or agro-processing.

E. Environmental Restoration and Protection

- Scale up **land reclamation efforts** with community participation, and adopt native tree species for reforestation in degraded forest reserves.
- Create an **Environmental Restoration Fund**, financed through mining royalties and climate finance, to support long-term ecological recovery.
- Ban surface mining in all forest reserves and establish **ecological boundaries** where mining is permanently prohibited.
- Incentivise **Ghanaian-led innovation** in remediation techniques through grants, fellowships, and prize competitions.
- Mandate quarterly environmental audits of all mining concessions, and published publicly.

F. Financial Monitoring and Market Regulation

- Strengthen collaboration with the **Bank of Ghana, Financial Intelligence Centre, and Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO)** to identify illicit financial flows associated with illegal mining.
- Enforce anti-money laundering (AML) laws, including **scrutiny of political party financing** potentially linked to illegal mining proceeds.
- Implement **end-to-end gold traceability systems** using blockchain or tamper-proof QR codes to ensure legal supply chains.
- Sustain and empower the **Goldbod Taskforce** to regulate gold buyers and clamp down on informal export operations.
- Intensify and strengthen **local gold refinery** in Ghana.
- Require **bank verification** and tax ID documentation for all bulk gold transactions and license renewals.

G. Transparent National Dialogue and Accountability

- Institutionalise **annual national dialogues** on natural resource governance to track progress, gather community feedback, and build consensus.
- Require all state institutions involved in mining governance to publish **annual performance reports**, accessible to the public and Parliament.
- Establish an independent **Galamsey Accountability Commission** with a mandate to monitor implementation of reforms and report to Parliament.

- Ensure timely implementation of key recommendations from the **Frimpong-Boateng Report**, the **Inter-Ministerial Committee on Illegal Mining**, and this **Dialogue**.

To ensure institutional coherence and a unified minerals governance architecture and mandate, it is recommended that all entities named in this Communiqué should be housed within a **National Minerals Governance Council**, to minimise agencies that pursue overlapping mandates with limited coordination.

Conclusion

This Communiqué represents a unified commitment to tackle the galamsey crisis with urgency, integrity, and collective resolve. We recognise that this challenge cannot be solved by enforcement or policy alone, but by a coordinated national effort rooted in accountability, justice, equity, and sustainability.

We call on all stakeholders — in government, political parties, traditional and religious leadership, civil society, media, academia, private sector, environmental activists, and the wider citizenry — to act with courage and purpose in implementing these recommendations and safeguarding the future of our land and people.

Issued this 29th day of October 2025, at Koforidua.

Signed

1. National Peace Council
2. National Commission on Civic Education
3. Media Foundation for West Africa
4. Parliamentary Select Committees on Lands and Natural Resources, and Environment, Science and Technology
5. Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
6. Forestry Commission
7. Environmental Protection Authority
8. Water Research Institute
9. National Security Council Secretariat
10. Office of the National House of Chiefs
11. Christian Council of Ghana
12. Catholic Bishops' Conference
13. Office of the National Chief Imam of Ghana
14. Trades Union Congress (Ghana)
15. A Rocha Ghana
16. Centre for Extractives and Development Africa
17. University Teachers Association of Ghana
18. Political Parties
19. Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining
20. Academia, Independent Researchers, Governance and Security Experts
21. Other Civil Society Organisations
22. Media