

Avanti Gold Announces Mobilisation of Drill Rigs to the Misisi Project in the DRC

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Following the signing of a drilling service contract, four drill rigs are currently being mobilized from Tanzania to the Misisi Project site where they are expected to arrive by the end of February
- Avanti continues to evaluate options to add additional drill rigs from additional suppliers who attended the in-country supplier field visit in January 2026
- The Phase 1 exploration programme, expected to launch in March 2026, will comprise 15,000m of drilling at the Akyanga and Akyanga East deposits, focusing on resource extensions at Akyanga and resource delineation at Akyanga East
- The Phase 2 exploration programme, expected to launch in August will comprises 27,000m of drilling across Akyanga and previously identified high-priority targets including Ngalula, Lubitchako, Tulonge and Kilombwe; drilling at Akyanga in Phase 2 will focus on in-fill drilling to convert Inferred resources to Indicated status
- Assay results from 2,100-meter of historic diamond core that targeted both the northwest extension and the high-grade southern zones of Akyanga are expected to be published in the coming weeks, as they become available
- To support drilling activities, key in-country roles have been filled, including Exploration Manager, Security & HSE, and Administration & Logistics, adding significant DRC operating experience to the Company

Vancouver, February 17, 2026 - [Avanti Gold Corp.](#) (CSE: AGC) (FSE: X370) (OTCQB: AVTGF) ("Avanti" or the "Company") is pleased to announce that it is currently mobilizing four drill rigs following the signing of a drilling service contract with Simba DRC Mining Services Ltd. ("Simba"). The rigs, which include three diamond drill rigs and one multi-purpose drill rig, are currently departing from Mwanza, Tanzania and expected to arrive at the Misisi Project site by the end of February. In addition, Minecon Resources and Services Ltd. ("Minecon") has been selected as the Drill Programme Manager, with an extended contract signed following the desktop geological review and 2026 exploration programme planning completed over the last several months. Avanti remains engaged with additional in-country drill service providers and is currently evaluating additional opportunities to increase the number of rigs on site.

Mohamed Cisse, Acting Chief Executive Officer of Avanti, commented: "I'm pleased to report that we have begun the mobilisation of drill rigs to the Misisi site, following the signing of a drilling services contract with Simba DRC Mining Services. Simba brings extensive experience operating in the DRC, having recently provided drilling services to Loncor Gold's Imbo project, located in North Kivu. Through the negotiated tender process and recently completed supplier field visit, we have developed very good working relationships with Simba and other in-country suppliers, and the team remains engaged in evaluating options to increase the number of rigs at site through the potential signing of additional contracts.

Further, I would like to welcome Avos Bashizi, Saleh Lwinda and Ntamba Aly Papou who have joined Avanti as Exploration Manager, Security & HSE Manager, and Logistics and Administration Manager, respectively. The appointments add significant eastern DRC operational experience with today's appointees holding prior positions at top firms between mining, security and supply chain.

With a strong team now assembled and drill rigs on their way to site, the team remains focussed on unlocking value at the Misisi Gold Project to the benefit of all stakeholders."

2026 Exploration Programme

As previously published, the 2026 exploration programme will entail a total of approximately 42,000 meters of diamond ("DD") and reverse circulation ("RC") drilling, split between two phases, as outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: 2026 Misisi Project Drilling Programme - meterage by target

Trend Name	Phase 1 Drilling (Mar - July 2026)		Phase 2 Drilling (Aug - Dec 2026)		2026 Drilling	
Akyanga	12,500m	83%	14,500m	55%	27,000m	64%
Akyanga East	2,500m	17%	2,000m	7%	4,500m	11%
Ngalula	-	-	3,500m	13%	3,500m	8%
Tulonge	-	-	2,000m	7%	2,000m	5%
Lubitchako	-	-	2,500m	9%	2,500m	6%
Kilombwe	-	-	2,500m	9%	2,500m	6%
Total Planned Meters Drilled	15,000m	100%	27,000m	100%	42,000m	100%

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding

The Phase 1 programme, supported by four drill rigs, will prioritize an increased footprint expansion effort at the Akyanga deposit, and high-priority target testing on the Akyanga East deposit while early exploration works including ground truthing, sampling, and mapping will be conducted on Ngalula, Tulonge, Lubitchako and Kilombwe to assist in guiding future drill hole locations on those targets. Concurrently, Avanti will continue to evaluate the number of drill rigs and pacing of contractor performance to inform options to scale the number of rigs at site.

The proposed Phase 2 programme is expected to entail approximately 27,000m of diamond and RC drilling across Akyanga as well as other high priority targets. The phased approach serves to provide drill service providers time to ramp-up efforts to include the additional targets along the 55-kilometer strike licensed area, while leveraging early exploration methods conducted in Phase 1 to better inform drilling target locations while leveraging optionality to add more drill rigs to the programme.

