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Framework for Election Security in Nigeria

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➤ Foreword

DAI with the support of the European Union, through the EU-SDGN programme has produced this paper which offers an in-depth analysis the preconditions for secure elections and provides recommendations for the Independent National Electoral Commission, the government of Nigeria and the security agencies to create a peaceful election environment.

Since the return to democracy in 1999 general elections, Nigeria has witnessed an election climate characterised by fraud, malpractices and insecurity. The failure of security agencies and the state to guarantee a secure and safe environment for stakeholders has often been identified as the epicentre of the insecure nature of elections. However, the interplay between elections and security is significantly more complex, and the securitisation of the electoral process goes beyond the deployment of the security forces.

This paper investigates principles and preconditions for the conduct of secure elections, that are free of coercion and intimidation and organised by credible and impartial institutions, all of which are prerequisites for the integrity of the electoral process. To do this it presents an overview of the constitutional framework of electoral governance in Nigeria in order to create a better understanding of principles and preconditions for credible elections and the roles the various stakeholders must play.

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Respectfully,

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Foreword



➤ Framework for Election Security in Nigeria



Elections are a valuable means of managing societal conflicts – potentially providing less violent fields for contesting differences, creating the possibility of political change without rending the fabric of society, and instituting some modest degree of accountability of the government to its citizens. But if elections are not conducted properly, they can crystallise and accentuate the very conflicts they should be helping to manage. Elections as alternatives to violence in the resolution and management of societal conflicts can be realized only if they are overseen by impartial dispute resolution bodies (electoral management body and courts) and security services (police and army).

[David K. Leonard, "Elections and Conflict in Africa," *Journal of African Elections*, Vol. 8, June 2009]



Indeed, in many ways elections in Nigeria are akin to war. For one thing, mobilisation by the election commission is massive, akin to preparation for a major war...For another thing, the heat and passion associated with elections in Nigeria often make elections appear like war...It is not therefore surprising that elections in Nigeria pose serious security challenges, not only in terms of security of men and materials deployed for the elections, but also in terms of protecting the voters and candidates.

[Attahiru M. Jega, *Election Management in Nigeria*, Ibadan: Safari Books Ltd., 2015, pp.116-117]



Executive Summary

The history of elections in Nigeria, since the 1951 general elections, portrays the conduct of elections and electoral politics as a continuation of war by other means. This history reflects three salient undercurrents of Nigerian politics: a mainstream political and legal culture that pursues electoral politics as a zero-sum game, with high premium placed on efficiency norms, such as the deadly violent intensity of the struggle to capture political power; the country's underdevelopment and difficult topography, both of which impose severe capacity and logistical limitations and even imperfections on electoral administration and governance, generally; and the political mobilisation of ethnicity for electoral competition under a federal political system designed to reflect and sustain ethnic, not geographical diversity. But it is not ethnic diversity as such that is problematic from a security standpoint. It is its poor management through a party system in which ethnicity is deployed by political parties to secure ethnic voting banks for electoral politics and the tendency for electoral politics to degenerate into ethnic hate speech and violent pre- and post-election

ethnopolitical conflicts.¹

The ebb and flow of these intertwined undercurrents have historically and significantly defined Nigeria's election security landscape and the numerous security challenges and risks they pose for the conduct of elections in line with, and to satisfy, the canons of electoral integrity set out in the country's constitution, electoral laws, and African regional and international codes and standards on elections. The major task ahead of the 2023 general elections is to design a framework that will diminish the negative impact of these three undercurrents framing the country's election security landscape and turn elections from serving as mechanisms for democratic reversal into ones for democratic consolidation.

This framework needs to address core elements such as the failure of public security provisioning; a rise in non-state security provisioning; political manipulation and abuse by security actors; and the rising individualisation and communalisation of security. These security dimensions and requirements of elections go beyond election day. Rather, they should be

¹See L. Adele Jinadu, *Managing Elections: The Winner-takes-all Rule, Democracy and Development*, Ghana Speaks Lecture Series No. 2, 2010, Accra: Institute for Democratic Governance, 2010. See also, W. Arthur Lewis, *Politics in West Africa*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1965, p71: "The surest way to kill the idea of democracy in a plural society is to adopt the Anglo-American system of first-past-the-post..."



routinised as an inherent aspect of electoral governance, concerned with and aimed at “securing” the electoral governance process from distortions, violations, and manipulations. Such routinisation will serve to nurture public trust in elections as mechanisms of accountability of elective public political officeholders, in addition to promoting the transparency and legitimacy of political succession.

An important guiding principle for securing the electoral governance process and the deployment of security and related personnel during elections is that of electoral integrity--the principle that “free and fair elections require as an antecedent condition freedom from coercion and fairness as the correlates of impartiality.”² This paper uses this basis to provide analysis of key questions as they relate to the 2023 Nigerian election.

Firstly, it asks what principles should inform the assessment of the broader electoral governance landscape for the deployment of security and Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) personnel. [Section III] How does the constitutional framework for Nigeria's electoral governance landscape reflect

these principles? [Section IV] What is the nature of the elections-security nexus framing the country's electoral governance landscape? [Section V] What are the general challenges posed by the landscape? [Section VI] What are the major election security threats currently posed by the framework for electoral integrity and security personnel deployment during elections? [Section VII] What special short-term security measures should immediately be put in place to address, remove, or mitigate the threats, and what is the specific role of each security actor and/or combination of security actors? [Section VIII] In answering these questions the report aims to clearly state what the critical minimum necessary violence-mitigating conditions the election security landscape should satisfy, if the 2023 general elections are to comply with the demands of electoral integrity.

Based on the foregoing Sections, the following recommendations are proposed to support the securing of the 2023 general elections and for deploying security personnel to that end between December 2022 and March 2023.

² R. Lopez-Pinto, *Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance*, N.Y.: UNDP, 2000, p.103



<p>Independent National Electoral Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Map out areas of insecurity according to levels of insecurity for surveillance and preventive measures to douse the risks of insecurity before February 2023. [See Appendix A] ● Take measures before the 2023 general elections to establish community-based task forces at selected polling units across the country to take pre-emptive action against criminal breaches of the electoral law on election-day [See Appendix B]. ● Strengthen internal preventive measures against hacking of INEC IRev Portal and electronic transmission of results on election day ● Quickly integrate new INEC members and RECs to minimise the adverse impact of a high rate of turnover in membership of INEC and RECs. ● Intensify training and retraining of INEC permanent and ad hoc staff for election-related duty ● Hold regular meetings with the political parties on arrangements for the 2023 general elections to reassure them of INECs commitment to conducting free and fair elections in 2023 and beyond. ● Issue a code of electoral conduct after consultations with and acceptance by the political parties. ● Improve logistics operations to ensure timely deployment and transportation of election officials and the delivery of election materials before, and on election day, to ensure prompt commencement of accreditation and voting process on election day.
<p>Federal government of Nigeria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen INEC's independence through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Immediate release of appropriated INEC annual and election-year budget. ii. Provide exemption from the regular budget and procurement process from INEC to strengthen its financial independence and to avoid delays in its procurement of sensitive election materials. iii. Avoid abuse of power of incumbency for party political advantage iv. Grant INEC the power to deploy security agencies for election-related assignments.
<p>State governments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid abuse of power of incumbency for party political advantage.
<p>Political parties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commit strongly to the Peace Accord agreed with the National Peace Committee and Code of Conduct for Political Parties ● Resolve outstanding disputes arising from party primaries ahead of the 2023 general elections ● Conduct peaceful and issue-based electioneering campaigns ● Embark on vigorous civic and voter education on the importance and desirability of democratic citizenship and mandate protection
<p>Ministries, departments & agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support/complement INEC preparations for the 2023 general elections, based on INEC's request and timelines.
<p>The judiciary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expeditiously complete and determine all pre-election petitions and address issues around conflicting judgements
<p>Security agencies (Police, Armed Forces, Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with INEC, and under its direction, to secure the 2023 general elections ● Take an active part in the decisions and activities of ICCES to secure the 2023 general elections, including the deployment of security personnel for election-related assignments
<p>Democracy- promoting agencies (Human Rights Commission, ICPC, EFCC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support/complement the needs of INEC for the 2023 general elections and coordinate their general election-related activities to prevent human rights abuses and corruption.



