

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Accra, Monday, January 20th 2025: The urgency to address the galamsey menace was significantly heightened following alarming reports in August 2024 from the Ghana Water Company Limited. These reports indicated a severe deterioration in water quality, with turbidity levels reaching 14,000 nephelometric turbidity units (NTU) at the Sekyere Hemang Water Treatment Plant, far exceeding the maximum permissible level specified by the WHO of 5NTU for processing.

In September 2024, a coalition comprising Media Coalition Against Galamsey, labour organisations, civil society groups, business groups, academia, professional bodies, faith-based organisations, youth groups, and others united to form the Ghana Coalition Against Galamsey. This Coalition aimed to create a unified platform for constructive advocacy against this critical issue. Our efforts led to the government suspending the operationalisation of L.I. 2462 and introducing enhanced measures, including deploying 100 military officers to protect selected water bodies and enforcing the arrest of illegal miners. We also secured the signing of a pledge to fight Galamsey by eight of the presidential candidates, including His Excellency President John D. Mahama, at the just-ended national elections.

Despite these efforts, since the December 2024 elections, we have witnessed a further decline in the situation. The perpetrators have exploited perceived leadership and governmental silence on the matter, leading to an increase in illegal mining activities. The tragic incidents at Ntrotroso and Obuasi a few days back, - whatever will be the outcome of an official independent investigation called by HE President Mahama, which we fully support - are a timely reminder that this problem is an explosive threat to national security and cohesion.

While we acknowledge the government's mention of the need to address galamsey in its first 120-day agenda, we are deeply concerned about the pace of action. We have formally written to His Excellency the President, urging for an immediate CEASE-AND-DESIST ORDER to all illegal miners and regulatory bodies. This decisive measure is crucial to demonstrate the government's commitment to combating this menace and protecting our environment, especially as comprehensive strategies are being developed.

We will launch additional advocacy initiatives in the coming weeks. We urge all Ghanaians and political leaders to remain steadfast in this fight. The urgency of addressing this issue now is greater than ever.

We are open for discussion to resolve the issue of illegal and irresponsible mining; however, our position remains:

1. The President must declare a state of emergency over our water bodies & get the military to clear everyone found on the water bodies (mining on the water bodies is illegal)
2. All planned and active mining concessions overlapping with river buffers should be abrogated, and all mining activities within 100 meters buffer of all rivers and streams should be halted immediately by the President. Failure of which the President must implement the full force of Act 995 without fear or favour of political colour and status in society.
3. Almost all water bodies take their sources from the forest reserves, so all entry permits given to mine in protected globally significant biodiversity areas (GSBAs) must also be abrogated.

PROMOTERS

Media, Organised Labour, Religious Bodies, Youth Groups, Research and Academia,
Pressure Groups, Civil Society, Professional Bodies, Traditional Leaders, Business Groups.

4. Repeal L.I 2462 immediately

END

Signed for the Ghana Coalition Against Galamsey

Kenneth Ashigbey

Convenor

GCAG

About the Ghana Coalition Against Galamsey

The Ghana Coalition Against Galamsey (GCAG) comprises coalitions and a network of organisations from 10 blocks: the Media, Labour, Religious Groups, Youth Groups, Research and academia, Pressure Groups, CSOs, Professional Bodies, Traditional Leaders, and Business bodies.

The Coalition is a common platform for all 'Against Galamsey Groups' (AGG) to harmonise advocacy and social action interventions in the fight against galamsey. Only through unity and collective action can we effectively combat this issue.

The campaign's focus against illegal mining activities is not limited to gold exploitation. However, it includes all mining offences committed under the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 (Act 703) based on the premise that the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana states that any mining activity that takes place without ratification by Parliament is illegal. The current members are drawn from:

- Media Coalition Against Galamsey
- OneGhana Movement
- Ghana CSOs Platform On SDGs
- BRACE
- Kasa Initiative Ghana Stakeholder Engagement Forum
- Gen. Transport, Petroleum & Chemical Workers Union
- Peasant Farmers Associations
- Ghana Institution of Engineering
- Institution of Engineering and Technology, Ghana
- Graduate Students Association of Ghana
- New Media Association of Ghana
- Ghana Institute of Architects
- Institute of Public Relations
- Ghana Institute of Foresters
- Africa Centre for Energy Policy
- Chamber of Agribusiness Ghana
- Research Scientists Association – GAEC
- Other Ghanaian Citizens of Repute

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Media, Organised Labour, Religious Bodies, Youth Groups, Research and Academia,
Pressure Groups, Civil Society, Professional Bodies, Traditional Leaders, Business Groups.