

2018 MEET THE PRESS

PRESENTATION BY

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS
AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

HON. KWAKU ASOMAH-CHEREMEH

Mr. Chairman,
Deputy Ministers,
Chief Directors,
Heads of Agencies,
The Media,
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

INTRODUCTION

It is my Pleasure to be here this morning to brief you on the current status of implementation of Programmes and Projects being pursued by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources within the National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework (2018-2021) and other National and International Strategic Plans such as the Sector Medium Term Plans (2018-2021), the Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030) and the African Union Agenda (2063).

This is in line with the President's Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (2017-2024) "An

Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for All (2018-2021)". These Programmes and Projects are geared towards attaining Sustainable Economic Growth with the focus of creating employment and ensuring environmental sustainability as well as a favourable investment climate.

I am here with my two deputies, Hon. Barbara Oteng-Gyasi and Hon. Benito Owusu-Bio and the Acting Chief Director, Prof. Patrick Agbesinyale. Also present are the Chief Executives of the Lands, Minerals and Forestry Commissions, the Administrator of Stool Lands, the Acting Director General of Ghana Geological Survey Authority, the Managing Director of the Precious Minerals Marketing Company and the Directors of the Ministry and Agencies.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, my presentation will cover a brief introduction of Programmes and Projects being initiated by the ministry, respective strategies and current status of implementation, prevailing challenges within the Natural Resource sector and way forward.

Mr. Chairman, with your kind permission I wish to commence my presentation by touching on the Forestry Sub-sector.

FORESTRY SUB-SECTOR

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, the forestry subsector of the Ministry has been very active in implementing various policies, programmes and projects in order to sustain Ghana's forests and wildlife estates and resources. The objectives of these activities are to ensure the sustainable management, development and protection of forest and wildlife resources. I would like to highlight some notable achievements within the Sub-Sector.

Restoration of Degraded Landscapes

Ladies and gentlemen, as part of efforts to restore the nation's degraded landscapes into a productive one, the Ministry continued to implement strategies and activities under the National Forest Plantation Development Programme. The goal of the programme is to develop a sustainable resource base that will satisfy the future demand for industrial timber and enhance environmental quality, thereby relieving pressure on the natural forest and increase forest cover. This is in line with the implementation of the 25-Year Ghana Forest Plantation Strategy (2016-2040), which is a blueprint for landscape restoration in Ghana.

It should be noted that between 2002 and 2017, an aggregate area of over 200,000ha of degraded forest reserves has been established throughout the country under various components of the plantation development programme. As of 2017, private developers have planted a cumulative area of over 40,000ha and in the process, an amount of about GHS 420,000 was disbursed as ground rent to the respective landowners of the planted forest reserves through the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands.

As spelt out in the National Plantation Strategy, a target of 25,000 hectares of degraded landscapes is expected to be planted this year under government and private sector initiatives across the country. As at October this year, an area of almost 14,600 hectares have been planted. This has so far generated employment for over 75,500 people through the government's Modified Taungya System (MTS), Direct Planting, YEA and the private sector plantings.

Youth in Afforestation Programme

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, the government's determination to save the environment and in line with the Forest Plantations Strategy, the Forestry Commission and the Youth Employment Agency signed a Service Agreement in 2017 for the

joint implementation of a 2-Year Forest Plantation Programme under the Youth in Agriculture and Afforestation Model. This programme was launched in Kumasi on 13th August, 2018, by His Excellency, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo.

Under the Service Agreement, the engaged beneficiaries are expected to establish forest plantations, undertake enrichment planting of degraded forest reserves, plant trees on farms, maintain and rehabilitate forest plantations.

Mr. Chairman, the agreement with the Youth Employment Agency was initially to recruit 15,000 youth but the number has far been exceeded as a result of overwhelming interest expressed by the teeming youth in the programme. Currently, over 60,000 beneficiaries have been engaged under the programme of which 30% of the total number are women. Indeed, this is part of government's job creation agenda in the forestry sub-sector to boost plantation activities in the country. This forms part of the total job created this year under the Ghana Forest Plantation Strategy.