CSOs and NGOs including the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support/complement needs of INEC for the 2023 general elections. ● Coordinate their 2023 general election-related activities, such as civic and voter education to promote the integrity and diversity of the election. ● Engage political parties on the need for a violence-free and issue-based electioneering campaign culture .
Community - based and faith-based organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support/complement needs of INEC for the 2023 general elections ● Coordinate their general election-related activities to promote the integrity of polls, and support peace initiatives with political parties. ● Pursue civic and voter education activities at the community level to raise consciousness about and commitment to democratic citizenship and mandate protection.
The electorate and general population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop an active and vigilant political culture of engagement with the electoral process and democratic governance. ● Electoral choice to be informed by issues, record, and character of candidates
African EMBs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If approached by INEC, share experience on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) conduct of elections under grave problems of national and externally induced security challenges. (b) challenges of deploying ICT to the conduct of general elections, including the possibility of hacking the election IT portal.
International community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Undertake a needs assessment and based on its findings, develop a short-term plan of support towards INEC's preparation for the 2023 general elections. ● Support INEC, if it requests it, with non-budget appropriated costs of its election-related activities for the 2023 general elections. ● Convene, in partnership with INEC and relevant civil society organisations, a meeting of IPAC early in January 2023 to engage with its members on the imperative of a peaceful conduct of the 2023 general elections ● Initiate and partner with INEC and the National Peace Committee on the extension of the Peace Accord among the presidential candidates to the state and local governments with the involvement of important traditional rulers and local influential figures to give the Peace Accord a more local and community-based resonance.



1

Chapter

➤ The Political Economy of the Elections-Security Nexus in Nigeria

Context: Economy, History and Political Culture

The history of elections in Nigeria, particularly since the 1951 general elections, portrays the conduct of elections and electoral politics as a continuation of war by other means. For this reason, Adekanye suggests that the conduct of elections be considered an 'extraordinary' matter, a "state of emergency," with the country's armed forces vested with the power to supervise their conduct, albeit under strict adherence to non-party political partisanship and the highest level of professionalism.³

Noting that "the 85-year history of Nigeria's elections [dating back to 1923, when the first set of elections were held in Lagos and Calabar], shows a progressive degeneration of outcomes,"⁴ stated Nigeria's Electoral Reform Committee Report in 2008. It also points out that Nigeria's political and electoral history "...shows that a

strong relationship exists between election management bodies (EMBs), security agencies, and legal provisions that guide the conduct of elections. These institutional arrangements have over the years become the focal points where elections are compromised.⁵

What explains this history? A useful framework is offered by a theory of Nigerian politics that situates the country's electoral politics with three salient undercurrents of wider politics. The first undercurrent is a mainstream political and legal culture that pursues electoral politics as a zero-sum game, with a high premium placed on efficiency norms, such as the deadly violent intensity of the struggle to capture political power.⁶ The culture is at variance with the requirement in liberal democratic theory for the "ex ante indeterminacy" of elections — "the possibility of yesterday's winners

³ B.J. Adekanye, "Nigerian Armed Forces to Take Over Conduct of Future Elections," *Quarterly Journal of Administration*. 23, Nos 1-2, 1988/1989, pp. 27-28

⁴ Electoral Reform Committee, Report of the Electoral Reform Committee, Volume 1, Main Report, Abuja, December 2008, p.18

⁵ Ibid, p.20

⁶ Claude Ake, "Explanatory Notes on the Political Economy of Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.14, No.1, , pp.1-23



being today's losers, and yesterday's losers being today's winners."⁷ The culture not only encourages and rewards impunity⁸ but also turns a blind eye to the abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan party electoral advantage, in a way that belies the normative prescription of liberal morality for the insulation of administration from partisan party politics.

The second undercurrent is the country's underdevelopment and difficult topography, both of which impose severe capacity and logistical limitations and even imperfections on electoral administration and governance in general.⁹ The limitations make it imperative for INEC to seek collaboration and partnership with state actors, including the police and security forces, and the private sector for the deployment of human resources and, more importantly military personnel and material to secure the electoral process across difficult to access land, riverine, and mountainous terrains.

The third undercurrent is the political mobilisation of ethnicity for electoral competition under a federal political system designed to reflect and sustain ethnic, not geographical diversity. It is not ethnic diversity as

such that is problematic from a security standpoint. Moreover, it is its poor management through a political system in which ethnicity is deployed by political parties to secure ethnic voting banks for electoral politics and the tendency for electoral politics to degenerate into ethnic hate speech and violent pre- and post-election ethnopolitical conflicts.¹⁰

Taken together, the ebb and flow of these intertwined undercurrents have historically, and significantly, defined Nigeria's election security landscape, posing risks for the conduct of elections in line with, and to satisfy, the canons of electoral integrity set out in the country's constitution, electoral laws, and African regional and international codes and standards on elections. The major task ahead of the 2023 general elections is to design an election framework that will diminish the negative impact of these three undercurrents framing the country's election security landscape. In doing so it can turn elections from serving as mechanisms for democratic decomposition, reversals into ones for democratic consolidation

⁷ Shaheen Mozaffer and Andreas Schedler, "The comparative study of electoral governance," *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 23, No.1, January 2002, p.11.

⁸ This point was at the heart of the criticism of the legal framework for elections in the memorandum submit, with typically led by the Nigeria Bar Association to Nigeria's Electoral Reform Committee in 2017/2018

⁹ See L. Adele Jinadu, "Matters Arising: African Elections and the Problem of Electoral Administration," *The African Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 2, 1997, pp1-11.

¹⁰ See L. Adele Jinadu, *Managing Elections: The Winner-takes-all Rule, Democracy and Development*, Ghana Speaks Lecture Series No. 2, 2010, Accra: Institute for Democratic Governance, 2010. See also, W. Arthur Lewis, *Politics in West Africa*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1965, p71: "The surest way to kill the idea of democracy in a plural society is to adopt the Anglo-American system of first-past-the-post..."



