

**REMARKS BY MR ERIC ASUBONTENG, PRESIDENT OF THE
GHANA CHAMBER OF MINES AT A CEREMONY HELD AT THE
MINISTRY OF HEALTH ON THURSDAY, 9TH APRIL 2020 TO
DONATE A PACKAGE OF GHS11.5 MILLION TOWARD EFFORTS
TO COMBAT THE COVID 19 CORONAVIRUS**

- **The Minister for Health, Hon. Kwaku Agyemang Manu;**
- **The Minister for Lands & Natural Resources, Hon. Kwaku Asomah-Cheremeh;**
- **Executives and Management of the Ghana Chamber of Mines;**
- **Officials of the Ministry of Health;**
- **Representatives of the KCCR, Noguchi and Korle-bu;**
- **Members of the media;**
- **Distinguished ladies and gentlemen.**

The threat we face now, as a nation, with this COVID-19 pandemic, has given both political and business leaders a reason to pause and reconsider the way we live our lives and its impact on the global village. Since December 2019, we have watched with bated breath as the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) has disrupted livelihoods and ended lives in Ghana and across the world, from China through to nearly every nook and cranny of our world.

We have had to even rethink the way we engage with family, friends and loved ones. Nations with some of the best health systems have yielded to the immense pressure from the crisis with over seventy thousand recorded deaths globally in the past few weeks.

Honourable Ministers, in Ghana we have all been witnesses to the measures announced by the President of the Republic, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, to contain the spread of the infection, provide adequate care for the sick and limit the impact of the virus on social and economic life. These laudable initiatives are essential to winning the fight against the disease, as has unfolded in many other jurisdictions.

As one of the main pillars of Ghana's economy, the mining industry deems it necessary now, more than ever, to lend a helping hand to the government as we seek a swift end to the Covid-19 crisis. The fight against this disease is as much that of government, as it is of the private sector. Indeed, we can only make meaningful progress if all and sundry, in one way or the other, big or small, do whatever we can to support this joint effort, led by His Excellency the President.

On that note, the Ghana Chamber of Mines is today presenting a package of GHS11.5 Million (the equivalent of USD\$2 Million) as our contribution to the efforts by the government to contain Covid-19 across the chain of measures in fighting this pandemic, including the provision of the best care for those who fall ill.

The package consists of the following:

- GHS 3.3 Million for twenty (20) Ventilators and accessories to the Ministry of Health for distribution to hospitals across the country;
- GHS 3.2 Million for procuring 7,000 complete sets of PPEs to frontline health workers and to support other Covid-19 logistical requirements;
- A total of GHS 5 Million to the key testing centres across the country to support the testing of 25,000 Covid-19 cases. This is broken down into the following:
 - GHS 2 Million to the Noguchi Medical Research Institute to support the testing of 10,000 Covid-19 cases;
 - GHS 2 Million to the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research in Tropical Medicine (KCCR) to support testing of 10,000 Covid-19 cases; and
 - GHS 1 Million to the National Public Health Reference Laboratory of the Korle-bu Teaching Hospital to support testing of 5,000 Covid-19 cases.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the World Health Organisation, has recommended that increased testing, done quickly and effectively, is a key step in isolating and containing the infection. It is our fervent expectation that this donation will ease the pressure on government and free up much-needed resources for other essential aspects of the national strategy for Covid-19.

Honourable Ministers, you may have heard about the measures individual member companies of the Ghana Chamber of Mines have put in place to protect our employees, contractors and host communities from the infection. These include extensive internal COVID-19 protocols on our operations, as well as donations at the local level to health facilities, local government institutions and community groups.

The mining industry thrives on discipline as well as commitment to the health and safety of our employees and host communities; hence we pledge our unflinching support to the government and its experts as we work collaboratively to stop the onslaught of COVID-19.

As a good Ghanaian corporate citizen, even as we seek the promotion of our respective business interests, we at the Ghana Chamber of Mines recognise the need to also identify ourselves with progressive national efforts to protect the people and institutions in our host communities and the nation at large.

The Chamber has always rallied support for the nation in times of such difficulties. A case in point was in 2014, when the Chamber provided high quality medical supplies to the state to help combat the dreaded Ebola disease that had killed many on the continent.

We take the opportunity to use this platform to call on our fellow Ghanaians to heed the advice of the Ghana Health Service and the medical staff as we put our shoulders to the wheel to safeguard our dear country from the effects of this pandemic.

Let us all stay at home, practice personal hygiene by regularly washing our hands with soap and under running water and ensure that we are always one-and-a-half metres, at least, away from the next person. I believe that working together we will pull through stronger. As the President of the Republic has said, "This too shall pass."

We also call on all well-meaning individuals and businesses to collaborate with government and support its effort, to ensure that the nation returns to normalcy as soon as possible.

May God bless the mining industry and the good people of Ghana.

Thank you.