Promotion of Private Sector Investments in Plantation Development

Ladies and gentlemen, as part of efforts to boost private sector participation in forest development, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Forestry Commission, Form Ghana Limited, Form International BV, Berekum Traditional Council and Berekum Municipal Authority to restore the degraded Tain II Forest Reserve in the Brong Ahafo Region.

The First Phase of the MoU, which ends in 2021 (4 years) is being financed at a cost of US\$6 million, by Partnerships for Forests, a UK Department for International Development (DFID) Programme and DOB Ecology, a Dutch Foundation. The agreement will ensure a sustainable restoration of the degraded forest reserve to enhance its productivity. This will begin with a pilot planting of 2,000ha and ultimately restore 100,000ha of the Reserve.

Tree Tenure and Benefit Sharing

Mr. Chairman, it will interest you to note that by June 2019, the Government would have completed policy reforms that will allow farmers to enjoy benefits of nurturing trees on their farms. This

policy is to motivate farmers to keep trees on their farms to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in off-reserve areas.

Similarly, under the Ghana Forest Investment Programme (GFIP), being implemented by the Ministry, the Forestry Commission, CoCoBoD and other partners, farmers are being supported to plant at least 18 trees per hectare of their cocoa farms to guarantee them future revenues and also make the farms more climate resilient. Over 2000 farmers are already benefiting from this initiative in cocoa growing areas in the Western Region.

Community Participation in Forest Resource Management

Mr. Chairman, in order to promote active community engagement in forest management, the Ministry together with other partners is establishing Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs) in many forest endowed communities. This is to empower the communities to participate in policy dialogue and resource management processes. To support the work of the CREMAs, the Ministry through the GFIP is constructing five CREMA buildings in Bia, Juaboso, Sefwi Traditional Area and Enchi to serve as resource centers for the communities. The buildings are currently in various stages of completion.

Ecotourism Development

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, in order to broaden the revenue base of the forestry subsector, the Ministry has prioritized ecotourism promotion and development as one of the major management tools in safeguarding the ecological integrity of selected wildlife protected areas in the country. It is also to sustainably exploit their enormous potential for income generation.

Over the years, the sector has implemented innovative marketing strategies that attracted investors such as Gold Fields Ghana Limited through Leadership for Conservation in Africa, Eco-lodges Ghana Limited and Brave-hearts International to implement ecotourism development initiatives in the wildlife protected areas.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, recently, through a competitive bidding process conducted by the Forestry Commission, a strategic investor has been selected to develop ecotourism infrastructure on the Sakumo Ramsar Site. About 300 acres (less than 10%) of the 3,371 acres, will be developed, thus leaving 2,451 acres for nature conservation.

This project is a Design, Finance, Build, Operate, Maintain and Transfer Public Private Partnership Model. Negotiations are on-going to sign an agreement for the project, which has an estimated total capital investment of almost US\$250 million over a concession period of thirty-five (35) years in the first instance, and renewable for a second term of twenty-five (25) years. Under the agreement, Government will receive an amount of USD 500,000 annually in addition to 20% of net annual profit.

This is a unique nature-based income generating recreational and job creation opportunity through private sector investment that will provide a major ecotourism destination to people within the West African sub-region.

Addressing Illegal Logging and Chainsaw Activities

Mr. Chairman, to combat the increasing spate of illegal logging, mining, farming and other illegal activities in our forest reserves and wildlife protected areas, two approaches are being pursued. The first approach is the continued capacity building of the Rapid Response Teams established by the Forestry Commission.

The Commission has so far resourced and deployed eighteen (18) Rapid Response Teams to hotspots of illegal activities in Forest Districts and wildlife protected areas. These are mobile units that have received military training and are arms-bearing teams within the Forestry Commission.

In the past six (6) months, their operations culminated in the arrest of One hundred and eighty one (181) suspects and seizure of ninety-eight thousand, five hundred and sixty-six (98,566) pieces of assorted lumber and forty-four (44) chainsaw machines. Thirty-four (34) dredging machines popularly known as “Chanfan” used for illegal mining on river beds in some forest reserves were also destroyed. This compares with the arrest of One hundred and eighty-five (185) suspects and seizure of over fifty three thousand six hundred (53,600) pieces of assorted lumber and one hundred and fifty-eight (158) chainsaw machines in 2017. The strategy of this approach is to be able to combat illegal activities at the field or forest level as well as the transport routes/roads.

