



PROMOTERS

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Pressure Groups, Civil Society, Professional
Bodies, Traditional Leaders, Business Groups.

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Press Statement For Immediate Release To All Media Agencies

The Era of Impunity is not Over

Accra, July 20, 2026– The Coalition Against Galamsey Ghana (CAGG) has reviewed the Accountability Series presentation delivered by the Hon. Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Emmanuel Armah-Kofi Buah, on 15th July 2026, covering the forestry and mining sub-sectors. While we acknowledge some genuine progress, there are however many aspects of the report that needs further action and rededication, because we are slacking.

Ghana's forests, rivers and mining communities are not protected by press briefings. They are protected by sustained, fearless and uniform enforcement, applied equally in every region, against every excavator, and irrespective of whose interests stand in the way. Judged against that standard, the report by the Minister of Lands told only a part of the true situation on the ground.

We grateful to the Attorney-General for dropping the charges against the Atronsu 5. In the same vein we urge the IGP and AG to investigate the murder of 13-year-old Pious Nketia Nkansah, justice should be served in this case.

1. Revocation of EI 144 as amended by EI 234 to Secure entire Achimota Forest

We commend Government for the bold and decisive Cabinet decision of 24th June 2026 to revoke Executive Instrument E.I. 144, as amended by E.I. 234, which had degazetted portions of Achimota Forest for purposes other than its function as a protective green lung within Accra's concrete settlement. We know what it took, politically and institutionally, to secure this outcome, and we highly commend this government for choosing citizens wellbeing and intergenerational benefit over short-term political expediency.



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2. The state of our forests still gloomy

We commend the Ministry and its allied agencies for the hard work invested in ridding our forest reserves of red zones since taking office in 2025. That said, a cleared red zone is not the same as a safe forest. Most of our forest reserves remain under vicious encroachment from illegal miners, and the sheer scale of that encroachment is more than the Forestry Commission can manage alone. The following cases illustrate the risk that still subsist:

- **Atewa Range Forest Reserve**, the source of water for over five million Ghanaians, remains under serious pressure from illegal miners.
- **Cape Three Points**, critical to the integrity of Ghana's first Marine Protected Area, is under serious threat.
- Forestry Commission staff were compelled, only last Friday, to demobilise an excavator operating illegally in the Afao Hills Forest in the Bibiani Forest District
- Draw River Forest Reserve, a beautiful and intact forest in the Gwira Banso area, is at risk from a legal mining concession granted to Betterland, despite the express objection of the communities and landowners who live with the consequences.

The threat to our forests is real and escalating. Government must do more, than just be content with getting rid of red zones.

As we asked in the past, we request again to empower the Forestry Commission with resources and adequate officers on the ground to undertake an urgent operation halt all illegal mining in our forest reserves. Additionally, we remind government of the need to militarise the Forestry Commission, the provision of protected camps in all forest reserves should be sped up.

Mr President this is also a good time to ask, when are you going to keep your promise of 2016 to make Atewa Range Forest Reserve the source of water for over 5 million Ghanaians a National Park? Doing will this will believe will be the greatest legacy any sitting President can give to its citizens.

3. The fight against Galamsey still struggling.



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We completely disagree with the Ministry's assertion, in its own conclusion, that "the era of impunity is over." The evidence on the ground says otherwise.

The Eastern Region, in the very shadow of the seat of government, continues to exhibit escalating lawlessness with no dedicated action to stop it. From Apedwa Junction through Anyinam and Osino, the evidence of impunity is there for all to see, and the recent clash between illegal miners and the NAIMOS team at Kyebi only confirms our concerns. Farmers and landowners along the Birim, Densu and Ayensu are left at the mercy of the destructive and intimidating activities of illegal miners.

Why is Government treating this particular region with kid gloves? Is the perception of selective enforcement in fact true?

The very fact that the Ashanti Regional Coordinating Council found it necessary to direct some MMDAs to halt the movement of all excavators for a month, to confront the impunity and undertake reclamation, speaks for itself about how serious this matter remains.

In Bamboi and Tinga, within the catchment of the Bui Hydroelectric Dam, serious impunity persists unchecked, posing a real risk to the integrity of a national energy asset. In Samreboi, impunity likewise persists, and not even Galamsey-linked floods that displaced over 1,000 people have pricked the conscience of those responsible.

The recent expose of mining one of the mountains' surrounding Lake Bosomtwe is another clear case of the impunity has not ended. All involved in this illegality walk free and we call Mr President to cause the arrest of all implicated in this major national tourist asset, including Richard Antwi who is known to the Ashanti Regional Minister and those illegal miners in the town of Yase.

The mining activities in the Ahwiren wetlands is another example of impunity that is happening in the clear sight of all including the DCE of Bekwai. **If Erastus Asare, a journalist, could unearth this illegality hiding next to main Bekwei-Asiwa road, then the DCE is either complicit or incompetent and should be brought to book by Mr President who made illegal mining as a KPI.** This illegal miner who claims to be working under rCOMSDEP, though the Head of rCOMSDEP has refuted his claims,



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is perpetuating what happened under the Community Mining scheme of the past NPP government. If he is not arrested and prosecuted, the impunity that characterised the Community Mining scheme, has also begun and the rCOMSDEP will suffer the same fate as the Community Mining scheme.

There is much to learn from what the Ashanti Regional Minister is doing in some MMDAs. We demand that all MMDAs where mining is prevalent should mount dedicated barriers to stop the movement of untracked excavators from undertaking any assignment anywhere.