Chapter

2

➤ Separating the broad from the Narrow: Sinews of the Elections-Security Nexus

A focus on the complex nature of the elections-security nexus is needed to unravel, understand and deploy it as a strategic mechanism for democratic consolidation. In focusing on the complexity of the elections security-nexus, it is necessary to take a broader view of security beyond the involvement of security agencies and the police and the deployment of their personnel in the electoral governance process.¹¹ As Ibeanu argues, it is also important to view “the general crisis of security and security management in Nigeria [as an] expression [of the] problem of the federal system in Nigeria.”¹² In fact, the nature of the crisis, which complicates the elections-security nexus in the country, is made up four key elements: a failure of public security provisioning; a quantum rise in non-state security

provisioning; the political manipulation and abuse of security; and a rising individualisation and communalisation of security.¹³

While a broader view of security is helpful in pointing to the fact that the security dimensions and requirements of elections go beyond election day, they should be routinised as an inherent aspect of electoral governance, concerned with and aimed at “securing” the electoral governance process from distortions, violations, and manipulations. Such routinisation will serve to nurture public trust in elections as mechanisms of accountability of elective public political officeholders, in addition to promoting the transparency and legitimacy of political succession.

¹¹According to Mozaffer and Schedler, “The comparative study of electoral governance,” p.7, the electoral governance process is “the wider set of activities [rule-making, rule application, and rule adjudication] that creates and maintains the broad institutional framework in which elections and electoral competition take place”

¹² Okechukwu Ibeanu, “Managing Security in a Multi-Level Governance System: Issues and Challenges in the Nigerian Federal System,” In Habu S. Galadima and Musa E. Umar (eds.), *Federalism and the Challenges of Dynamic Equilibrium in Nigeria: Towards a National Strategy*, Kuru: The National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, 2017, p.44

¹³Ibid, p.44



Chapter

3

Principles Anchoring Electoral Governance Landscape for Security Personnel Deployment

The principles that frame Nigeria's current election governance and security landscape derive from the underlying constitutional theory of the country's 1979, 1986, and 1999 Constitutions.¹⁴ These military-brokered Constitutions have played an important role in the reform of the country's electoral governance architecture by entrenching provisions to secure electoral integrity and diminish the contradictions in the country's electoral politics under democratic civilian rule between 1951 and 1966,¹⁵ and between 1979 and 1983.¹⁶ The contradictions were underlying factors in the botched, controversial and deadly violent general elections between 1962 and

1965, and in 1983, that brought about the collapse of the country's First and Second Republics respectively.

The set of anchoring principles of the electoral governance and security architecture of the Constitutions, and of the ancillary legislation deriving from them, most pertinently the electoral law, draws substantially on, though is not limited to, the theory of constitutional or limited government, defined by the rule of law, in liberal democratic theory. These principles included separation or partial fusion of power, moderated by checks and balances; democratic political succession with fixed presidential and governorship term limits within the

¹⁴See, Peter P. Ekeh, Patrick Dele-Cole and Gabriel O. Olusanya (eds.), *Nigeria Since Independence, The First Twenty-Five Years, Volume V: Politics and Constitutions*, Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Limited, 1989

¹⁵See: K.W.J. Post, *The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963; Billy J. Dudley, *Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria*, London: Frank Cass, 1968; Remi Anifowose, *Violence and Politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience*, Lagos: NOK, 1980; John P. Mackintosh(ed.), *Nigerian Government and Politics*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1966; K.W.J. Post and M. Vickers, *Structure & Conflict in Nigeria 1960-1965*. London: Heinemann, 1973; C.S. Whitaker, *The Politics of Tradition: Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria 1946-1966*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970; Billy J. Dudley, *Instability and Political Order*, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1973 ; Larry Diamond, *Class, Ethnicity and Democracy in Nigeria: The Failure of the First Republic*, Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1988

¹⁶See: Billy J. Dudley, *An Introduction to Nigerian Government and Politics*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, , 1982, especially chapters 3,4,5,and 6; Oyeleye Oyediran (ed.), *The Nigerian 1979 Elections*, Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria, 1981;

¹⁷Such as the federal character clauses of the 1979 Constitution, the partially implemented 1986 Constitution, and the 1999 Constitution (as amended).



framework of competitive party and electoral politics; free, fair and credible elections managed, supervised, and conducted by an independent electoral management body; recognition, promotion and protection of positive rights, notably economic, ethnocultural and social rights,¹⁷ in addition to customary civil and political rights; reform of the structure of the country's federal system with the creation of more states in ethno-regional minority homelands to assuage minority ethnic fears of

domination and to address the issue of the structural asymmetry in the country's 1960 and 1963 Constitutions, and supports a party system that is national in outlook, reflects internal party democracy in its internal decision-making and internal administrative processes and for elective party and elective public political offices, and that is framed around subscription to the provisions of Chapter II of each of the country's 1979, 1986 and 1999 Constitutions, by the country's political parties.



The set of anchoring principles of the electoral governance and security architecture of the Constitutions, and of the ancillary legislation deriving from them, most pertinently the electoral law, draws substantially on, though is not limited to, the theory of constitutional or limited government, defined by the rule of law, in liberal democratic theory.



Chapter

4

➤ The Constitutional Framework: Electoral Governance and Security Personnel Deployment

The principles outlined in Section III underlie the constitutional framework within which the country's electoral governance must be situated and assessed.

Table I outlines significant provisions of the country's 1999 Constitution that frame electoral governance in the country.

Table I: Overview of Constitutional Framework of Electoral Governance in Nigeria, Under the 1999 Constitution

Section	Subject
Preamble	1999 Constitution designed to provide for good government and general welfare on the principles of Freedom, Equality and Justice, and consolidating Unity of Nigerians.
Chapter I: Part I Chapter I: Part II	Supremacy of Constitution Legislative Powers (Section 4); Executive Powers (Section 5); Judicial Powers (Section 6); Local Government (Section 7).
Chapter II	Fundamental Objectives & Directive Principles of State Policy Fundamental obligations of the government (Section 13); The government and the people (Section 14); Political, Economic, and Social and Educational Objectives (Sections 15, 16, 17 and 18); Environmental objectives (Section 20); Directive on Nigerian Cultures (Section 21); Obligations of the mass media (Section 22); National Ethics (Section 23); Duties of the Citizen (Section 24).
Chapter III	Citizenship (Sections 24-32).
Chapter IV	Fundamental Human Rights. Right to dignity of human person (Section 34); Right to personal liberty (Section 35); Right to fair hearing (Section 36); Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Section 38); Right to freedom of expression); Right to peaceful assembly and association (Section 40); Right to freedom of movement (Section 41); Right to freedom from discrimination (Section 42); Restriction and derogation from fundamental rights (Section 45).