Mr. Chairman, the second approach adopted towards fighting illegal logging is through the implementation of the Voluntary

Partnership Agreement (VPA), which Ghana entered into with the European Union in November 2009.

Under this agreement, all timber consignments are to be issued with Timber Legality Licenses. These Timber Legality Licenses, which are known under the agreement as Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Licenses can only be issued after consignments going to the market have been proven to come from a legal source.

Ladies and gentlemen, the strategy behind this arrangement is to ensure that those who engage in illegalities will not have access to the market, whether local or international. In other words, the message is, “you may be able to steal the timber but you cannot sell it”.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to announce that in November 2017, the Legislative Instrument that gives effect to this new regime was passed by Parliament. This is the Timber Resources Management and Legality Licensing Regulations, 2017 (LI 2254).

The technical and administrative systems to fully implement this agreement are nearly done and Ghana is in consultation with the EU, as arranged under the agreement, to assess and finalize the processes that will see Ghana trading under Timber Legality Licenses. Trial shipments have already been conducted to The Netherlands, Germany and Spain.

Timber Exports

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, to enhance revenue mobilization for the forestry subsector of the economy, the Ministry strengthened timber trade and industry development in recent years. In 2017, the export trade recorded a volume of over 339,000m³, which is about 15% less of the 397,000m³ realized in 2016. In terms of value, US\$226 million was realized in 2017, which is 16% less than the 2016 figure of US\$268 million. The factors that accounted for the decrease in the export trade are numerous and not limited to dwindling resource base but due to less expensive products from Asia. It will however, interest you to know that as at June this year, the Forestry Commission has facilitated the export of a total wood volume of about 169,000m³ that yielded a value of US\$126 million. All things being equal and not underestimating the variability factors in the international

market, the total expected value of US\$238 million will be recorded from an estimated volume of over 320,000m³ at the end of this year.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, in our quest to halt deforestation and forest degradation and address the adverse effects of climate change, the forestry sub-sector has actively engaged both national and international stakeholders in the design and implementation of Ghana's REDD+ Strategy and programmes.

One of the programmes in the strategy, which is the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme (GCFRP), selected into the Carbon Fund of the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility in Paris in June 2017, seeks to reduce expansionist cocoa production systems while also restoring tree cover on farmlands to improve cocoa yields, reduce deforestation and degradation and enhance rural livelihoods. This programme when executed successfully, has the potential to generate US\$50 million in payments for about ten (10) million tons of Carbon Emission Reductions over a six (6) year period.

Another significant milestone is the submission of another emission reduction project document to the Green Climate Fund for funding to undertake climate mitigation actions in the three Northern Regions of Ghana. The project is dubbed the Ghana Shea Landscape REDD+ Project which will be implemented from 2019 to 2025, also with immense support from the private sector.

Cocoa and Forest Initiative

Mr. Chairman, I am also glad to inform you that Ghana is in the process of implementing a Cocoa and Forest Initiative (CFI) which is a joint agreement between the government and multinational chocolate producing companies who have made commitments to end deforestation and forest degradation due to cocoa production. This is an initiative of the Prince of Wales and Ghana has already developed and launched an Implementation Plan to implement the Joint Framework of Action which was signed in Bonn, Germany in November 2017.

Promoting the Bamboo and Rattan Industry

Ladies and Gentlemen, as part of efforts to find suitable alternatives to timber resource, Bamboo and Rattan which together

constitute the two largest Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) of Ghana have been identified. These resources have been proven to be the most suitable complement to timber usage such as building and construction, pulpwood, flooring, panel products and furniture. In addition, bamboo is a unique material with a range of socio-economic and environmental benefits and hence it is the desire of the government to protect these resources and promote its utilization.

In view of these, the Ministry has commenced various interventions to create awareness on the potentials of bamboo and rattan and also build capacities of artisans in the use of the material. Just a few weeks ago, the Ministry in collaboration with the Chinese Embassy organized an intensive four-week training for over one hundred (100) Ghanaian artisans to upgrade their skills in various products design and processing. The training was very successful as fantastic bamboo and rattan products were produced.