Additionally, we must task all mining MMDAs to suspend the sale of fuel to all illegal operators within their jurisdictions. The Coalition petitioned the National Petroleum Authority to stop the sale of fuel to Galamseyers, despite the assurance given us by the NPA, the practice is still continuous, the NPA is reneging on its regulatory mandate. We demand that the NPA take action to stop fuelling Galamsey.

This will constitute an important stop gap that is currently missing.

4. NAIMOS: TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

NAIMOS has been active on the ground, and its record of over 200 operations is not in dispute. The question that must be asked, however, is whether that record reflects enforcement carried out without fear or favour. We have received reports from mining communities alleging a selective enforcement approach by NAIMOS. Far more troubling is the allegation that confiscated equipment is being returned to miners upon payment of a fee, with motorbike owners reportedly paying GH¢15,000 to reclaim seized bikes. If this is true, this is shameful, and it is an affront to the integrity of NAIMOS and to the very mandate it was set up to fulfil.

We call on NAIMOS to come clean on this allegation without delay.

Where is NAIMOS's toll-free complaints line published, and what is the public record of community complaints received, logged and acted upon?



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Accountability requires that these questions be answered, not assumed.

5. Blue Water Guards and Poor Enforcement by the Ghana Police

Government has recruited and deployed over 2,000 Blue Water Guards, with the sole mandate to see and report. This is a welcome frontline investment in principle. But the truth is simple: Government could recruit 10,000 more, and nothing will change if the Police and NAIMOS are not ready to respond swiftly to what is reported.

This brings into sharp focus the uncollaborative approach of the Ghana Police Service in the fight against Galamsey. Their posture before NAIMOS was instituted was commendable. As the state agency with primary responsibility for enforcement, negligence or indifference to Galamsey happening within a jurisdiction is shameful, unprofessional, and brings the institution into disrepute. There is a real and widening perception that we are failing in this fight because, beyond MMDAs that are either complicit or are not prioritising action, the Police in many of these jurisdictions are unsupportive and, at times, complicit in their refusal to see and their failure to act decisively and professionally.

The National Security Council and the IGP as well as the Presidency must investigate and address this negative perception and ensure that the police are up to the task and all Divisions and Regional Commands not performing satisfactorily to rid jurisdictions of Galamsey, be interdicted, sacked or suspended. The reshuffling is not achieving the intended results, so more stringent approaches must be adopted.

6. Revision of the Minerals and Mining Act must Prioritize Safeguards

We commend Government for keeping its promise to amend the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 (Act 703). We remind His Excellency, however, that one of the central reasons for this amendment was to provide stronger safeguards for our forests, our water bodies, and the wellbeing of citizens living in mining-hotspot communities.

Any amendment or review of Act 703 that fails to guarantee these safeguards is, in our view, as good as dead.



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We therefore formally request that the Ministry share the Cabinet-approved version of the reviewed Act with civil society, to allow for our study and for meaningful engagement with Parliament before the amended Act is passed.

7. The Constitutional Review Committee and the Future of Environmental Governance

We add our voice to the Citizens Platform on Constitutional Reforms in calling on Government to publish the full report of the Constitutional Review Committee, and to prioritise the citizen-centred reforms it has proposed for the environment and natural resources sector. Until we brace ourselves and commit to bold, decisive reform that guarantees intergenerational wellbeing, the present drivers of our environmental crisis of poor governance, greed, state capture, and the erosion of community safeguards, will not go away. They will keep this nation locked in a vicious cycle of resource degradation and mounting climate vulnerability.

8. Other Critical Issues Outstanding That Require Urgent and Critical Governmental Action

- Lack of Arrest and Prosecution Kingpins; H.E President Mahama indicated in October 2024 that the fight against Galamsey will be fruitless if we do not arrest the Kingpins involved in the act. However, for the past 19 months since coming into power, though the President has admitted that some of his party members are involved in the criminal act of Galamsey, there has been no prosecution of Kingpins and Politically exposed persons involved in Galamsey apart from Chairman Wontomi. The promised made by the Attorney-General to publish the outcome of the EOCO investigation of the 2 ruling government officials are outstanding and neither has any action on the Prof Frimpong Boateng's report been made public.
- The Hon Minister of Lands and Natural Resources had made recommendation to HE the President on our petition to enforce law of prosecuting foreigners before deporting them. These clear breach of Ghanaian law still continues and we have not heard any directive from Mr President for a cease-and-desist order to the Minister of Interior's policy directive.

To conclude, we wish to reiterate in full, the call we made to His Excellency the President in October 2025 for daily publication of water-quality data at public treatment plants, monthly state-of-rivers



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and state-of-forests reports, quarterly food-safety research in mining-affected areas, and monthly Attorney-General updates on prosecutions.

These commitments remain outstanding, and transparency of this kind is the only way this Ministry's next accountability report will be judged on evidence rather than assertion.

We either deal with this menace or we perish, because without clean water, clean air and standing forests, we are done as a people.

We remain ready to work with Government, in good faith, to close this gap.

Signed for the Ghana Coalition Against Galamsey

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- OneGhana Movement
- Ghana CSOs Platform On SDGs
- BRACE
- Kasa Initiative Ghana Stakeholder Engagement Forum
- A Rocha Ghana
- EcoConscious Citizens
- Nature and Development Foundation
- Jema Anti Galamsey Advocacy (JACA)
- Gen. Transport, Petroleum & Chemical Workers Union
- Peasant Farmers Associations
- Ghana Institution of Engineering - GhIE
- 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



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- Africa Centre for Energy Policy
- Chamber of Agribusiness Ghana
- Research Scientists Association – GAEC
- University Teachers Association of Ghana - UTAG
- Other Ghanaian Citizens of Repute
- Ghana Environmental Advocacy Group