Chapter V: Part I National Assembly	<p>A: Composition: (Sections 47, 48 and 49). B: Procedure for Summoning & Dissolution of National Assembly: (Section 64). C: Qualifications: (Sections 65, 66, 69). D: Elections to National Assembly: (Sections 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78). E: Power & Control over Public Funds: (Section 84).</p>
Chapter V: Part II: House Of Assembly of a State	<p>A: Composition: (Sections 90, 91, 105). B: Procedure for Summoning & Dissolution of House of Assembly: (Section 105). C: Qualification for Membership of House of Assembly, etc.: (Sections 106, 107, 110). D: Elections to a House of Assembly: (Sections 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119). Section E: Power & Control over Public Funds: (Section 124).</p>
Chapter VI: Part I: Federal Executive	<p>A: The President of the Federation: (Sections 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136(2), 137, 139, 140, 141, 142). B: Establishment of Certain Federal Executive Bodies: (Sections 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161).</p>
Chapter VI: Part II: State Executive	<p>A: The Governor of a State: (Sections 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181(2), 182, 184, 186, 187, 191(2)). B: Establishment of Certain State Executive Bodies: (Sections, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204).</p>
Chapter VI: Part III: Supplemental	<p>Part B: Nigeria Police Force: (Sections 214, 215). Part C: Armed Forces of the Federation: (Sections 217, 218). Part D: Political Parties: (Sections 221, 222, 223, 224, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228).</p>
Chapter VII: The Judicature	<p>Part I: A: Federal Courts: (Sections 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 236) Part I B: The Court of Appeal: (Sections 237, 238, 238(1)(a-c), 238(2), 239(1)(a), 240, 246(1)(b), 246(1)(i), (ii), (iii), 246(3)). Part: II C: The Federal High Court: (Section 241). Part III: Election Tribunals: (Section 285).</p>
Chapter VIII: Federal Capital Territory, Abuja & General Supplementary Provision	<p>Part I: Federal Capital Territory, Abuja : (Sections 298, 299, 300, 303). Part II: Miscellaneous Provisions (Sections 305, 307).</p>
Third Schedule: Part I: Federal Executive Bodies (Established by Section 153)	<p>B: Council of State: B5, B6(iv). F: Independent National Electoral Commission: F14(1), F14(2) F15. K: National Security Council: K25, K26. L: Nigeria Police Council: L27, L28. M: Police Service Commission: M29, M30.</p>
Third Schedule: Part II: State Executive Bodies (established by Section 197)	<p>B: State Independent Electoral Commission: B3, B4.</p>
Fifth Schedule: Part I Code of Conduct for Public Officers	<p>General: 1,2,3,4,6,9,10,11,12 13. Code of Conduct Tribunal: 15, 18(1), 18(2).</p>
Sixth Schedule: Election Tribunals	<p>A: National Assembly Election Tribunal : 1(1-3). B: Governorship and Legislative Houses Election Tribunal : 2(1-3).</p>



The framework provides the constitutional authority for the more detailed reflection and elaboration of the principles in the country's electoral law and related legislation, such as the country's official gazette, and the country's expanding and intertwined administrative and political institu-

tions and processes for electoral governance. These are enshrined in the Electoral Act, 2022 which provides detailed elaboration of these constitutional provisions in their application to electoral governance in the country. [See, Table II].

Table II: Overview of Electoral Act 2022

Subject	Specific Provisions/Sections Article	Level of Electoral Governance
Part I: Establishment & Functions of INEC	1-7	Rule-making: Rules of Electoral Governance
Part II: Staff of the Commission	8	Rule-making: Rules of Electoral Governance
Part III: National Registration of Voters & Voters' Register	9-23	a) Rulemaking: Rules of Electoral Governance; b) Rule Application: Organising the Electoral Game
Part IV: Procedure at Election	24-74	Rule Application: Organising the Electoral Game
Part V: Political Parties	75-97	a) Rule-making: Rules of Electoral Governance; b) Rule Application: Organising the Electoral Game
Part VI: Procedure for Election to Area Council	98-113	Rule Application: Organising the Electoral Game
Part VII: Electoral Offences	114-129	Rule Making: Rules of Electoral Governance
Part VIII: Determination of Electoral Petitions Arising from Elections	130-140	Rule Adjudication: Certifying election results and resolving disputes
Part IX: Miscellaneous Provisions	141-150	a) Rule-making: Rules of Electoral Governance; b) Rule Application: Organizing the Electoral Game

Source: Electoral Act 2022



It is clear from the summary presented in Table II that INEC is the coordinating nerve-centre of this electoral governance and security personnel deployment framework.

The framework, whose major stakeholders will be outlined and analysed in section, is made up principally of the political parties, the federal and state executive, legislature, the judiciary, democracy-promoting, federal and state executive bodies, such as the National Human Rights Commission, the Economic and

Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), that serve as a virtual fourth branch of government, civil society, and increasingly the country's national security and police leadership.¹⁸ In serving this coordinating nerve-centre role, INEC has the constitutional authority to issue Regulations and Guidelines for the conduct of elections. [Table III provides an overview of the regulations and guidelines.]

Table III: Overview of INEC Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections 2022

Subject	Specific provisions/Sections	Level of Electoral Governance
Part I: Elections and Arrangements for Their Conduct	1-12	Rule-making: Choosing and defining basic rules of the electoral game: a) Rules of electoral competition. b) Rules of electoral governance
Part II: Accreditation and Voting Procedure at Elections	12-43	Rule making: Choosing and defining basic rules of the electoral game: a) Rules of electoral governance.
Part III: Collation of Election Results and Making of Returns	44-106	a) Rules of electoral governance: b) Rule application: Organizing the electoral game
Schedule: Conducting Elections During the COVID-19 and Other Health Emergencies	1-13	

¹⁸See footnote 9.



Despite this authority and mandate to manage the electoral framework the extent to which INEC's operational activities are insulated from external direction, and possible control or attenuation, has varied. The 1960 Constitution [Section 40(9)] and the 1979 Constitution [Section 145(1)] provide that "in the exercise of its functions...the Commission shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority." But the 1999 Constitution, Section 158(1), provides that "[INEC] shall not be subject to the direction and control of any other authority or persons...[only] in exercising its power to make appointments or to exercise disciplinary control over persons"

Furthermore, Section 160(1), constricts the extent of the independence of INEC in playing its central coordinating role by specifically providing that where necessary "INEC may, with the approval of the President, by rules or otherwise regulate its own procedure or confer powers and impose duties on any officer or authority for the purpose of discharging its functions." The conditional clause of the provision "to

confer powers and impose duties on any officer or authority for the purpose of discharging its duties" can be read widely and interpreted to grant INEC the power to mobilise human and logistical resources to secure the electoral process.¹⁹

This raises questions about under whose control, and at whose cost, the personnel and other resources of the Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF) and the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) shall be operationally deployed for election duty. This is especially the case under emergency situations such as those envisaged under the 2022 Electoral Act, Section 24((1-3), or when the President is a candidate or has partisan interest in how NAF or NPF personnel are to be deployed during elections.²⁰ It is for this reason that Adekanye refers to the practice in "Bangladesh where the recent trend of conducting elections under a neutral caretaker government has led to a pronounced role being assigned to the Bangladeshi Armed Forces in the conduct of elections."²⁰ It is also why in India the operational authority during elections lies with the Indian Electoral Commission.

¹⁹ I owe this insight to discussions with Okechukwu Ibeanu on the expansive nature of the powers, functions and responsibilities of INEC under the 1979 Constitution.

