

SPEECH: HON. EMMANUEL ARMAH-KOFI BUAH(MP), MINISTER FOR LANDS & NATURAL RESOURCES.

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Minister of Government Communications, Hon. Felix Ofosu-Kwakye

Heads of Agencies,

Friends from the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this accountability series and provide an update on the progress made by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and its Agencies during the first half of 2026.

The lands and natural resources sector remains a critical pillar of Ghana's economic transformation agenda. It contributes immensely to national revenue mobilisation, job creation, industrial development, environmental sustainability and the overall wellbeing of our citizens. Guided by Government's commitment to responsible resource governance, value addition, environmental stewardship and inclusive growth, the Ministry has continued to implement a wide range of policies, programmes and projects aimed at unlocking the full potential of our lands, forests, minerals and other related natural resources.

From January to June this year, notable progress has been made across the forestry, mining, and lands sub-sectors. These achievements reflect the collective efforts of government, our agencies, development partners, traditional authorities, local communities and private sector stakeholders who continue to support the sustainable management and utilisation of our natural resources.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all our stakeholders for their continued partnership and support. Together, we will continue to build a natural resources sector that delivers lasting benefits for present and future generations.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the following are the key achievements of the Sub-Sectors:

FORESTRY SUB-SECTOR

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sure you are all aware that, despite the immense contribution of the Forestry Sub-Sector to the national economy, the sector continues to face deforestation and forest degradation with dire consequences on our existence. To address these issues, a number of strategic actions have been undertaken by my Ministry.

1. Tree for Life Restoration Initiative

This flagship initiative which was launched by His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama seeks to restore degraded forest reserves and mined-out areas and transform them into ecologically functional landscapes.

The impact of the programme remains a significant intervention in Government's aggressive environmental restoration agenda. In 2025 alone, about **31 million seedlings** were planted with success rates ranging between 50-78% recorded in the northern savannah zone and 65-85% recorded in the High Forest Zone, resulting in the restoration of approximately **23,600 hectares** of degraded landscapes. Building on this success, the Ministry is maintaining the planting target of **30 million seedlings** this year which commenced on 5th June until the end of the raining season.

To support implementation, the Forestry Commission has engaged and deployed 2,719 Youth Forest Champions, who are actively involved in nursery operations, seedling production, site preparation, tree planting, plantation maintenance, wildfire prevention and protection of forest reserves.

The general public is encouraged to join this national campaign of tree planting and nurturing to make Ghana green again.

I want to use this opportunity to express the ministry's profound gratitude to corporate Ghana and other stakeholders who supported us in achieving our ambitious target last year and are continuing their efforts this year too.



2. Addressing Illegal Mining in Forest Reserves

Ladies and gentlemen, in our determination to protect our forests from illegal mining activities, the Ministry working closely with the Forestry Commission and other stakeholders intensified enforcement operations within forest reserves. These operations resulted in the following

Item	Number seized/demobilized
Suspects arrested	258
Excavators demobilized	6
Pumping machines seized	1,225
Changfan machines demobilized	765
Tricycles destroyed	35
Motorbikes seized /demobilized	212
Structures destroyed	430
Gold detectors seized	40

We have not had any Red zones since December 2025.

3. Wildlife Resource Management Regulation

As part of efforts to strengthen Wildlife Conservation and management, the Ministry in collaboration with the Forestry Commission is developing a Legislative Instrument to give effect to the Wildlife Resources Management Act, 2023 (Act 1115).

This Legislative Instrument when approved will provide legal backing and operational guidelines for Community Resources Management Areas (CREMAs) which has now become a model for engaging communities and landowners in sustainable forest management.

4. Reclamation of Mined-out Areas

The Ministry in collaboration with the private sector has embarked on an aggressive strategy to reclaim degraded mined-out areas and transform them into an ecologically functional landscape.

In partnership with the private sector, 1,535 acres of degraded land has been reclaimed and restored in the Ashanti Region. We've got commitments from the private sector to undertake more reclamation and we're targeting 1,500 acres to be reclaimed by the end of the year. Government on its own is also working to reclaim 960 acres in selected degraded areas across the country.

5. Ecotourism Promotion and Revenue Diversification

Ladies and Gentlemen, one of the key priorities of government is to maximize revenues from the forest and wildlife resources. To achieve this, the Ministry through the Forestry Commission is improving ecotourism facilities within our national parks and resource reserves.

