

ORGANISED LABOUR

PRESS STATEMENT ON THE ILLEGAL MINING {GALAMSEY}

**READ BY BROTHER JOSHUA ANSAH, THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF TUC
GHANA ON BEHALF OF ORGANIZED LABOUR**

TIME TO END GALAMSEY FOR GOOD

Today, September 11, 2024, the leadership of Organised Labour met to discuss the growing menace of illegal mining and the dangers it poses to the Ghanaian society.

Organised Labour has followed the ongoing spirited public discussions on illegal mining (Galamsey) and its consequential destruction of our forest cover, water bodies and ecology, health hazards severe health risk posed to communities living near galamsey sites, such as exposure to toxic chemicals like mercury and cyanide, including increase in respiratory and waterborne diseases due to polluted air and water, among other negative impacts.

It is now clear to us as it is to all well-meaning Ghanaians that the menace of galamsey has reached a crisis proportion. The depletion of our forest cover has never been this rapid. The destruction of our water bodies is at an unprecedented scale. Our entire ecosystem is on the precipice.

In a recent statement, the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) indicated its inability to produce the required volumes of water for the people of Cape Coast and Elmina primarily because of the heavy pollution of the River Pra from activities of illegal mining. In 2022, the GWCL shutdown its water treatment plant in Kyebi because “the Birim River from which water is pumped for treatment to the township and its environs has been heavily polluted due to the operations of illegal miners”. The cost of treating water has gone up by about tenfold according to GWCL. Ghana risk importing water for household and industrial consumption.

The torrents of videos and photos of heavily polluted and discoloured water bodies are alarming. Even more harrowing are the videos and photos of lifeless bodies of young people pulled from galamsey pits every now and then. The threat to food supply has been growing as agricultural lands are appropriated for mining activities. The intensive and inappropriate use of mining-related chemicals is affecting productivity of agricultural lands and food safety.

Organised Labour demands immediate actions from the President of the Republic as follows;

1. An immediate declaration of State of Emergency in line with the provisions of the 1992 Constitution (Articles 31 and 31(4)).
The declaration must incorporate the following:
 - a) an order to halt to all forms of mining (legal or illegal) in forest reserves and around water bodies.
 - b) Immediate evacuation of all mining equipment in forest reserves and around water bodies.
 - c) The deployment of the Police and the Military with full orders to remove/destroy all mining equipment and other earth moving equipment around river bodies and in the forest reserves

2. The immediate revocation of LI2462 and withdrawal of all licenses that have been granted for prospecting and mining in forest and protected reserves and also around water bodies.
3. Establish a special Court to prosecute the perpetrators of this horrible crime.

ORGANIZED LABOUR will urgently embark on series of demonstrations and a nationwide strike if government fails to address the concerns raised by end of September 2024.

We call on all well-meaning Ghanaians to join organized labour in the fight against this menace.

~~GALAMSEY MUST STOP NOW!!!!~~



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ACCRA.