²⁰ Adebayo Adekanye and Rachael Iyanda, "Security Challenges of Elections in Nigeria: An Overview," p.29, in 'Lai Olurode and Attahiru Jega (eds.), Security Challenges of Elections in Nigeria, Abuja: The Independent National Electoral Commission, 2011



Chapter

5

➤ The Electoral Governance Landscape I: Unfolding Paradox of Elections-Security Nexus

INECs ability to serve as the nerve-centre of the various guardrails of the country's democratic electoral governance provided under the 1999 Constitution is complicated by the combination of material and cultural environment within which politics and competitive party and electoral politics are situated. On the one hand, the process of democratisation in Nigeria has been deepened over the electoral cycles since 1999, on the other hand there remain significant fault lines and cracks that threaten the fragile democracy that has been established in a little over two decades. The 2023 election will play an important role in enhancing one of these two narratives.

There is no doubt about the considerable progress towards deepening the democratisation process in the country since 1999. Despite the

controversies and turbulence that continue to buffet and trail electoral outcomes at the federal and state levels over six electoral cycles -1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 - and several off-cycle elections, Nigeria is currently enjoying its longest period of uninterrupted democratic civilian rule. The country's political culture, despite its resilient anti-democratic impulses, now reflects a growing and strong rejection of unconstitutional changes of government. There is also a general compliance with constitutional provisions for the periodic conduct of elections, and with presidential and governorship fixed terms. This emerging political culture reflects a general acceptance and commitment particularly to the spirit but also to the letter of the provision of Section 1(2) of the 1999 Constitution that states, "The Federal Republic of Nigeria shall not be governed, nor shall any person or



group of persons take control of the Government of Nigeria or any part thereof, except in compliance with the provisions of this Constitution.”

This commitment provided the rallying point for the firm rejection of the attempt to elongate the fixed term limit for the country's president and state governors in 2003. It is also reflected in the acceptance of judgements of the appropriate courts on disputed presidential and governorship elections since 1999, without substantive recourse to violent civil disobedience to side-track them. The process and the outcome of the 2015 general elections also brought about a significant party realignment in the country, and with it the alternation of executive and legislative power from one party to another party at the federal level in May 2015 for the first time in Nigeria's political history.²¹ The development provides limited empirical evidence for the thesis that, “only if competitive elections allow for alternation in power do they provide tangible proof of their democratic character.”²² In short, “electoral politics, while still flawed in several respects, is now much more competitive, at least at the federal level, thanks much more to the vigorous pro-democracy watchdog role of state and non-stake actors and a

reinvented Independent National Electoral Commission than to the internalisation and display of a political culture by the political parties and the generality of Nigerians.”²³

These democratic developments have been supported by the strengthening of INEC through administrative and financial reform; its deployment of technology to sanitise the election, including the voter registration process; and outreach activities and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including the security agencies, designed to enhance the integrity of elections by creating confidence and trust in its operations among the general public.²⁴

Despite this progress, INEC still has considerable internal reforms to undertake. This includes the professionalisation of its activities as recommended by the Report of the *2007 Electoral Reform Committee* and problems of coordination, with its vast decentralised structure and the accountability challenges of the attendant long span of control, including the place and role of the Resident Electoral Commissions in INEC's hierarchy unaddressed to date. Beyond INEC, yet embedded in its external environment, is a recognition that democratic institutions in Nigeria

²¹Much earlier alternation of political power at the executive branch leadership/governorship at the state level had in fact occurred before 2015 in some states of the federation, e.g. Adamawa, Bayelsa, Edo, Ekiti, Kogi, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, and Sokoto.

²²B. Geddes, “What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?” *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2:115-144, quoted in Shaheen Mozaffer and Andreas Schedler, “The Comparative Study of Electoral Governance-Introduction,” p.20, *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 23, No.1, 2002.

²³L. Adele Jinadu, “Democracy and Development in Nigeria,” *Pan-African Social Science Review*, No.13, December 2016, p.11

²⁴See, Attahiru M. Jega, *Election Management in Nigeria: The Evolution of Nigerian Election Process, 2010-2015*, Ibadan: Safari Books Ltd., 2015; INEC, *2019 Election Project Plan, Volume 1: Consolidating Free, Fair, and Credible Elections in Nigeria*, Abuja: INEC, 2018



remain fragile.

Furthermore, bonds of solidarity across identity markers, especially ethno-religious and ethno-communal ones, are weakening in the country, fanning the embers of civil discord

and hate speech. Investments in human development and social security by public authorities and the private sector to alleviate poverty, and illiteracy, provide health, water, and sanitation facilities to uplift the most vulnerable groups in society, provide

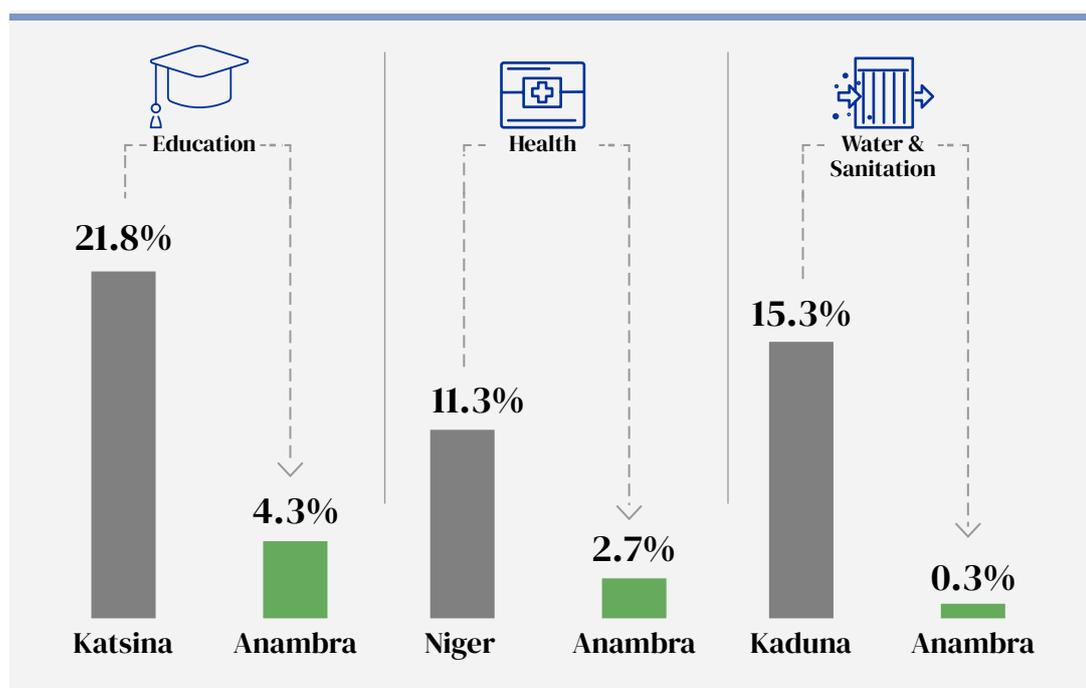


Table IV: Capital Expenditure Share by Sectors (%), 2006-2012

Sector	Anambra	Enugu	Jigawa	Kaduna	Kano	Katsina	Lagos	Niger	Yobe	Zamfara
Agriculture	2.3	3.0	5.4	8.0	9.2	9.3	0.6	9.6	6.4	15.1
Infrastructure	57.1	42.1	35.0	34.4	7.1	43.2	36.1	0.0 ²⁵	25.4	20.1
Power & Energy	N/A	2.7	1.7	2.9	1.9	0.8	1.4	5.3	3.4	3.3
Environment	4.3	1.3	0.3	3.0	2.6	0.3	4.9	0.0	0.6	3.7
Trade & Industry	1.3	20.7	3.9	0.7	12.4	0.8	4.1	31.7	9.6	2.9
Education	4.3	8.0	12.0	14.9	17.0	21.8	6.4	14.4	16.7	19.9
Health	2.7	7.6	6.0	7.3	3.6	4.8	4.7	11.3	4.9	2.7
Culture, Youths & Sports	2.0	2.6	1.1	3.4	1.9	2.8	3.1	1.0	2.1	1.9
Town, Urban & Regional Development	2.6	1.9	14.4	0.9	16.9	1.2	7.4	5.4	6.9	6.2
Water & Sanitation	0.3	4.4	10.7	15.3	13.4	3.2	0.6	7.6	4.0	7.1
General Admin	22.4	5.4	9.3	8.6	13.6	11.8	32.6	15.4	20.6	14.9