Management Appointments

To support its exploration programme, Avanti has made three key-in country management appointments to facilitate the various elements of the ongoing programme. Avanti is pleased to have had significant interest in the candidate search, allowing for the appointment of top-quality candidates with extensive experience operating in the Eastern DRC with major mining companies;

- Avos Bashizi has been appointed as Exploration Manager, effective February 1, 2026. Mr. Bashizi is a seasoned exploration geologist with extensive experience operating in the Eastern DRC and Tanzania, having most recently served as a Chief geologist at Katavi Mining, a gold and copper mining and refinery operation based in Tanzania. Prior to this, Mr. Bashizi has worked extensively in the region conducting target generation, regional mapping, drilling and resource modelling for key regional players including [Banro Corp.](#), AngloGold Ashanti Goldfields, Sakima Mining and Vector Resources.
- Saleh Lwinda has been appointed as Security & HSE Manager, effective February 1, 2026. Mr. Lwinda has served as an instrumental part of the ongoing risk assessments of the Misisi Project. Through his role as Sector Commander and Chief Instructor at TOP-S.I.G. S.A.R.L ("TOP SIG"), a DRC-registered company authorised to operate as a private security company within the borders of the DRC, Mr. Lwinda has built and maintained key intelligence and security relationships with government and local communities in the Fizi Region. Further, Mr. Lwinda has provided security and logistical services for several projects in multiple districts throughout the Eastern DRC, having most recently conducted the in-country management field visit and the drill contractor visit to the Misisi project as part of the drill service tendering process.
- Ntamba Aly Papou has been appointed as Logistics and Administration Manager, effective February 1, 2026. Mr. Aly Papou has extensive experience around supply chain, logistics and public affairs within the Eastern DRC, having most recently held a senior position in the Direction of Immigration in Bukavu. Prior to his, he has served as a senior purchasing and logistics officer at Banro Corporation directing purchasing and supply chain for the Twangiza, Lugushwa and Namoya mines.

Next Steps

- Assay results: Assay results from 2,100-meter of historic diamond core that targeted both the northwest extension and the high-grade southern zones of the Akyanga deposit. The samples, representing approximately 10% of the total drilling conducted at Akyanga, are currently undergoing assay, having arrived at the SGS lab in Tanzania on January 22, 2026.
- Phase 1 exploration programme: Drill rigs are expected to reach the Misisi Project site by the end of February, with the formal launch of the 15,000m Phase 1 programme covering the Akyanga and Akyanga East deposits expected to commence by in March 2026.

ABOUT MINECON RESOURCES & SERVICES LTD

Minecon Resources and Services Ltd is a Ghana-headquartered technical services and consultancy firm specializing in the mining and upstream oil & gas sectors, with regional offices located across Africa and in the DRC. The company partners with industry players across Africa to deliver expert support in geology and mineral exploration, mining project development and optimisation, petroleum engineering, as well as supply chain, construction, and workforce development services. Minecon's multidisciplinary team provides tailored solutions that help clients advance exploration programs, prepare economic assessments, and optimise operations.

ABOUT SIMBA DRC MINING SERVICES LTD

Simba DRC Mining Services Ltd is a DRC drilling service provided incorporated locally as part of Blackrock Acquisitions Ltd, a contract drilling organization founded in 2016 that offers a wide range of ultra-portable core drilling services reaching maximum depths of up to 600m. Blackrock Acquisitions Ltd provides modular drill rigs offering a comprehensive range of drilling services from the early stages of exploration to mining site operations with operations in Canada, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Japan, the DRC & Kazakhstan. Blackrock Acquisitions is currently engaged in drilling services at Loncor Gold's Imbo Project in North Kivu, DRC.

ABOUT AVANTI GOLD CORP

Avanti Gold Corp. is a gold exploration company with a robust portfolio of projects in Africa. The Company's flagship asset is the Misisi Project in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), home to the Akyanga gold deposit. The Akyanga deposit has an Inferred Mineral Resource of 44.3 million tonnes (Mt) at an average gold grade of 2.37 grams per tonne (g/t), totaling 3.1 million ounces (Moz) of gold. The Misisi Project spans three contiguous 30-year mining leases covering 133 square kilometers (km²) along the 55-kilometer-long Kibara Gold Belt, a prominent metallogenic province known for hosting significant gold deposits.

QUALIFIED PERSONS STATEMENT

Ephraim Masibhera, a "Qualified Person" as defined by National Instrument 43-101 - Standards of Disclosure for Mineral Projects ("NI 43-101"), who is independent has reviewed the scientific and technical information that forms the basis for this news release and has approved the disclosure herein. Historical information contained in this news release cannot be relied upon as the Company's Qualified Person, as defined under NI 43-101, has not prepared nor verified the historical information.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For Inquiries:
Mohamed Cisse
Acting Chief Executive Officer
info@avantigoldcorp.com

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