



**NATIONAL SECRETARIAT**

# **UNIVERSITY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF GHANA**

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**Press Release  
For Immediate Release**

**#BANgalamsey**

## **UTAG Calls for Immediate Nationwide Ban on Mining and Prospecting for Gold and Other Minerals in Forest Reserves, Farms and Rivers**

**Accra:** The University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) is adding its voice to the fight against illegal mining, commonly referred to as *galamsey*, and general mining in the forest reserves, which has devastated Ghana's water bodies, forests, and agricultural lands. Numerous scholars have described the state-led efforts to combat galamsey in the Fourth Republic as "failed and corruption-infested militarized battles." Given the current alarming state of illegal mining in the country, these critiques are difficult to dispute.

UTAG is calling for a **total ban** on galamsey now.

Several stakeholders reveal that if the current trajectory continues, Ghana may be forced to **import potable water within six years**. Cocoa productivity, once a cornerstone of our dear economy, has declined by 45% this year. Experts estimate that illegal mining costs the economy **\$2.3 billion annually**. The Forestry Commission reports that over **2.5 million hectares of forest cover** have been permanently destroyed. The Ghana Health Service (GHS) has identified a **35% rise in respiratory diseases** in mining areas, and the alarming statistics continue. This situation correlates very well with high levels of particulate matter and harmful chemical toxins such as mercury, arsenic, lead, cadmium, chromium, etc, found in water bodies, soils, and foods in these mining areas. While mining has been an integral part of our lives for a long time, these devastating developments are linked to the evil actions of greedy people involved in **these activities whose quest for wealth is insatiable**. Have we not already destroyed **50%** of what our forefathers left us? The time for action is now. **All forms of small-scale mining must be banned immediately.**

UTAG has taken this permanent stand against galamsey and will use every constitutionally available tool to ensure compliance because Government-led initiatives like **Operation Vanguard, Operation Flashout**, and other state-led efforts have been monumental failures. The data shows that small-scale mining has negatively affected Ghanaians and, instead, **has evolved into a tool for economic empowerment for the political class, chieftaincy leaders, and the elite**. It does not appear that the rigid and bold stands of some traditional leaders like the Asantehene, Otumfour Nana Osei-Tutu II, against this menace would yield the desired results with the carnage currently on the rise.

Let's unite as a nation to protect the little we have left, safeguard the future of our youth, and chart a sustainable path to development. Therefore, we are calling on the Ghanaian people to support the call for a complete ban on mining in our forest reserves, farms, and water bodies. UTAG will join all labour unions in Ghana to act decisively to ensure that the right thing is done. **If this is not done by the end of September 2024, we will embark on a nationwide industrial action.**

We have taken this principled stand against galamsey because our lives depend on it. We shall not waive our demand for the complete and total ban of galamsey.

It's time to **#BANgalamsey** and ban it for good!

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**#BANgalmsey Now**  
**#SaveOurLand**  
**#ProtectOurFuture**  
**#GhanaFirst**



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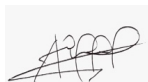
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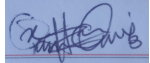
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