Source: State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC), Working Paper: Understanding Political Commitment, Lagos: UKAID, 2014



social safety nets, and reduce income inequalities in the country are not the priority of the public authorities, despite the Constitution (Section 14 (2) (b)) stating that, “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.”

Table IV illustrates and reinforces this observation about the failure of the country's public authorities to provide for human development and human security. It provides a comparative overview of the actual average per cent share of total capital expenditure on key social sectors, namely, education, health, and water and sanitation, between two electoral cycles from 2006 to 2012 in ten states of Nigeria [Anambra, Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Lagos, Nigeri, Yobe, and Zamfara]. It shows that expenditure for the social sectors was generally low for the ten states, with the highest and lowest ranking states, as follows: Education (Katsina, 21.8%; Anambra, 4.2%); Health (Niger, 11%; Anambra, 2.7%); and Water & Sanitation (Kaduna, 15.3%; Anambra, 0.3%).

The figures underscore the generally low priority given to the social sector, and the lack of political commitment by the public authorities across the ten states to provide for the human security of their citizens, as stipulated

under Chapter II of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; and in African standards and codes on democracy and development, such as the *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*, the *African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation*, the *African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance*, and the *African Peer Review Mechanism*. The provisions include: (a) protection and protection of minority rights for historically marginalized groups; (b) political decentralization or devolution based on the principle of subsidiarity; (c) socioeconomic and cultural rights. The gains, therefore, recorded by INEC since 2011 in strengthening its commitment and capacity to engender confidence and trust in conducting free and fair elections are severely diminished by these strong currents flowing out of the political economy of the Nigerian and the African state generally.

Under such a political economy of the state, and as the ECA observes in respect of the future of democratic consolidation in Africa generally, “electoral processes are still a concern because they may become instruments for exclusion rather than inclusion.”²⁶ This is the “clear and present danger” facing Nigeria: how to address

²⁶ECA, African Governance Report III, p. ix



and attenuate what O'Donnell characterises as the perpetual crises of democracy, its intrinsic mix of hope and dissatisfaction in "constantly redirecting its citizens' gaze from a more or less unsatisfactory present toward a future of still unfulfilled possibilities."²⁷ This suggests that "establishing a credible EMB is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for conducting credible elections...: a general anti-democratic political culture of impunity characterised by abuse of power by incumbent parties for partisan electoral gain; a zero-sum approach to electoral competition that ignites and fuels electoral violence; and high-levels of vote-buying and voter-intimidation can create an environment which makes conducting credible elections difficult, regardless of the technocratic skills and techno-

logical innovations deployed to conduct credible elections by a credible EMB. This is the experience in Nigeria, where controversial elections were held in 2015 and 2019, despite the popular perception of the country's EMB, as a credible EMB. For this reason, attention should be turned to strengthening the structural-material and cultural environment conducive to competitive party and electoral politics. Nigeria's experience since 2019 with the investment of the country's EMB in high technology, and internal administrative and financial reform to sanitize the conduct of voter registration, to create a credible voters' register, has served, paradoxically, to galvanize political parties to find more dishonest ways to act with impunity to subvert the electoral process."²⁸

 **In respect of the future of democratic consolidation in Africa generally, "electoral processes are still a concern because they may become instruments for exclusion rather than inclusion."**

²⁷Guillermo O'Donnell, "The Perpetual Crises of Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 18, Issue No.1, January 2007, p.5

²⁸ L. Adele Jinadu, *Credibility of Electoral Commissions in West Africa*, Abuja: Centre for Democracy and Development, Abuja : Blog Publications, March 10, 20212 p.5

Chapter

6

➤ The Electoral Governance Landscape II: Challenges for Security Personnel Deployment

Since the 2019 general elections, Nigeria has experienced serious coordinated attempts to undermine the integrity of competitive party and electoral politics in the country through manipulation of two levels of the country's electoral governance landscape, which are controlled by federal and state executive and the legislature, and which sometimes pit both branches of government against one another. In respect of the rules of electoral competition, the attempts aimed to influence, for partisan party advantage, the reappointment process of the cohort of national electoral commissioners and RECs appointed for the first of two consecutive fixed five-year terms in 2015/2016 and the appointment of new members of INEC and RECs to fill vacancies, due to the end of the two consecutive five-year tenure of some members of INEC and RECs.

There have also been attempts to diminish and compromise the integrity of the country's electoral governance landscape and of INEC itself. The attempt was a major factor behind the protracted debate between the federal executive branch and the legislature over the provisions and passage of the 2022 Electoral Act. Opposition to the electronic transmission of results was the major area of contestation. This opposition remains active and a cause of concern, as evidenced by allegations of attempt to remove the Chairman of INEC in October 2022 to pave the way for the roll back of the electronic transmission of election results ahead of the 2023 elections. INEC's success in undertaking the continuous voter registration has also opened it up to attacks on its staff who have been kidnapped and even killed in some instances.²⁹



Two observations, deriving from the earlier characterisation of the material and cultural environment framing the country's electoral governance landscape, are appropriate to emphasise and important. This is the conflict of interest inherent in the central role of the elected executive and legislative public political office-holders in the process of appointing members of INEC and RECs, who has regulatory and oversight powers to ensure electoral integrity, and in passing legislation about rules of electoral competition and rule application in organising the competition to manage an electoral process over which they have a vested interest and are bent to manipulate to their partisan party and personal advantage,

raising the question, "*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*"³⁰ ["Who will guard the guardians themselves?"] The material-psycho-cultural structure of the country's party system, driven by a zero-sum approach to electoral politics, lack of mutuality and reciprocity among the political parties, and the tendency to abuse the power of incumbency for partisan political party and personal advantage combine to divert competitive party and electoral politics and the electoral governance landscape in the country, from what they should be and the higher ethical purpose it should serve, as outlined in the jurisprudence of the country's 1999 Constitution and in African regional codes and standards on democracy, elections and development.



Since the 2019 general elections, Nigeria has experienced serious coordinated attempts to undermine the integrity of competitive party and electoral politics in the country through manipulation of two levels of the country's electoral governance landscape, which are controlled by federal and state executive and the legislature, and which sometimes pit both branches of government against one another.

