

**For Immediate Release  
All Press Houses**

**October 7<sup>th</sup> 2024, Accra**

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**CSO CONVENING ON ENVIRONMENT, MINERAL EXPLOITATION AND ENERGY  
TRANSITION  
HELD AT THE MAXLOT HOTEL, ACCRA OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2024**

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***FINAL COMMUNIQUE***

With support from the Publish What You Pay Movement, the CSOs Convening meeting was held on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Maxlot Hotel, Accra, pursuant to the recent happenings in Ghana's natural resources sector, to discuss issues of mining, forest, water resources and the general environment.

1. The meeting was also attended amongst others, by: -

Representatives of the Ministry of Lands, and Natural Resources, Ministry of Finance, National Development Planning Commission, Representatives of the Media, Community representatives of Mining Communities, Civil Society Representatives on Extractives and small-scale miners.

2. Stakeholders at the discussion noted with regret the destruction of Ghana's freshwater and forest resources including the socio-cultural heritage of Ghana's pristine environmental conditions.

3. While recognizing the enormous potential of Ghana's natural resources to deliver against poverty and deprivation for Ghanaians, the CSOs bemoaned the irresponsible manner in which these resources are being managed, leading to the depletion of these resources as well as pollution of the habitats where these resources are exploited. The absence of prudent management and governance of our resources has resulted in a fast decline in the living conditions of Ghanaians while exposing future generations to future uncertainties. CSOs also noted with regret the unprecedented existential risk, resulting from the evidence of pollution and contamination of our water bodies, and food systems from poisonous levels of heavy metals such as evidence of mercury, cadmium, lead, arsenic and cyanide due to widespread and unregulated illegal mining activities in Ghana. These irresponsible mining activities have resulted in large scale deforestation and forest degradation compromising on their ecological integrity and their continuous capacity to provide essential life supporting needs like water, habitat for biodiversity, raw minerals while also contributing to climate mitigation and resilience.

4. CSOs acknowledged that, small-scale mining if properly regulated and accompanied by strict compliance and enforcement of punitive measures as outlined by law, could have significantly curtailed the activities of illegal mining.

5. However, they reached a consensus that the current situation has escalated into a national emergency and requires urgent action by the government.

6. Having deliberated on technical submissions, presentations, verbal arguments and recommendations, the CSOs resolved to stand in solidarity with the ongoing demands by the Ghana Medical Association, Media Coalition Against Galamsey, The Trades Union Congress, The Ghana Federation of Labour, Kasa Initiative Ghana, The Ghana Catholic Bishop's Conference, The Christian Council of Ghana, The Office of the Chief Imam, and all other well-meaning Ghanaians that:

1. The President must immediately declare a state of emergency over our water bodies and forest reserves and to clear everyone found undertaking mining activities on water bodies and in forest reserves
2. All planned and active mining concessions within 100 meters buffer of all rivers and streams should be halted with immediate effect. 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 with immediate effect.
4. Repeal L.I 2462 immediately
5. All the Presidential Candidates of the political parties vying for elections should publicly declare their total support for this crisis response.

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