



**NATIONAL SECRETARIAT**

# **UNIVERSITY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF GHANA**

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## **Press Statement**

For Immediate Release

### **UTAG Calls on President Mahama to Fulfil His Pledge to End Galamsey**

#### **1. Review of Government Actions**

The National Executive Council (NEC) of the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) held an emergency meeting on Thursday, July 17, 2025, to review the actions of government over the last six (6) months towards combating illegal mining (galamsey) in Ghana. While acknowledging the modest gains achieved by the government through the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources and the security services, particularly the Ghana Police Service led by the Inspector General of Police (IGP) in the fight against galamsey, NEC strongly believe much is left to be desired as the wanton destruction of the environment continues unabated. NEC took note of the instructions issued by the Attorney General and Minister of Justice to the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) to investigate named political actors for their alleged involvement in galamsey and related activities. While this is commendable, more significant and coordinated action is needed to eradicate the galamsey menace in the country permanently.

#### **2. The Pledge Against Galamsey**

The NEC of UTAG urgently calls on His Excellency, President John Dramani Mahama, to honour the anti-galamsey pledge he voluntarily signed prior to the 2024 general elections. This commitment, enshrined in the *National Pledge by Presidential Candidate Taken Against Illegal and Irresponsible Mining (Galamsey) in Ghana*, and witnessed by both the Ghana Coalition Against Galamsey (GCAG) and UTAG, constituted a solemn social contract with the Ghanaian people to combat illegal mining and restore environmental integrity.

#### **3. Time to Walk the Talk**

President Mahama's assumption of office has not yet yielded the concrete actions required to match the gravity of his pledge. UTAG, as a community of scholars, researchers, and defenders of sustainable development, deems it necessary to remind the President of the specific commitments he made and the urgency with which they must be fulfilled. President Mahama must now walk the talk.

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#### **4. Key Commitments in the Pledge and Current Gaps**

As educators, researchers, and advocates for sustainable development, we in UTAG find it imperative to remind the President of the following core promises embedded in the pledge he signed:

##### **a. Immediate and Unambiguous Denunciation of Galamsey**

President Mahama pledged to, upon assuming office as President of the Republic, immediately and publicly denounce the practice of galamsey for its detrimental impact on the natural environment, as well as the health, safety, and well-being of present and future generations of Ghanaians. We are yet to witness the operationalisation of this pledge after six (6) months in office as President of the Republic.

##### **b. Immediate Action to Halt Galamsey Activities**

He promised to direct all persons engaged in illegal mining — be they perpetrators, agents, assigns, financiers, or operatives — to cease their activities immediately and vacate all forest reserves, river bodies, and protected areas. Despite publicly admitting that galamsey is a national emergency (*"I must be honest; this is a national emergency. The national taskforce will continue its effort to halt illegal mining in our forest reserves and on our water bodies,"* [HE President John Dramani Mahama, 15 July 2025]), his actions on this promise have yet to be felt on the ground, as he has continuously declined to declare a state of emergency in galamsey-endemic areas to give practical meaning to the pledge.

##### **c. Law Enforcement Without Fear or Favour**

President John Dramani Mahama pledged to empower the law enforcement agencies — Ghana Police Service, National Security, the Attorney General's Department, and the Judiciary — to ruthlessly enforce the law against those engage in this heinous environmental crime by clamping down on the practice and bringing culprits to book ultimately through the criminal justice system regardless of their political affiliation or social status. There must be no sanctuary for offenders. We are yet to see this pledge materialized in a way that can halt and reverse the wanton destruction of our forest reserves, waterbodies and arable lands.

##### **d. Implementation of Anti-Galamsey Policies**

His Excellency the President promised to design and implement policies to permanently uproot galamsey, starting immediately and continuing into the medium and long terms, as a cornerstone of his administration. We are yet to see any coherent, practically relevant and workable policies from the President and his government to address the galamsey menace permanently.

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**e. Zero Tolerance Messaging from Political Actors**

The President pledged to rein in party officials, communicators, and all persons affiliated with his political party, and to ensure they refrain from making any statements or taking actions that indirectly support or encourage illegal mining. There was a promise by the President to dismiss Metropolitan, Municipal or District Chief Executives who entertain galamsey in their areas and yet, no single one of them has been sacked despite galamsey still ravaging, especially in the Ashanti, Eastern, Western and Ahafo regions among others. Key members of the ruling party and government in these areas where galamsey remains highly active are allegedly involved with no concrete actions taken to arrest and prosecute them.

**6. Beyond the Pledge: Fulfil Other Promises**

UTAG further calls on the President to honour additional campaign commitments made to Ghanaians in 2024, including the repeal of L.I. 2462 and the declaration of a state of emergency in galamsey-affected regions. The time for decisive leadership is now. Illegal mining represents an existential threat, devastating our rivers, forests, agricultural lands, and future livelihoods. UTAG stands firm in its readiness to support scientific research, policy innovation, and civic education aligned with a non-partisan and sustainable fight against galamsey.

**7. Call to Action**

UTAG expects the President to fulfil his pledges with urgency and transparency. If concrete steps are not taken promptly, UTAG will not hesitate to activate all constitutionally permitted avenues—including industrial action—to demand the fulfilment of these national commitments. We urge our members and the broader public to remain vigilant and united in protecting our environment for future generations. The time for rhetoric is over; the time for action is now.

Signed,



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