Our focus this year will be on the completion of the 120-seater capacity picnic area and a 10-unit chalet at the Shai Hills Resource Reserve. Additionally, a 20-room tourist accommodation and restaurant at the Mole National Park will be completed.

Issuance of Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) License

As you may recall, Ghana in August 2025 became the first country in Africa and second in the world to qualify for the issuance of FLEGT licenses. Ghana has issued over 600 licenses to about 22 destinations in the European Union since 2025. At the end of the 2nd quarter of 2026, four hundred and eleven (411) licenses were issued. The FLEGT licenses have enhanced Ghana's credibility in the timber trade internationally. This has also enhanced Ghana's global standing in its efforts towards climate resilience.

The Achimota Forest

Ladies and gentlemen, I am happy to announce a historic cabinet decision taken on the 24th of June 2026, to revoke Executive Instrument E.I 144 as amended by E.I 234, effectively ensuring that the Achimota Forest retains its original status as a Forest Reserve and providing ecological safety zone for Accra and its environs.

MINING SUB-SECTOR

MINERALS COMMISSION

Ladies and gentlemen, the Mining Sub-sector recorded significant achievements aimed at strengthening regulation, enhancing value addition, improving safety, and combating illegal mining.

PASSAGE OF THE MINERALS AND MINING (ROYALTIES) REGULATIONS (2025), L.I 2517

A major legislative milestone is the passage of the Minerals and Mining (Royalties) Regulations (2025), L.I 2517 which establishes a sliding-scale royalty payment, presents a strategically adaptive framework for both the Republic, as the resource owner, and mining companies, as contractors and investors.

This regime ensures that government captures significant revenue during periods of rising commodity prices or production booms while conversely alleviating financial strain on companies during downturns by reducing rates to prevent negative cash flow, encourage continuous operations to guarantee job security.

Ultimately, this self-adjusting mechanism offers greater predictability to investors than a rigid fixed rate vulnerable to low-price cycles.

Review of Minerals and Mining Policy of 2014

I am also very happy to announce that the Minerals and Mining Policy of 2014 has been revised and approved by Cabinet this year. This Policy seeks to indigenize mining by strengthening local content and participation through domestic value addition to minerals, improve linkages to manufacturing industry and deal decisively with the menace of illegal mining and protection of the environment.

Review of the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 (Act 703)

Following stakeholder consultations, the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 (Act 703) which has been operational for 20 years was also reviewed and endorsed by Cabinet for onward transmission to Parliament for approval. The revised Bill provides an updated, coherent and



forward-looking legal regime to ensure that mining contributes immensely to national development.

The new Act introduces district mining committees as a starting point for mineral licensing, medium scale mining as a new category, removes reconnaissance and prospecting license and replaces it with Exploration fixed at 5 years maximum. Mining lease period is now fixed at 20 years maximum and we have introduced community development agreement as part of any mining lease.

Local Content in Mining

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our vision for Local Content is to ensure that Ghana's mineral wealth creates lasting prosperity for Ghanaians. We are committed to building a mining industry where our people are not merely participants, but owners, investors, innovators, and manufacturers. Through deliberate policies, Government is promoting Ghanaian ownership, value addition, technology transfer, local enterprise development, and sustainable job creation so that the full benefits of our natural resources remain within our economy. This vision informed the launch of the maiden Mining Local Content Summit in Takoradi in February this year by H.E. President John Dramani Mahama.

The summit brought together key stakeholders and reinforced our resolve to move beyond the export of raw minerals towards value addition and industrialisation. As Government, we remain steadfast in protecting genuine Ghanaian participation and will not condone fronting or any arrangement that undermines the spirit and objectives of our Local Content agenda.

Infrastructure Development

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, significant progress has been made in the delivery of critical infrastructure projects within mining communities. During the period under review, the Ministry through the Minerals Commission successfully completed a number of key projects, including a 500-seater Sports Complex at Kenyasi, the Savannah Regional Office in Bole, Damang, Bibiani and Akim Oda District Offices. These projects are expected to enhance

service delivery, promote community development, and ensure operational presence within these mining areas.