I am also happy to announce that the Chinese Government has approved our proposal for the construction of a Bamboo and Rattan Processing and Demonstration Center at Ayi-Mensah in Greater Accra Region where a lot of skills training will be provided for

Ghanaian artisans and investors in the bamboo industry. I am hopeful that this facility when constructed will further enhance the sector's performance.

MINING SUB-SECTOR

Mr. Chairman, the mining sub-sector presents an extraordinary opportunity for Ghana's rapid transformation because of the significant contribution to Government's revenue, as well as the potential for the development of linkage opportunities including value addition to minerals being exploited.

As the second largest producer of gold in Africa, Ghana's prominence in the mining sector continues to dominate and for which reason, the organizers of the largest mining investment event in Africa, 'Investing in Mining Indaba' have invited H.E. The President of the Republic of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo as the Special Guest of Honour at the 2019 conference in South Africa.

Mining Sub-Sector Contribution to the Economy

Mr. Chairman, in 2017, the Sub-Sector contributed GH¢ 2.2 billion to Government revenue, representing 16.3% of total domestic tax

revenue collected by the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA). This represented 32% increase in the sector's contribution to government revenue compared to GH¢ 1.6 billion in 2016.

For first half of 2018, the Mining Sub-Sector contributed a total of GH¢1.03 billion to Government revenue as collected by the Domestic Tax Revenue Division of Ghana Revenue Authority. This indicates an increase of 17.11% as compared to the 2017 first half value of GH¢ 877 million.

Again, the sector contributed 7.2% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2017 compared to 8.0% GDP in 2016. This means the sector contributed GH¢17.1 billion to the Ghanaian economy in 2017 compared to GH¢15.8 billion in 2016.

Further, the sector contributed 44% of total merchandise exports in 2017 translating into US\$6 billion compared to US\$ 5 billion in 2016 representing 45%.

For first half of 2018, minerals export earned Ghana US\$ 3.1 billion representing 38% of Total Merchandize Export.

Investments in the Mining Sub-Sector

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is also worth noting that investments in the mining sector have seen an increase of 7% in 2017. This showed an increase from US\$ 970 million in 2016 to US\$ 1.04 billion in 2017.

As part of government's effort to promote local content in the mining industry and in accordance with the Minerals and Mining (General) Regulations, 2012 (L.I.2173), the Ministry working with the Minerals Commission in 2018 identified nine (9) products (goods/services) in addition to the existing nineteen (19) to be procured locally by mining companies in the country.

The purpose of adding on to the Local Procurement List for the mining industry is to ensure that goods and services which are locally available in adequate quantities and at an optimal price and meet the appropriate safety and quality standards are patronized by the mining industry with the view of promoting the growth of the economy, particularly in the manufacturing and service sectors, thereby reducing imports and creating employment in country.

The additional Local Procurement List are:

1. Security Services (Exclusive Ghanaian Directors and Shareholders)
2. Legal Services (Exclusive Ghanaians)
3. Insurance Services (Strictly incorporated in Ghana)
4. Financial Services (Strictly incorporated in Ghana)
5. Contract Mining (Strictly incorporated in Ghana)
6. Fuel (Exclusive Ghanaian Directors and Shareholders)
7. Activated Carbon
8. Cable Bolt and Accessories, Split Setts, Rebars, Mining Mesh
9. Cupels

The increase in revenues accruing from the sector is as a result of increase in production of the traditional minerals coupled with favourable metal price on the International commodities market.

It will interest all to know that bauxite production increased by 16% in 2017 to 1.5million metric tonnes compared to 1.3 million metric tonnes in 2016. Manganese production saw an increase to 3 million metric tonnes in 2017 representing an increase of 49% over 2016 production.

Gold production, however, witnessed a marginal dip from 4.24 million ounces in 2016 to 4.23 million ounces in 2017.

For 2018, all minerals except bauxite witnessed significant increase in production during the first half as compared to 2017. Bauxite decreased by 167 thousand metric tonnes in the first half of 2018 as compared to the same period in 2017. A total of 537 thousand metric tonnes was produced in first half 2018 as compared to 703 thousand metric tonnes in first half 2017. This represents a decrease of 23.69%.

