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OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT
KOFI ANNAN INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING TRAINING CENTRE (KAIPTC)
PMB CT 210, Cantonments, Accra – Ghana, West Africa

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

**ADOPTED AT THE NATIONAL VALIDATION AND DIALOGUE WORKSHOP ON
THE SAFETY AND SECURITY ECOSYSTEM OF ILLEGAL MINING IN GHANA
HELD IN ACCRA BETWEEN 24 -26 MARCH 2026**

1. Preamble

The Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), in partnership with the Embassy of Spain in Accra, convened a National Validation and Dialogue Workshop on the theme: “Safety and Security Ecosystem of Illegal Mining in Ghana”. The national workshop was preceded by the regional validation workshops held in Kumasi (between 10-11 March 2026) and Takoradi (between 17-18 March 2026).

The Workshop brought together a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including representatives from Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources; Ministry of Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs; Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection; Ghana Armed Forces; Ghana Police Service; Ghana Immigration Service; National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO); National Anti-Illegal Mining Operations Secretariat (NAIMOS); Environmental Protection Authority (EPA); Minerals Commission; Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs); National Security; Bureau of National Intelligence (BNI); Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ); Traditional Authorities; international partners such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Civil Society Organisations such as the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), Association of Small Scale Miners; Community Youth Members, the media, amongst others.

The validation process formed part of a broader KAIPTC initiative in applied research and policy engagement aimed at bridging empirical evidence, operational realities, and policy responses to illegal mining in Ghana.

Participants acknowledged that illegal mining (galamsey) has evolved into a multi-dimensional challenge, with far-reaching implications for environmental sustainability, public health, livelihoods, and state authority.

2. Development of the Communiqué

This communiqué is based on:

- a. Empirical findings from field research conducted in selected mining areas in Amansie West District, Ashanti Akim Central Municipal and Obuasi Municipal in the Ashanti region; as well as Tarkwa Nsuaem Municipal; Wassa Amenfi West Municipal; and Prestea-Huni Valley Municipal in the Western Region.

b. Deliberations during regional validation and dialogue workshops held in Kumasi and Takoradi between 10 – 11 March 2026 and 17 – 18 March 2026 respectively.

3. The Communiqué

Participants made the following observations and recommendations:

3.1 Context

- a. Illegal mining in Ghana has evolved from an informal livelihood activity into a complex, organised, and adaptive ecosystem, involving financiers, labour networks, equipment supply chain, and protection arrangements;
- b. Illegal mining now represents a serious national security and human security concern, with linkages to organised crime such as arms proliferation, illicit financial flows, and transnational networks;
- c. The persistence of illegal mining is driven by a deeply entrenched political economy, including elite patronage, political interference, and fragmented concession ownership structures, which undermine enforcement efforts;
- d. Environmental degradation, including pollution of major water bodies such as the Pra, Ankobra, and Offin, and widespread land degradation, continue to threaten availability of safe water, food security, and public health;
- e. Communities affected by illegal mining experience multi-layered human insecurity, including health risks from toxic exposure, loss of livelihoods, and social vulnerabilities affecting women, children, and youth;
- f. Illegal mining sites have increasingly become hubs for criminal activity, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, and smuggling, contributing to the emergence of ungoverned spaces and violent hotspots;
- g. Despite intensified enforcement efforts, including the establishment of NAIMOS as a central coordinating body, responses remain constrained by fragmented mandates, weak coordination, and episodic interventions, limiting long-term impact;
- h. High unemployment, poverty, and limited alternative livelihoods continue to drive youth participation in illegal mining, reinforcing its persistence and social acceptance;
- i. Weak data systems, limited intelligence sharing, and inadequate monitoring mechanisms undermine evidence-based policymaking and coordinated responses; and

k. Enforcement-focused approaches alone have proven insufficient, as illegal mining networks demonstrate high levels of adaptability, resilience, and capacity to re-emerge after disruption.