Other ongoing infrastructural development during the period under review include, the construction of a Seven-Storey Office Complex in Kumasi with auxiliary facilities such as modern laboratories and a museum, Tamale Regional Office Block, Kyebi District Office, and staff accommodation projects, all reached advanced stages of completion.

Deployment of Blue Water Guards

Government also strengthened water body protection against illegal mining through the recruitment, training and deployment of an additional 452 Blue Water Guards, bringing total deployments across eight regions to 2,069 personnel

Strengthen Institutional Oversight

To strengthen oversight of the small-scale mining sector, 4,347 earth-moving and mining equipment units were registered at the Tema Port, while 1,864 tracking devices were installed on these equipment. Fifty-two mercury pollution abatement training programmes were conducted.

NATIONAL ANTI-ILLEGAL MINING OPERATIONS SECRETARIAT (NAIMOS)

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the fight against illegal mining remains one of the Ministry's highest priorities. During the period under review, NAIMOS sustained nationwide operational tempo against illegal mining (galamsey) across six endemic regions, namely Ashanti, Western, Western North, Eastern, Bono/Ahafo and Central. A total of 200 operations were executed across 53 districts, recording an operational strike rate of 84.1%.

The Secretariat conducted 169 enforcement operations targeting illegal mining sites, forest reserves, river bodies and concession encroachments. The combined output of these operations is summarized as follows:

- 207 suspects arrested, comprising 161 Ghanaians and 46 foreign nationals. The suspects were processed and handed over to the security services for appropriate action.

- Between January and June this year, 78 excavators have been seized and 90 excavators immobilized on site.
- 2,800 chanfangs were destroyed on river bodies across the endemic regions.
- 1,244 makeshift structures associated with illegal mining camps were also destroyed.
- 302 water pumps, 31 vehicles, 72 motor bikes, 18 generators, 2 pay loaders, 5 gold detector machines, 3 outboard motors, 3 weighing scales and 2 mini car washing machines were also retrieved from active and abandoned galamsey sites. The water pumps have been handed over to Ministry of Food and Agriculture to support government's irrigation efforts.
- 112 pump action rifles, 2 sidearms, 2 locally manufactured rifles and 1,637 rounds of assorted ammunition recovered, removing illicit firepower from mining enclaves. The weapons and ammunition have been handed over to Ministry of the Interior for destruction.

RESPONSIBLE COOPERATIVE MINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (rCOMSDEP)

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Ministry during the period under review made progress towards transforming the small-scale mining sector through formalization of mining operations, capacity building, digital innovation and skills development.

In collaboration with the Minerals Commission, the Environmental Protection Authority, the Department of Cooperatives, and the Ghana Revenue Authority, rCOMSDEP has conducted a nationwide registration and assessment exercise, successfully registering over 9,000 miners and 700 cooperatives across eight mining regions to promote responsible, legal, and sustainable operations while strengthening regulatory compliance.

Concurrently, comprehensive training programmes on responsible mining practices have been conducted in the Western, Eastern and Bono regions covering environmental stewardship, occupational health and safety, regulatory adherence, mercury-free processing technologies, and sustainable livelihood development, thereby equipping miners to enhance productivity and community well-being.

Additionally, under a strategic partnership with the African Development Bank and the Social Investment Fund, rCOMSDEP is a co-implementing partner in the Ghana Women and Youth Economic Empowerment and Social Cohesion (GWYESCO) Project for 2026–2029, which is targeted at 10,000 women and youth across the Upper West, Upper East, Savannah, Central, and Eastern Regions with skills development, entrepreneurship training, and start-up support to foster sustainable livelihoods, youth employment, economic inclusion, and community development.

GHANA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AUTHORITY (GGSA)

Passage of Regulation for GGSA Act 928

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the GGSA has been an authority for ten years without Legislative Instruments. This greatly hampered the effective and efficient implementation of the GGSA Act 928. In line with the provisions of the Ghana Geological Survey Authority Act, 2016 (Act 928), seven Regulations were developed to establish standards, strengthen compliance, and provide the regulatory architecture required for effective geoscientific operations. Following extensive stakeholder consultations, the Regulations proposed to operationalise the GGSA (Act 928) have successfully been laid in Parliament.