Manganese production however continued in the trajectory of growth. The country produced 1.9 million metric tonnes of manganese in the first half of 2018 as compared to 1.3 million metric tonnes in the first half of 2017. This resulted in an increase of about 44% over the period.

Gold, which is Ghana's flagship mineral, saw production rise from 2.2 million ounces in first half of 2017 to 2.5 million ounces in first half of 2018 representing an increase of 13.67%.

Addressing Illegal Mining

Ladies and Gentlemen, even with all these contributions stated above, the mining sector has seen its fair share of challenges. The most prominent of these challenges being illegal mining activities and its associated environmental implications.

To address this challenge, a moratorium to temporarily suspend artisanal and small-scale mining operations was put in place in April, 2017. The main objectives of the ban were to reduce:

- Uncontrolled Pollution of water bodies
- Degradation of forest and farmlands
- Illegal small-scale mining activities.

Operation Vanguard

Esteemed guests and members of the media, I must admit that the media had played a very significant role in our quest to reduce the menace of illegal mining. The collective and coordinated approach in the fight against illegal mining had improved some of our heavily polluted water bodies. However, some recalcitrant illegal miners were not co-operating with the ban and this called for further action that resulted in the launch of Operation Vanguard on July 31st 2017. Operation Vanguard had:

- *Made 1,339 arrests.*
- *Seized and immobilized 614 excavators.*
- *Seized and immobilized 1,557 water pumping machines.*
- *Seized 84 vehicles and 84 motorbikes.*
- *Seized 5,739 'Chang Fan' dredging equipment.*
- *Seized 112 arms and 2,359 ammo rounds.*

Restructuring of Minerals Commission

Ladies and Gentlemen, as part of the measures to streamline small scale mining activities, the Minerals Commission has undergone some institutional reforms. To this end, Government facilitated the establishment of additional Regional, District and Satellite offices of the Minerals Commission to enhance visibility and monitoring of small scale mining activities.

As I speak now, four (4) Satellite Offices in Manso Nkwanta, Diaso, Daboase and Prestea have been completed and are ready for occupation. Another ten (10) of such offices are being established at Tinga, Dormaa, Enchi, Juabeso, Wassa Akropong, Antoakrom, Gbani, Nkawie, Jacobu and Kpassa.

Also five (5) District Offices at Bole, Kenyasi, Tamale, Cape Coast and Hohoe are being added to the existing ones whilst two additional regional offices Ho and Bolgatanga are being added to the existing four (4) regional offices.

The Commission has already taken delivery of 17 Toyota Land Cruiser Pick Ups and some 26 Tablets and awaiting delivery of 45 motor bikes and accessories to enhance effectiveness at Regional, Districts and Satellite decentralized offices.

Last month, I witnessed the passing-out parade of the first batch of 220 mine guards out of targeted 600 guards, who went through two (2) weeks training at the Police Training School, Tesano to help curb illegal mining activities. The functions of these mine guards are mainly to:

- Monitor activities on and around water bodies in mining areas;
- Report all forms of illegal mining activities to their respective District offices;
- Be the focal person on mining of all forms (small scale gold mining, sand, quarry, gravels and stone mining among other industrial mineral operations) in the Satellite areas.

In furtherance to the institutional reforms of the Commission, Complaints, Grievance and Investigation Desk have also been established at the Minerals Commission to manage community and mining related conflicts.

Road Map for Lifting of Ban on Small Scale Mining

Ladies and Gentlemen, it would be recalled that, on the 16th of August, 2018, the road map for lifting the ban on artisanal and small-scale mining operations was presented to the general public, and this Ministry will continue to work with the relevant stakeholders to ensure the roadmap is fully implemented.

However, in preparation towards lifting of the ban on artisanal and small-scale mining operations, the Ministry is planning to roll-out the Multi-Sectoral Mining Integrated Project (MMIP) as its flagship project. The objectives of the project include:

- Regulate and assist Artisanal and Small-scale Miners (ASMs) to improve efficiency of their operations.
- Ensure the use of appropriate, safe and affordable technology in small-scale mining.
- Develop Alternative Livelihood Projects in mining communities.

