

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE GHANA CHAMBER OF MINES, MR. SULEMANU KONEY, AT THE ZONE ONE INTER-MINES FIRST AID AND SAFETY COMPETITION HELD AT ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI IDUAPRIEM LIMITED ON 22ND JULY, 2017

Nana Chairman

Hon Gilbert Asmah, M.C.E. for Tarkwa Nsuaem Municipal Assembly

Mr. San Noi, Acting Managing Director of AngloGold Ashanti Iduapriem Limited

Deputy Chief Inspectors of Mines and colleagues

Police Commander,

Municipal Director of Education

Nananom

Clergy and Imams

Captains of the mining industry

Participating mining companies

Venerable Judges from St. John Ambulance

Members of the Media

Invited Guest

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great pleasure that I warmly welcome all and sundry to the zone one edition of the 2017 Inter-Mines First Aid and Safety competition. This year's edition of the competition marks the 40th anniversary of the Chamber's untiring efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and safe practices as core values in the mining industry as well as every home across the country. Over the years, the form and nature of the flagship health and safety event have evolved in response to the unique demands of the era. The erstwhile contest of companies has now transformed to a primetime event for disseminating invaluable knowledge on how to protect lives and property to maximize national production. More recently, the decision to hive-off the oral component of the competition and broadcast same on GTV has enabled us to reach every nook and cranny of our dear country with our message on safety. As well, the introduction of an essay competition for school children within the catchment area of our member companies provides us with a unique opportunity to bequeath invaluable knowledge on health and safety to the country's future leaders.

I wish to commend the members of the Technical Committee and the Central Planning Committee for the innovations and continuous improvement in the relevance of the programme. As well, I applaud our regulatory partner, Inspectorate Division of Minerals Commission for its unflinching commitment to this course since 1977, when the Inter-Mines First Aid and Safety competition was first held. St. John Ambulance also deserves plaudits for enhancing the

professional standards of the event. Moreover, I commend the producing member companies of the Chamber for their support in the institutionalization of the competition. Lastly, our host communities and publics deserve special commendation for their diverse contributions to the growth and sustainability of the mining industry.

Mr. Chairman, our collective efforts over the years have culminated in significant improvements in the mining industry's safety outcomes. Data from the Inspectorate Division of Minerals Commission indicates that the mining industry recorded a reduction in all cases of reportable incidents in 2016, except for First Aid Injury. Specifically, the frequency of Serious Accidents decreased from nineteen (19) in 2015 to seventeen (17) in 2016 while the recorded cases of fatality declined from four (4) to three (3) over the same period. As well, the incidence of non-employee accidents dipped from four (4) in 2015 to zero (0) in 2016. However, the cases of First Aid Injuries increased from one hundred and fifty-five (155) in 2015 to one-hundred and eighty-four (184) in 2016. Although the afore-mentioned statistics denote broad improvements in safety outcomes of mining, the Chamber and its members will continue to adopt technologies and practices that will guarantee zero harm at our various work places. This underlies the choice of "safe and responsible mining, our heritage" as the theme for this year's edition of the Inter-Mines First Aid and Safety competition.

Ladies and gentlemen, our media has been awash with discussions on illegal mining and its impacts since the turn of the year. The wanton pollution and destruction of the ecosystem by these unlicensed miners have recently caught the attention of the public in spite of the solitary and arduous crusade by the Chamber of Mines over the years. For instance, through its regular seminars for Judges and Prosecutors, the Chamber has been instrumental in the amendments of the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 (Act 703) to deepen sanctions for offenses relating to illegal mining. Furthermore, the Chamber has consistently supported the National Security Secretariat in its efforts to tackle the menace of illegal mining. Although these efforts yielded limited success, we are upbeat that His Excellency the President's avowed commitment and the citizens' outcry against illegal mining will provide tailwinds for the permanent eradication of this menace. The Chamber fully supports the government's efforts in this regard and will make its expertise in mining available to the relevant duty bearers.

Often times, the public commentary on illegal mining is confused with small-scale mining. Whereas the difference between both activities has become imperceptible in recent times, it is important to state unequivocally that they are not homogeneous. Small-scale mining is provided for within the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 (Act 703) and is a potent means of creating decent employment for Ghanaians.

We must therefore explore ways of improving the outcomes associated with this legal activity, which is a critical form of local content in the mining industry. The introduction of basic Health

and Safety standards such as the compulsory use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as regular monitoring and reporting could be useful in moderating the environmental legacies of such form of mining. We also urge the state to conduct geological investigations before parceling out concessions to prospective small-scale miners or review the statutes to make it mandatory for exploration to precede the issuance of mining permits for small-scale mining. Such a measure will abate the degree of speculation in small-scale mining and reduce its environmental footprint. Reforms in the sector should also consider how to maximize the broad-based value potential of the sub-sector.

Notwithstanding the numerous challenges besetting the minerals sector, it continues to remain the bastion of fiscal revenue to finance the development aspirations of the country. Data from the Ghana Revenue Authority shows that the mining sector was the largest contributor to direct domestic revenue in 2016. It accounted for approximately 16 per cent of total direct domestic revenue mobilized by the GRA, which translates into a nominal value of GH¢ 1.65 billion.

The 2016 fiscal revenue outturn of the minerals sector represents a 22 per cent improvement over the GH¢ 1.35 billion recorded in 2015. The main drivers of the upturn in fiscal performance were the 7.5 per cent increase in the average price of gold and fresh production from Asanko Gold Mines as well as growth in production from Newmont's Ahafo Mine, AngloGold Ashanti's Iduapriem Mine and Ghana Manganese Company. In addition, two of our producing member companies, Gold Fields Ghana and Newmont, were recognized as the first and second large tax payers in 2016 by the GRA respectively.

Furthermore, the minerals sector continues to exert significant positive influence on the health of the country's balance of payments (BOP). In 2016, statistics from the Bank of Ghana shows that proceeds from the export of minerals accounted for nearly 45 per cent of total merchandise exports, which was more than twice and thrice the shares of cocoa and crude oil respectively. The January 2017 report of the Monetary Committee of the Bank of Ghana partly attributes the return of the country's BOP to positive in nearly six years to the increase in mineral revenue; "For the first time since 2011, the provisional balance of payments in 2016 recorded a surplus. This largely reflected an improvement in the trade balance driven by a rise in gold receipts and a fall in oil import prices". Since the health of a country's BOP is positively correlated with the stability of its currency, it implies that the mining sector contributed significantly to shoring up the stability of the Cedi in 2016.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the potential for the mining industry to support broad based economic development is not lost on the Chamber. Accordingly, the Chamber has deliberately endeavoured to integrate the operations of its member companies into the local host and national economies. Specifically, the Chamber's collaboration with the Minerals Commission in the development of a Procurement List for the mining industry has culminated in the expansion of

local participation in the value chain of the mining industry. These linkages do not only enhance the well-being of our population but also fortify the capacity of businesses to transfer critical skills acquired in the mining industry to other productive segments of the economy. More so, the recent decision to host the primary Secretariat of ECOWAS Federation of Chambers of Mines in Ghana provides an opportunity for business units to service the input demands of mining companies in the sub-region.

As I bring my address to a conclusion, I wish to commend AngloGold Ashanti Iduapriem Limited for ably hosting the zone one Inter-Mines First Aid and Safety competition. Our participating companies and community teams also deserve praise for their exemplary commitment to safety. I urge you all to imbibe the knowledge from the programme and incorporate it into your everyday lives.

I am most grateful for your kind attention. Thank you.