

WELCOME REMARKS BY SULEMANU KONEY, CEO OF THE GHANA CHAMBER OF MINES, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 2024 WEST AFRICAN MINING AND POWER CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION (WAMPOC/WAMPEX) HELD ON 5TH JUNE 2024 AT THE ACCRA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

Odeneho Okyere Kusi Ntrama, Essumagya Manhene, and Asanteman Benkumhene,
Hon. Samuel A. Jinapor, MP for Damongo and Minister for Lands and Natural Resources,
Hon. Kwaku Ofori Asiamah, Minister of Transport,
The Chair and members of the Minerals Commissions' Board
President of the EFEDCOM, Mr. Adama Soro
Representatives of Ministers from the ECOWAS Subregion,
Esteemed Past and Present Executives of the Chamber,
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
CEOs and Captains of the Mining and Power Sectors,
CEOs and Heads of Institutions,
Members of the Media,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am truly delighted to welcome you to the 2024 edition of the West African Mining & Power Conference and Exhibition in our national capital city, Accra. A special welcome goes to our brothers and sisters from West Africa who will be with us for the next three days.

While the conference (WAMPOC) will be for two days starting today, the exhibition (WAMPEX) will run for three days, ending on Friday, 7th June 2024.

Before I continue, I would like to pay special homage to HRM Otumfuo Osei Tutu II not only for his decision to grace the Conference but to share his nuggets of wisdom with us. We are delighted that he delegated no other than the Asanteman Benkumhene, Odeneho Okyere Kusi Ntrama, to speak to us on his behalf. We are very grateful. Odeneho, you are most welcome, AKWAABA!

Your Excellences, Hon. Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are hosting WAMPOC/WAMPEX at a very challenging time of the global

economy and especially that of developing countries. In a recent study, the World Bank observed that despite multiple shocks during the last few years, the global economy has generally been resilient. Major economies are emerging strongly even with a significant rise in interest rates relative to the last four decades, without accompanying steep unemployment rates or financial crises. However, global growth was the weakest in that period relative to any half-decade since the 1990s. Further and quite worrying is the fact that one out of every four developing economies is relatively poor compared to its pre-COVID years.

Ladies and gentlemen, the World Bank also noted in one breadth that commodity-exporting nations face a peculiar challenge relative to their fiscal performance; on the other, it acknowledges tremendous opportunities for mineral resources, especially in the developing world, to be catalyzed for development. The Bank recommends a holistic approach to minerals-based development. In other words, an approach that deliberately integrates mining into the broader economy. This includes planning physical and social infrastructure, and industrial development with the mining companies in mind. Not as sources of funds for these developments but as partners who can catalyze these developments through meaningful and proactive engagements between resource countries and mining firms. Ironically, developing countries, especially those in Africa, host significant mineral resources, including critical minerals.

Ladies and gentlemen, the theme for the conference is "Mining and Power Hub: Driving Sustainable Investment Opportunities in West Africa" is therefore apt. We have endeavoured to reflect in this conference program the most appropriate topics that should elicit deliberations and foster ideas to reposition mining in West Africa for broad-based socio-economic development.

On behalf of the organizers, we wish to welcome all the keynote speakers, panelists, and indeed delegates for participating in the Conference. We also are privileged to have with us delegations from Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Burkina Faso, and ECOWAS Federation of Chambers of Mines. Welcome. We thank you most sincerely for making the time to be with us.

We expect that the mix of ideas and insights from mining and energy professionals as well as the wisdom from traditional authorities will constitute a worthwhile broth to help us address the paradox.

Welcome, Hon. Samuel Abu Jinapor, Minister for Lands and Natural Resources of Ghana. Thank you, Hon. Minister, for being a champion of the mining industry. You continue to lead the charge for us, and I hope I will be allowed to echo what leaders in the industry say about our Sector Minister. “We could not have had a better Minister!!!”

Before I conclude, I would like to underscore our deep appreciation to our partners, DMG Events of South Africa as well as Events and Projects International (EDI) for the 30-year journey. We look forward to many more years of partnership that not only delivers mutual value but helps to unlock the great potential our mining and energy resources in West Africa can unleash for national and sub-regional development.

Whilst we focused on our regular endeavours, EPI, and DMG Events did a lot of the extra legwork. We are grateful for your partnership.

We want to put on special record the sponsorship of several companies without whose support, we would not have been able to organize this Conference: Mac Partners as Headline Sponsor; Newmont, Atlantic Lithium, Minerals Income Investment Fund (MIIF), B5Plus, and Cummins as Main sponsors; Stanbic Bank as the Financial Sponsor; and others such as Rand Refinery, FLSmidth, Nguvu Mining, Miwatek, CBG, Protea Coin, and the Bank Hospital for supporting the conference.

To our exhibitors, we trust you will realize your objectives for the investments you have made to showcase your products to the distinguished and worthy eyeballs at WAMPOC/WAMPEX 2024.

At this point, it is my great pleasure to introduce the Chairman of this opening ceremony, a seasoned lawyer with a diverse background and competencies. He joined Gold Fields in 2010 and has been the Vice President and Head of Legal and Compliance since March 2015. With a distinguished career in the mining industry spanning many years, he has a background in law, economics, taxation, and finance. He previously lectured business law and jurisprudence at Zenith

University College. He is a Past Chairman of the Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee of the Ghana Chamber of Mines.

Odeno, Hon. Minister, ladies, and gentlemen, please let's welcome Mr. Michael Edem Akafia, Esq., now Vice President - External Affairs of Gold Fields Ghana, and President of the Ghana Chamber of Mines to chair the function.

Mr. Chairman, I present to you your audience. Audience, your Chairman.