- Train miners on sustainable mining practices and extraction processes.
- Ensure Stakeholders enforce the Law reserving small-scale mining for Ghanaians

In effect the MMIP will hinge on three (3) main pillars namely: statutory enforcement, social interventions and technological adaptations.

Distinguished audience, though the MMIP has not yet been rolled out, Sustainable Livelihood Programmes (SLP) are being carried out to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of mining on host communities in Dunkwa and its environs and protect the natural habitat from been encroached on by illegal miners. **A total of 7,667 acres** of oil palm plantation was established in 2017. **Also 1,442 farm families** benefitted from the project in 2017.

In 2018, the programme targeted 450,000 oil palm seedlings to be supplied to beneficiary registered farmers. The output at the end of the programme as at end of October 2018 is as follows:

1. A total of 2,501 farmers made up of 1,860 males and 641 females benefited from the supply as at October 31, 2018.

2. Also, a total of 450,000 oil palm seedlings were supplied in 92 Communities as at October 31, 2018. This represents 100% of the target for 2018.
3. In all, a total of 7,500 acres of oil palm plantation has been established under this programme in 2018.

The majority of beneficiaries are youth and mostly first-time farmers. Most of the beneficiaries of the project, notably the youth, are known to have been previously involved in illegal mining activities. The youth in the project areas see the intervention as a key source of livelihood and it is hoped that it can be sustained over a longer period.

Giving a New Vision to Mining in Ghana

Ladies and gentlemen, since the adoption of the African Mining Vision (AMV) in 2009, Ghana is in the process of developing the Country Mining Vision (CMV) which will reflect the guiding principles of the African Mining Vision. In 2015 the Minerals and Mining Policy was launched as part of the process.

In order to achieve the set objectives of the Minerals and Mining policy, the Ministry recognized the need to establish a clear, comprehensive and forward-looking plan that will effectively govern the regulation and development of the mining sector.

It is against this background that in 2017, the Government of Ghana facilitated the development of a Strategic Plan to give effect to the Minerals and Mining Policy. A final report was submitted in April 2018 and it is expected to inform activities in subsequent annual budgets of the Ministry. Some key strategies in the Plan include:

- Improve Mineral Licensing Process: **Going Fully Digital**
- Optimize fiscal benefits accruing to the country from the mining sector
- Create linkages and add value along mining value chain.
- Enhance mineral-based **industrialization and diversification** of the Ghanaian economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen, preparatory works of these strategies have already commenced. For instance, we have kick start discussions with key stakeholders on Government's intended policy to refine 30% of all gold produced in the country.

Developing Ghana's Bauxite Resource

Parliament recently passed the Ghana Integrated Aluminum Development Corporation Act, 2018. The Corporation will facilitate the promotion and development of an integrated aluminum industry.

May I be quick to emphasize that, whilst exploiting the bauxite resources, Government is mindful of the environmental and social impacts of these activities and will ensure that the exploitation is done in a sustainable manner.

Diversification of Ghana's Mineral Base

Mr. Chairman, the dependence of Ghana on her traditional minerals such as gold, bauxite, manganese and diamond has been a cause of worry for decades now, given the price volatility of such commodities. The Ministry in recognition of this fact has put in place measures to ensure the diversification of mineral production base of the country.

Data gathered during the Mining Sector Support Programme (MSSP) project in 2007/2008 within the Nkwanta South and

Kadjebi Districts of the Volta Region on base metals were reviewed in 2018 and anomalous areas delineated for further exploration. A synthesis of geochemical, geophysical and geological data resulted in the delineation of three (3) distinct anomalous targets of Nickel (Ni), Cobalt (Co), Copper (Cu), Chromium (Cr) and, to some extent, Manganese (Mn), Lead (Pb) and Zinc (Zn). These discoveries will be marketed at Investment promotion events going forward.

Ladies and Gentlemen, everyone recognizes that when managed responsibly and effectively, and in a context of good governance, mining and metals production can contribute meaningfully to improvement in our living standards.

GHANA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AUTHORITY

Mr. Chairman, in order to discover new mineral resources to increase the mineral base of the country, the Government has acquired a number of equipment for the Ghana Geological Survey Authority (GGSA) since 2017. These include:

- **Magnetometer** to conduct ground follow-up of anomalous mineral zones (areas with high economic mineral concentration) identified during the geological mapping

project under the European Union Mining Sector Support Programme.