²⁹In 2022, one INEC staff was killed and two others were missing when masked gunmen stormed and attacked INEC's office in Ihitte, Uboma Local Government Area of Imo state in April, while the continuous voter registration was ongoing. As a result, the continuous voter registration exercise was suspended not only in the local government area but also in fifty-four additional centres in Imo state. In October 2022, a Principal Executive Officer of INEC in Anambra state, earlier declared missing, was found dead.

³⁰Juvenal, Satire VI, lines 347-348

Chapter

7

➤ The Electoral Governance Landscape III: Characterising the Current Security Landscape

The descent into an “anarchical society” or a “failed state” might seem implausible or improbable but the escalation of violent conflicts, particularly decimating violent political conflicts over the control of political power in Nigeria, over the electoral cycles since 2011, raises serious concerns about the politics of brinkmanship in the country and the ability of the Nigeria state to provide national security and, specifically regarding the 2023 general elections, the peaceful environment for the conduct of the elections. The global spread of international terror, and its convergence with, or spill-over effects on, regional and national anti-state movements, as is the case currently in the Sahel Belt of West Africa, complicates the challenges for the peaceful conduct of the 2023 general elections in the country.

The environment is characterised by a massive problem of the structural condition of contemporary Nigeria that reflects the ubiquity, across the country's six geopolitical zones, of a growing structural violence, of deepening poverty, social injustice and institutionalised inequities accentuated by kleptocratic rule by public authorities—all of which has given rise to a sense of alienation and anomie, hopelessness, and incendiary desperation and criminal behaviour among citizens and other actors. The deepening structural violence is complemented by psychological violence in the form of insidious and dehumanising hate speech and ethnic profiling that in turn tends to fan the embers of violent ethnopolitical political conflict, especially in urban settings. The nature of this political and security environment is well-captured by General L.E.O. Iboror, Nigeria's Chief of the Defence Staff in Box I:



Box I: Overview of Contemporary Security Environment of Nigeria

As part of the international community, Nigeria is currently grappling with various security threats that pose challenges to the country's national development. These security threats include activities of Boko Haram Terrorists (BHTs) in the northeast, militancy in the Niger Delta, banditry in the northwest, secessionist agitations in the southeast, cattle rustling in the north-central as well as kidnapping and farmer-herder clashes in virtually every part of the country. These asymmetric security challenges are aided in very large measure by the

proliferation of small and light weapons and the emergence of groups that engage in banditry, kidnapping, political violence, and other mafia-style violent activities. Added to all these challenges are the internal social contradictions related to politics, ethnicity, resource control, religion and corruption which continuously generate acrimony and heat up the polity. This unfavourable situation has impacted negatively on peace and security for Nigerians with negative consequences on the country's national development.

Source: General L.E.O. Iboror, Contemporary Security Environment and National Development: Efforts of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, Distinguished NIJA Lecture, delivered at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Laos, Nigeria, 25 August 2022, pp.3-4

Box II gives an overview of the security environment in each of the county's six geopolitical zones.

Box II: Short Security Environment Profile of Nigeria's Six Geopolitical Zones

THE NORTHEAST

The largest, most ethnically, religiously, linguistically, and geographically diverse geo-political zone in the country, the north-east's socio-economic indices reveal high levels of poverty, infrastructural decay, lack of development, poor governance, unfavourable climatic conditions and differences in religious cultures. It is currently experiencing cases of insecurity ranging from ideological/religious extremism, terrorism, kidnapping, and ethno-religious conflicts amongst others.

The BHT/the Islamic State in West African Province (ISWAP) terrorists whose roots emanate in the zone draw oxygen for their survival mainly from the pervasive level of poverty and underdevelopment in the zone amongst other factors. The BH/ISWAP

activities have led to the destruction of communities, killing of thousands of people as well as loss of farmlands and other means of livelihood, inhibited infrastructural development, negatively impacted food security in the region, and hamper socio-economic activities.

THE NORTHWEST

The northwest has some of the richest resource states in northern Nigeria. However, poverty, poor governance, cultural and political inadequacies, low literacy rate coupled with large unemployed youth population have combined to create a precarious security environment in the zone, leading to a steep rise in violent crimes such as banditry, kidnapping, farmers-herders conflicts, ethno-religious violence and political violence in the zone. The festering insecurity serves as a dragnet, drawing bandits to the



zone such that criminal elements have now taken advantage of the vast uninhabited forests such as Kamuku, Kuyello, Kuyambana, Falgore, Sububu, Kawasari and Danjibga forests as springboards for armed banditry and other violent attacks. The prevailing unstable security environment has taken a heavy toll on peace and security while the associated violence resulted in loss of lives and properties with attendant negative impacts on national development.

THE NORTH-CENTRAL

Conflicts in the north-central zone are multifaceted, aggravated by increase in communal violence, ethno-religious conflicts and farmers-herders clashes, nurtured and fed by a clash of interest between agricultural households and nomadic cattle-herding groups both of which go into conflict over land access. At the same time, climate change and the Boko Haram insurgency have reduced the size of land suitable for grazing in the northeast forcing herding communities to expand their routes into the north-central states where they frequently clash with local farming communities. This competition over land and resources is further compounded by religious and ethnic intolerance between mostly Fulani herders and the indigenous population of the zone.

The cycle of violence has given rise to the proliferation of ethno-religious militias across the region, with the security exacerbated by political violence usually along ethnic and religious lines. Additionally, low literacy, high poverty level and poor overall socio-economic development have com-

bined to weave a matrix of a complex and perpetual conflict environment. Added to these is the threat of violence by the high population of unemployed youths many of whom have turned to criminality. This is responsible for the rampant cases of kidnapping for ransom, abductions, murders and assassinations common in the zone.

THE SOUTHWEST

The southwest is the most peaceful and perhaps the most economically viable region with expectedly the highest literacy rate in the country. The main security challenges include armed robbery, kidnapping, political thuggery as well as the violent activities of ethnic militias and cult groups. Others are cyber and financial fraud, weapon trafficking, some form of ethnic violence, sea robbery, cross-border crimes and other sundry crimes associated with urbanized areas including oil theft and pipeline vandalism.

THE SOUTHEAST AND SOUTH-SOUTH

The historical, cultural, economic, and geographical affinities of the southeast and south-south geo-political zones of the country give one the latitude to discuss their contemporary security environments together. In this regard, the prevailing security environment is characterised by militancy, ethnic violence, communal conflicts, separatist agitations, environmental degradation, political violence, drug abuse/trafficking, oil theft, and vandalism as well as other crimes occasioned by the existence of large populations of unemployed youths. Prominent threat groups in the southeast include the Indigenous Peoples of



Biafra (IPOB), Eastern Security Network (ESN) and a myriad of militants and sea pirates that constantly pose security threats along the numerous inland waterways that crisscross that part of the country.

In the south-south region, in particular, the security landscape is characterised by rising cases of oil theft and pipeline vandalism which have impacted negatively on revenue generation by the government while also aggravating environmental degradation across the zone. Put together, the threat

scenario in both regions is further compounded by human trafficking and the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. The inflow of illicit funds from illegal bunkering and oil theft meant that non-state actors and separatist groups like the IPOB and other terror groups now have the resources to acquire more light weapons to perpetrate violence thereby undermining the monopoly of instruments of coercion by the Nigerian state with the resultant effects on peace and security and ultimately national development.