Upgrade of National Seismic Network

Ladies and gentlemen, since the last investment in 2015, the National Seismic Network has suffered worsening condition due to the lack of the needed investment for timely maintenance of the facility for effective earthquake disaster risk management. Recognising the poor condition of the country's seismic monitoring infrastructure, Government this year supported the comprehensive modernisation of the national seismic monitoring network. The installation of the upgraded equipment has been successfully completed and commissioned. The project has restored nationwide real-time seismic monitoring, modernized dam safety monitoring systems, upgraded the National Seismological Observatory data Centre, strengthened the country's seismic early warning and rapid response capabilities, and enhanced Ghana's overall disaster risk reduction and national resilience.

Geological Investigations for Small Scale Mining

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, as part of Government's efforts to promote responsible and sustainable small-scale mining, the Authority with the support of the Ghana Gold Board and the Minerals Development Fund has commenced mineral exploration within designated areas earmarked for small-scale mining operations. This initiative is intended to identify mineralised zones with viable commercial potential and ensure that mining activities are concentrated within properly delineated areas. By providing reliable geological information, government aims to improve mining efficiency, reduce environmental degradation and support implementation of responsible and co-operative mining programmes that benefit the country.

MINERALS DEVELOPMENT FUND

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Minerals Development Fund continued to advance its mandate of ensuring that mining communities derive tangible and sustainable benefits from the country's mineral resources through targeted interventions in environmental restoration, community development, research, and economic diversification.

The Fund continued to strengthen evidence-based decision-making within the mining sector through support for scientific research. During the period, two research papers reached the peer-review stage and are awaiting publication.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Fund has secured commitment authorisation to implement development projects across mining communities nationwide in 2026. These include

- The construction of three small-town water supply systems and sixteen solar-powered boreholes across various mining districts to improve access to safe and reliable water.
- Construction of new school infrastructure projects in six mining districts to enhance access to quality education for children in mining communities.
- Construction of health centres in four mining districts to improve access to quality primary healthcare services for mining-affected communities.
- The construction of market facilities in six mining districts, providing improved commercial spaces for traders and small business operators.

GHANA INTEGRATED ALUMINIUM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (GIADEC)

Establishment of Tema Industrial Park

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, Government remains firmly committed to expanding Ghana's downstream aluminium industry as a key pillar of its industrialisation agenda. In furtherance of this objective, GIADEC, in partnership with the Tema Development Corporation (TDC) and ARISE Integrated Industrial Platforms (ARISE IIP), is advancing the establishment of Tema Integrated Industrial Parks Limited, a joint venture entity tasked with developing a world-class integrated industrial park within the Tema Heavy Industrial Area. The project is expected to be developed over the next 36 months.

With respect to aluminium refinery development, GIADEC has intensified its engagement with key investors for the establishment of a 2-million-metric-tonne-per-annum aluminium refinery in Ghana.

Furthermore, GIADEC is also engaging investors to develop an Aluminium Foil Plant within the industrial park. The facility is expected to produce between 45,000 and 50,000 tonnes of high-quality aluminium foil annually for use in the pharmaceutical, food packaging, and manufacturing sectors. The project will utilise aluminium products from VALCO as feedstock and significantly enhance downstream value addition within Ghana's aluminium value chain.

GHANA INTEGRATED IRON AND STEEL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Ghana Integrated Iron and Steel Development Corporation (GIISDEC) continued to make significant progress towards the realisation of Government's vision of establishing a fully integrated and globally competitive iron and steel industry in Ghana.

A major milestone during the period under review was the successful completion of advanced Mineral Resource Estimation on the Asato-Gyamurume Iron Ore Block in the Oti Region.

Independent laboratory analysis has confirmed high-grade deposits, providing bankable feasibility reports that position Ghana as a credible destination for multi-million-dollar investments in mining and beneficiation.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, recognising the importance of a strong regulatory and policy framework for sustainable growth of the iron and steel industry, GIISDEC has made considerable progress in policy development. The Corporation has completed a draft Scrap Metal Policy and a National Scrap Metal Management Framework to regulate the collection, licensing, and supply of scrap metals across the country. These initiatives are expected to ensure a sustainable supply of raw materials for domestic steel production while promoting greater efficiency and formalisation within the scrap metal sector.

Volta Aluminium Company Limited (VALCO)

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the Volta Aluminium Company Limited (VALCO) recorded a strong operational and financial performance during the first half of 2026, reflecting the positive impact of ongoing efforts to improve efficiency, enhance production, and strengthen the company's competitiveness within the aluminium industry.