- **State-of-the-art X-Ray-Fluorescence (XRF)** equipment to rapidly establish geochemical background of the country which is directly relevant to mineral exploration, environmental studies, agriculture, forestry, animal and human health and land use planning.
- **Universal Strength Testing Machine** for testing the flexural strength of materials such as ceramic products such as tiles, bricks, electrical insulators, clay materials in general and aspects of geotechnical analysis. This aims at complementing government's effort at providing affordable housing delivery to the citizenry.

Geological Investigations

Mr. Chairman, in order to diversify the mineral economy of the country, the GGSA with the mandate of providing geo-scientific data and information for the development of the nation is vigorously conducting geological field investigations under the following initiated projects:

- Iron ore deposit evaluation at Akpafu in the Volta Region

- Limestone investigation at Walewale in the Northern Region
- Clay Investigation at Kwahu West Municipality (Fodoa, Nsaba, Oframase, Nkawanda and Asuboni) in the Eastern Region
- Geochemical investigation in New Edubiase area and Offinso North District in the Ashanti Region.

To identify and delineate more economic mineral resources in Ghana, about one million (1,000,000) acres of virgin areas have been mapped in Sekyedumase and Akumadan in the Ashanti Region; Akuma in the Brong Ahafo Region; Kpesenkpe in the Northern Region; Kwesi Kuma in the Eastern Region, Hemang in the Twifo-Hemang- Denkyira in the Central Region; Tarkwa- Aboso in the Western Region and Ahamaso- Dodi Papaase in the Volta Region .

To establish the geochemical background of the Country to assist mineral exploration and land use planning, regional geochemical soil sampling covering an area of about seven hundred thousand (700,000) acres has been completed at Chiana Asunia in the Upper

East Region; Ofoase- Ayerebi and New Ntronang in the Eastern Region; and New Edubiase and Dompooase in the Ashanti Region

In addition, GGSA has discovered and evaluated clay resources of approximately five million (5,000,000) metric tonnes at Tekyemso in the New Abirem District. About four million (4,000,000) tonnes of Kaolin has been discovered in Teleku-Bokazo and New Aluku area in the Western Region.

Earthquake Management

Mr. Chairman, the issue of earthquake occurrence continues to threaten the country. In order to mitigate the impact of Earthquakes in the Southern Sector of the country, Mapping and Risk Assessment in Nyanyano, Weija, McCarthy Hills and surrounding areas were carried out to generate an updated geo-hazard/risk map for planning and decision making.

Power outage continues to hamper earthquake monitoring in the country. In order to carry out the 24/7 monitoring of earthquakes in Ghana, Government has approved the installation of Solar Power at GGSA Earthquake (Seismic) Observatory.

PRECIOUS MINERALS MARKETING COMPANY LIMITED (PMMC)

Assaying of Gold

To be able to document all gold exports in the country and apply the necessary taxation in enhancing Government revenue, a directive was issued in 2016 that made PMMC the sole assayer of gold in the country.

The new Assay regime was established pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Minerals and Mining (General Regulation) 2012 (LI 2173).

In fulfilling the directive, a modern laboratory building was put up using a World Bank Grant, facilitated by the Minerals Commission and the Ministry in 2016.

This has brought on board both Licensed Gold Exporters (LGE) and Large Scale Mining Companies to assay their produce at the Assay Center at the Kotoka International Airport.

Value of Gold Assayed in 2018

Total gold assayed at the center for the six months January to June 2018 is about 111,526 Kilos valued over USD2.1 billion. This

includes gold in transit from neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo of about 4,877 kilos valued at USD159 million. Plans are far advanced to bring other countries on board.

The PMMC takes every bar of gold through assay analysis and pre-shipment inspection before export. By so doing the appropriate taxes and royalties are applied and government revenue collection has been greatly enhanced.

Rough **Diamond Trading**

The total rough diamond export for 2017 stood at 86,925 carats valued at nearly USD3.0 million. The total exports for 2018 is estimated at 61,750 carats at an expected value of USD2.0 million. As at June 2018, nearly 40,000 carats has been exported at the value of almost USD1.2 million.