3.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed for consideration by Government and Development Partners:

a. Governance and Political Economy Reforms

- (1) The Government of Ghana should enforce policies prohibiting politically exposed persons (PEPs) from holding or benefiting from mining concessions;
- (2) Mandatory beneficial ownership disclosure should be introduced and enforced across all mining licenses and concessions;
- (3) Land and concession management systems should be digitised and integrated across the Minerals Commission, Lands Commission, and traditional authorities;
- (4) Stronger accountability mechanisms should be established to address corruption, political interference, and elite capture within the mining sector.

b. Institutional Coordination and Policy Coherence

- (1) NAIMOS should be strengthened as the central coordinating architecture for anti-illegal mining efforts, with clear mandates, unified command structures, and standardised reporting protocols;
- (2) Government should institutionalise inter-agency coordination frameworks, linking enforcement, regulation, intelligence, and prosecution across national, regional, and local levels;
- (3) Development partners should support capacity building, logistics, and technical systems to enhance coordination and operational effectiveness.

c. Security Sector and Law Enforcement Reforms

- (1) Enforcement strategies should transition to intelligence-led, technology-driven approaches, including the deployment of drones, satellite monitoring, and real-time surveillance systems;
- (2) Measures should be strengthened to address arms proliferation, border insecurity, and organised criminal networks linked to illegal mining;

(3) Specialised courts and fast-track judicial processes should be established and decentralised to enhance prosecution of illegal mining actors, including financiers and enablers.

d. Disruption of Illicit Financial and Criminal Networks

(1) Government should strengthen anti-money laundering systems and financial intelligence tracking to disrupt illicit gold trade and criminal financing;

(2) Regulatory and security agencies should collaborate to monitor and control:

(a) Gold supply transactions.

(b) Use of heavy metals such as mercury, cyanide, lead, etc., and explosives.

(c) Earth-moving equipment (e.g., excavators), as well as other relevant machinery.

(d) Cross-border movements and smuggling networks.

(3) Development partners should support regional and international cooperation to address the transnational dimensions of illegal mining.

e. Livelihoods and Economic Transformation

(1) Government should scale up sustainable alternative livelihood programmes, including agriculture, agro-processing, aquaculture, and entrepreneurship;

(2) Technical and vocational training centres should be established in mining communities to support skills development and employment creation;

(3) Social protection programmes, including Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), should be expanded and targeted at communities affected by illegal mining;

(4) Community mining schemes should be reformed and regulated to ensure sustainability, inclusivity, and compliance.

f. Environmental Protection and Public Health

(1) Enforcement of environmental regulations should be strengthened, including:

(a) Protection of water bodies and forest reserves.

- (b) Enforcement of buffer zones and reclamation bonds.
- (2) Government should scale up land reclamation, reforestation, and water restoration programmes;
- (3) Public health interventions should include:
 - (a) Community screening for heavy metal exposure.
 - (b) Mobile health services in mining areas.
 - (c) Risk communication and public education campaigns

g. Community Engagement and Local Governance

- (1) Community-based monitoring and early warning systems should be institutionalised;
- (2) Traditional authorities, civil society organisations, and local government structures should be empowered to play active roles in monitoring and reporting illegal mining activities;
- (3) Public awareness campaigns should be intensified to change social norms and perceptions around illegal mining.

h. Data, Research, and Monitoring Systems

- (1) Government should develop an integrated national data system for tracking illegal mining activities, sites, actors, and impacts;
- (2) Continuous research and policy dialogue should be supported to inform adaptive and evidence-based responses;
- (3) Development partners should support data systems, research initiatives, and monitoring frameworks to enhance policy effectiveness.

4. Conclusion

Participants concluded that illegal mining in Ghana represents a systemic, adaptive, and multi-dimensional challenge that requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society response. Sustainable solutions must move beyond enforcement to addressing:

- a. Governance and accountability deficits.
- b. Economic and livelihood drivers.

- c. Criminal networks and illicit financial flows.
- c. Environmental and public health risks.

Signature:



Date:

7 April 2026

Commandant

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