Key developments impacting performance.

In line with His Excellency the President's vision of promoting value addition and industrial transformation, VALCO reached a historic milestone last year with the installation of its first ever value addition production line, Electrical Grade Rod Mill. The facility is currently in the test production phase, manufacturing electrical-grade aluminum rods for both the domestic and European markets.

This marks a significant shift in VALCO's evolution from a producer of primary aluminium to a manufacturer of higher value-added products. Once fully operational, the Rod Mill will deepen local industrialization, support downstream manufacturing, create sustainable jobs, increase export earnings, reduce reliance on imported aluminium products, and strengthen Ghana's competitiveness across the global aluminium value chain.

LANDS SUB-SECTOR

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the lands sub-sector remains central to Ghana's socio-economic development, providing the foundation for investment, infrastructure development, housing, agriculture, and effective land governance.

Preparation of Regulations for the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036)

To facilitate the effective implementation of the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036), the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources in collaboration with the Office of the Attorney-General are currently engaging key stakeholders on the Regulations. Once completed, it will be submitted to Parliament for approval. We are optimistic that the Regulations will receive Parliamentary approval before the end of 2026, thereby providing the legal framework necessary to give effect to the Land Act.

Digitalisation and Automation of Service Delivery

Ladies and Gentlemen, as part of Government's broader digital transformation objectives under the Resetting Ghana Agenda, the Lands Commission has continued to make significant progress in the digitalisation of land administration services.

Consequently, the Commission has enhanced the functionalities of the Enterprise Land Information System (ELIS), a digital platform designed to modernize and streamline the operations of the Lands Commission.

Currently, ELIS is operational in nine regional offices, namely:

- Greater Accra;
- Eastern;
- Western;
- Western North;
- Oti;
- Bono East;
- Volta
- Savannah and
- North East Regions.

I am pleased to announce that the Commission has successfully developed and operationalized digital workflows for all major land administration services within these regions. Consequently, clients can now access a range of land registration services electronically.

For example, members of the public can apply online for official searches on land parcels without physically visiting these Lands Commission offices.

Strategic Land Administration Reform Project (SLARP)

Government has launched the Strategic Land Administration Reform Project (SLARP) as a comprehensive, nationally owned and sustainably financed reform programme aimed at transforming Ghana's land administration system into a modern, transparent, decentralized, digitally enabled, and performance-driven public service.

The Project responds to long-standing constraints in land service delivery, including fragmented manual records, weak integration between spatial and textual land information, incomplete cadastral coverage, uneven mapping infrastructure, centralized service delivery, prolonged turnaround times, exposure to multiple registrations, and limited public confidence in formal land administration processes. The Project is structured around interlinked components whose implementation is mutually reinforcing and sequential in nature.

The key Project components are as follows:

1. Improved Maps and Spatial Data Infrastructure.
2. Digital Transformation of the Lands Commission and Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands.
3. Decentralization of Land Service Delivery.
4. Systematic Titling and National Cadastre.
5. Strengthening Customary Land Administration and Customary Land Secretariat
6. Boundary Demarcation and Boundary Data Integration.
7. Land Banks and Investment-Ready Land Information.

8. Institutional Capacity, Change Management and Project Governance.

Establishment of Land Banks

As part of Government's commitment to promoting industrialisation and private sector-led investment, the Ministry is supporting the implementation of the Land Bank Project, a strategic Government initiative aimed at facilitating access to land for large-scale oil palm cultivation and value-added processing.

The project is designed to identify, acquire, and secure suitable lands for investment in commercial oil palm plantations and related processing industries, including mills and other downstream value-addition enterprises. This initiative is expected to address one of the major constraints to agricultural investment by providing investors with secure and readily accessible land for large-scale production.

The geospatial mapping of identified areas is currently underway to support effective planning, land management, and investment decisions. The Ministry is also actively engaging traditional authorities and other key stakeholders within the selected districts to secure the necessary community support and facilitate land acquisition processes.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the Land Bank Project represents a transformative intervention that will unlock investment opportunities, promote agro-industrial development, create employment, and contribute to Ghana's broader economic growth and industrialisation agenda.