Way Forward **for the Mining Sub-Sector**

The Ministry will continue to implement strategies to increase local content participation in the mining industry leading to the ultimate goal where all inputs required by the mining companies would be procured locally.

Moreover, efficient utilization of the country's bauxite resources remains a key priority for Government. As such the Ministry will ensure that, provisions in the recently passed Ghana Integrated Aluminum Development Corporation Act, 2018 is fully implemented.

LANDS SUB-SECTOR

Improving Land Administration

Mr. Chairman, the Government's overall goal for land administration and management is to ensure an effective and efficient land service delivery system that would provide the foundation for socio-economic development. The National Land Policy, which was launched in 1999, was largely seen as the roadmap for land administration reform in the country to address the myriad of challenges.

Since 2003, successive governments have been implementing the roadmap through the Ghana Land Administration Project (LAP).

The Land Administration reforms have focused on reforming the policy, legal regulatory and institutional frameworks,

decentralization of service delivery, testing new methods and approaches through piloting; seeking to harmonize the customary and formal systems of land administration; and building the capacities of the land sector agencies.

The implementation of the two Phases of the Land Administration Project (LAP 1 and 2) has resulted in some notable achievements and improvement in Ghana's land administration arena. Whilst the achievements so far are important milestones in Ghana's quest to enhance its land administration system, some critical aspects of the structural reforms still remain to be addressed.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, a major component is the streamlining of land title and deeds registration processes nationwide. To this end, government is seeking for a Public Private Partnership (PPP) to implement the key activities aimed at reducing the time taken to register land transactions to meet the government's target of 30 days.

The key activities under the PPP include;

- fully decentralizing land administration services to the district and regional levels

- digitizing and automating land registration processes to improve the speed and accuracy of land registration for both Deeds and Title
- preparing up-to-date and accurate maps through the development of digital orthophoto and topographical maps, and other spatial data.

This is aimed at increasing the speed, accuracy and reduction in the cost of land registration in the country. In addition, improvement in customary land administration will continue under the PPP arrangement.

Ladies and gentlemen, in line with the government's policy of Private Sector participation, the Ministry is further exploring strategies aimed at leveraging the potential of private sector capital and expertise in the land administration reforms. In fulfillment of this, as you will recall, a Market Sounding event was recently held under the auspices of the Office of the Vice President to measure the level of interest of the Private Sector. The event showed that

the Private Sector was highly interested in the transformation agenda of the Land Sub-Sector.

In order to deepen the strategy, a market analysis and feasibility study is to be undertaken to establish among others, the appropriate model(s) of private sector participation in land administration and the nature of services expected from the private sector in line with the public service objectives of land administration.

Accra Physical Redevelopment

The Ministry in consultation with other stakeholders is consolidating the facilitation of Government's vision to put the Nation's Capital City on a competitive pedestal comparable to emerging major cities in the world. In this regard, the Ministry has facilitated the surveying and acquisition of appropriate legal interest in various land areas earmarked for these transformational projects. These include:

- Marine Drive
- The National Cathedral and
- Energy City

Under the above three projects, Government is currently facilitating the relocation of the existing entities on the sites to pave way for the projects. Other technical aspects are being handled by appropriate committees.

STOOL LANDS ADMINISTRATION

Revenue Mobilization and Disbursement

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, a number of operational activities were undertaken to improve stool land revenue mobilization and disbursement.

In the year 2017, a total amount of over Forty Six Million Ghana Cedis (over GHS 46,000,000.00) was mobilized and disbursed to Stools, Traditional Authorities and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs).

As at June this year, about Thirty Nine Million Ghana Cedis, (GHS 39,000,000.00) had been mobilized and disbursed to beneficiaries.

The revenue received by the MMDAs were used to undertake social services including schools, good drinking water, hospitals and

residential accommodation amongst others in their respective communities.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, the Ministry will continue to pursue policies and strategies within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, African Union Agenda 2063, the Government's vision to provide equal opportunity for all Ghanaians, and the creation of employment for the youth as spelt out within the Medium-Term Plans of this sector.

Thank you.