

**Welcome Address by Mr. Dan Owiredu, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of  
the Chamber of Mines, at the 81<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting  
held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at the MPlaza Hotel.**

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Your Excellency, the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana

Hon. Minister of Lands and Natural Resources

Hon. Members of Parliament

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

The CEO, President Vice President and Members of the Chamber

Distinguished Invited Guests

Colleagues

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very honoured to welcome you all to the 81<sup>st</sup> AGM of our Chamber. I would like to extend a special welcome to Your Excellency, Mr. John Dramani Mahama, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana for joining us here today.

As many of you are aware, the Ghana Chamber of Mines is a private sector organization with a vision of being a respected, effective and unified voice for the mining industry. The Chamber's mission is to represent the mining industry in Ghana using the resources and capabilities of its members to deliver services that address members, government and community needs in order to enhance development.

Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen, the mining industry has over the past years been actively pursuing proactive strategic relationship with our various publics in order to build consensus on the contribution of the sector to sustainable national development.

This AGM which is under the theme: **“Mining and Sustainable Development: Meeting inter-generational challenges”** seeks to highlight the quest of the mining industry to operate in a manner that will satisfy the needs of the current generation without jeopardizing the survival and well being of future generations.

This theme, which emphasizes the words **“meeting inter-generational challenges”** seeks to stress the industry’s mission to promote and use mining as a catalyst for sustainable national development.

One of the greatest challenges facing our industry is the creative integration of mining as an economic activity within the imperative of environmental integrity and social concerns.

Your Excellency, we believe that for mining to make a profound contribution to sustainable development it is important to address the integration of all aspects of economic social and environmental benefits and impacts during and beyond all phases of the life of a mining operation as well as ensure that benefits can be sustained and also ensure the rehabilitation of disturbed land.

The industry continues to generate wealth in direct and indirect ways, but there is still a growing perception that there is a mismatch of opportunities and problems. The perception is that the wealth often seem to be created far from the communities and environments that feel the adverse impacts. The challenge of ensuring that local communities benefit from mining is what is driving the Chamber’s effort at creating sustainable partnerships for development that will enhance social development in the communities.

The Chamber’s sustainable development concept seeks to promote a vision of business accountability to its wide range of stakeholders. Some of the key areas of the concept are responsible environmental management, proactive community

relations, health and safety for employees and their dependants, as well as respect for the needs of the present and future generations.

We are aware that for the minerals sector to continue to contribute positively to sustainable development, we need to demonstrate continuous improvement of our environmental, social, economic contributions.

The mining industry subscribes to responsible, sustainable and innovative community relations. The mining industry also believes that social responsibility is a corporate priority and we recognize the importance of integrating the environmental, social and economic aspects of our operations into the decision-making process.

Your Excellency, the industry is aware that it is only through responsible environmental and social behaviour and due consideration for the welfare of employees and the host communities in which we operate that we will obtain the indispensable social license necessary for sustainable mining operations.

With an active history in mining, the Chamber believes that Ghana should deliberately mainstream mining into its development agenda in order to tap the integrated benefits that the industry offers. The mere dependence on the revenues derived from mining alone will not afford this nation the opportunity to piggy-back on its natural resources for socio-economic development.

We believe that with the right policies, backed by a judicious use of our resources, mining can take a centre stage in the development of skills, expertise and revenues necessary to catalyze development.

Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude by saying that the Chamber and its members will continue to concentrate on implementing a

proactive sustainable development agenda that is strengthened by its members' existing management systems and strategic values.

Once again akwaaba.

Thank you very much for your attention.