Reforms in the Administration of State Lands

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of the major governance reforms undertaken by the Ministry has been the implementation of Cabinet-approved recommendations to restore integrity, transparency, and accountability in the administration of public (state) lands. We have comprehensively reviewed the processes governing the allocation and leasing of state lands by introducing a revised and standardized Public Land Application Form (Form 5), strengthening internal approval procedures, and

ensuring that all allocations are subject to enhanced oversight and strict compliance with established guidelines.

To protect the national interest and guarantee value for money, Government has also proposed a new premium framework that aligns state land values with prevailing market prices and initiated the publication of market valuation data to improve transparency and established a Public Land Protection Task Force to prevent encroachment and unauthorized developments on public lands. These reforms are intended to ensure that state land transactions are done in a more transparent, accountable, and efficient manner to safeguard public assets while restoring confidence in Ghana's land administration system.

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF STOOL LANDS (OASL)

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands continued to play a critical role in strengthening customary land administration, enhancing revenue mobilisation, and promoting accountability in the management of stool land resources during the period under review.

As part of its revenue mobilization mandate, the Office recorded significant growth in stool land revenue collections during the period under review. By the end of June 2026, a total of **GHC265.61 million** had been mobilized against an annual target of **GHC351.88 million**, representing approximately **75.48%** of the target.

In line with Government's commitment to improving public access to land administration services, the Office expanded its operational presence across the country through the establishment of four new offices out of the five targeted for the year, at Derma in the Ahafo Region, Abesim in the Bono Region, Kwabenya in Ga East and Amamole in the Ga South District in the Greater Accra Region.

In accordance with Section 14 of the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036), a new Customary Land Secretariat was established within the Sunyani Traditional Area and upgraded the Mim and Hwidiem CLS. These initiatives are contributing to improve land governance, enhance record

management, and reduction of land-related disputes through application of Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms.

GHANA BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the Ghana Boundary Commission continues to make progress in safeguarding the territorial integrity of our nation and strengthening cross-border cooperation during the first half of the year.

The Commission and its Ivorian counterparts have jointly reaffirmed 150kms of its land boundaries resulting in the construction of 37 boundary pillars by the 48 Engineer Regiments of the Ghana Armed Forces. An additional 200 kms will be reaffirmed by the end of the year.

The Boundary Commissions of Ghana and Burkina Faso have held series of bilateral meetings, set up a joint technical committee for boundary reaffirmation and has developed a workplan for the construction of our shared boundary pillars before the close of year.

The Commission in conjunction with the Ghana Navy conducted an independent Maritime patrol of Ghana's Eastern Maritime Boundary in the second quarter of 2026 aimed at safeguarding our territory and will be conducting a joint patrol on the Western Boundary with its Ivorian counterparts in the third quarter, in line with the 2017 International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) ruling.

CONCLUSION

Today, I have presented not merely an account of my Ministry's performance, but a statement of purpose. From restoring our forests and protecting our rivers, to reforming our mining laws, modernising land administration, and strengthening our natural resource institutions, one message is clear: Ghana's natural resources will no longer be managed for the benefit of a few, but for the prosperity of all. There comes a defining moment in the life of every nation when its people must choose whether to protect their inheritance or surrender it to lawlessness. That moment is now. The fight against illegal mining is a defining environmental battle of

our generation. Our rivers are not for sale. Our forests are not expendable. Our mineral wealth is a sacred national inheritance that we have a duty to protect.

Let me be clear, the era of impunity is over. Government will continue to pursue every individual, every financier, and every criminal syndicate that profits from the destruction of our environment. The law will be applied without fear or favour. But this battle cannot be won by Government alone; it is Ghana's fight. I call on all traditional leaders, religious leaders, miners, security officers, media houses, communities and citizens to stand on the side of our nation. As Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah reminded us, "The forces that unite us are intrinsic and greater than the superimposed influences that keep us apart." Today, those forces must unite us to reject greed, reject complicity, and defend our national heritage.

History will judge our generation by how we responded to this defining challenge. Let it be said that we chose courage over complacency, unity over division and patriotism over personal gain. The battle against illegal mining is difficult, but the Ghanaian spirit is stronger. We will not retreat. We will not relent. We will not surrender. Together, we shall reclaim our rivers, restore our forests, protect our natural wealth, and secure a greener, stronger, and more prosperous Ghana for generations yet unborn. Together, we shall win this fight.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our homeland, Ghana.

Thank you.