Source: Summarized from, General L.E.O. Iboror, Contemporary Security Environment and National Development: Efforts of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, Distinguished NIIA Lecture, delivered at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Laos, Nigeria, 25 August 2022, pp. 6-11

To assess the potential impact on the elections of the political and security landscape described in Boxes I and II requires distinguishing two categories of violence. The first category is the triadic intersection of physical, structural, and cultural violence³¹ that arises from, but that has become a dysfunctional and seriously embedded defining feature of, the political economy of the Nigerian state. It operates as an intervening causative variable that predisposes to and has, in fact, ignited electoral violence, as a species of political violence in Nigeria's political and electoral history, with negative consequences on the ability of electoral commis-

sions in Nigeria to conduct free and fair elections.³²

The anxieties and mistrust about the possibility of a compromised election that are due to operational delays, shortfalls in materials and personnel, and logistics inadequacies, in the transportation and deployment of material and human resources, especially over difficult topography, have typically precipitated violence on election day in the country. In short, elections can "seriously go bad," with violent consequences, as they did under the country's First, Second and Third Republics, requiring the deployment of security personnel, "in the

³²As illustrated in the following definitive studies of electoral politics and conduct of elections in Nigeria: Post, The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959, Violence and Politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience, Post and Vickers, Structure & Conflict in Nigeria 1960-1965. y J. Dudley, Instability and Political Order.



context of material scarcity and political distrust that is common in many emerging democracies.”³³

Indeed, it was in anticipation of, and to pre-empt, these consequences of the country's political economy that the National Electoral Commission, under Eme Awa, in 1987 restricted, as part of the Guidelines and Regulations for the conduct of the December 1987 Local Government elections on a non-party basis, (a) inter-local government and inter-state movement of persons and vehicles, and (b) voting hours from 8am to 2pm, on election day. It was also what influenced the Military regime of Ibrahim Babangida to deploy security personnel on patrol across the major urban areas of the country before and on election day. It remains a concern that the material structure of Nigeria's political economy has continued since 1999, under civilian democratic politics to require a high level of securitization for the conduct of elections in the country.

There is another, more direct impact the general triadic violence underlying the country's political economy may have on the conduct of elections

and the deployment of security personnel or election-related assignments, before, during, and after election day. This is the civil unrest, with deep roots in domestic and external sources, and in the underlying citizenship and social question, “To whom does the state belong?” that has seen the country descend into episodic, even protracted and expanding outbursts of political violence, including insurgent and irredentist ones, with international and regional West African links, against the Nigerian state since 1999. The unrest has assumed the form of political and social banditry, kidnapping, inter-cine inter-community conflicts over land, water, mineral resources and grazing rights, the Boko Haram insurgency, irredentism and the criminalisation of politics in urban centres across the country, through the activities of associational proxies and surrogates of prominent politicians. The toxic political and socioeconomic environment created by the unrest continues to raise questions about its security implications for the peaceful, and therefore, free and fair conduct of the 2023 general elections. [See Box III]

³³Mozaffer and Schedler, “The Comparative Study of Electoral Governance,” p.8suspended not only in the local government area but also in fifty-four additional centres in Imo state. In October 2022, a Principal Executive Officer of INEC in Anambra state, earlier declared missing, was found dead.



Box IV: Two “Possible Scenarios” for Failure to Hold Elections in 2023

President.

Where elections could not hold in more than one-third of the 36 States of the Federation, no Presidential candidate can be said to have up to one-quarter of the votes cast in each of at least two-thirds of all the States and FCT;

- The above may be interpreted to mean that elections must have been held in all the States of the Federation and the FCT;
- The legal implication is that in such a situation, no candidate can be declared winner of a presidential election. Then, there is a threat of a vacuum where the tenure of the incumbent expires.

Failure to hold elections in a constituency

- Where elections cannot be held in a substantial part of a constituency, provided the margin of lead is higher than the total number of PVCs collected, INEC may declare a return.
- Where the margin of lead is below the total number of PVCs collected, INEC shall not declare a return but fix a date for another election in the areas affected.
- An unusual situation is where no matter the length of postponement, the election can still not be safely conducted. For instance, the situation in some northern parts of the country may not allow the possibility of an election after postponement.

Source: Kunle Adegoke, SAN, “The Legal and Political Implications of Failure of Elections in Substantial Parts of Some Constituencies Due to Insecurity,” power-point presentation at Expert Meeting on Conducting Nigeria’s 2023 General Elections in Volatile Environments, jointly organized by the CDD and INEC, September 1-2, 2022 at the Transcorp Hilton, Abuja.

The second category of violence that frames the political and security landscape of elections in the country is linked to the pursuit and debasement of politics as warfare, “in which people seek political power by all means, legal or not.”³⁵ The major medium for the debasement is the nature and structure of the country’s patron-clientelism party system, through the political mobilisation of ethnicity and the hate speech that it tends to encourage as a feature of electoral politics in the country. As Sofiri Joab-Peterside contends, “a key

current in the escalation of violence by ethnic militias is the recruitment of their leaders to secure electoral victory through violence and intimidation.”³⁶ The system has historically tended to precipitate violent electoral conflicts, contrary to the spirit and letter of “the basic rules of the electoral game.” Why, how, and with what consequences for democracy and development, the party system does this is well-captured in several studies³⁷ that need not be elaborated here, beyond that conveyed in the observations by Patrick Ollawa in Box V.

³⁵Claude Ake, “The Political Question,” Chapter 2, p.22, in Oyeleye Oyediran (ed.), *Governance and Development in Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Professor Billy J. Dudley*, Ibadan: Oyediran Consult International, 1996.

³⁶Sofiri Joab-Peterside, “Security Challenges in Contemporary Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Development,” *Pan-African Social Science Review*, No. 13, December 2016, p.140

³⁷See: Olu Obafemi, Sam Egwu, Okechukwu Ibeanu and Jibrin Ibrahim (eds.), *Political Parties and Democracy in Nigeria*, Kuru: The National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, 2014; *The Nigerian Electoral Journal*, Special Issue: Election Violence and Security, Vol.9, No.1, January 2017; Yahaya Tanko Baba, *Political Parties and Violence: Framing Nigeria’s Electioneering Campaigns: Evidence from General Elections in Sokoto State, Nigeria (1999-2011)*, Abuja: The Electoral Institute, 2016 .



Box V Persistence of Institutional and Psycho-cultural Deficits in Nigeria's Party System

The paradox of party politics in the Second Republic is that despite a well-intentioned constitutional attempt to evolve a party system, which would provide stable context between parties, presumably characterized by different programmes manifested in issue-oriented ideologies, ...what emerged in practice was transactional politics based on opportunistic and informal networks of politicking replete with intra-party factionalism that constantly led to shifting alliances, a situation which unavoidably supplanted the formal structures of party organization...the basic problem centered on the subversion and pervasion of the intrinsic values and principles of governing the operation of the system by politicians, whose party affiliations were rooted more in the pursuit of financial rewards and opportunities and linkages in dyadic relation to some party notables

Source: Patrick E. Ollawa, "The 1979 Elections," in Peter P. Ekeh, Patrick Dele Cole and Gabriel O. Olusanya (eds.), *Nigeria Since Independence, The First Twenty Five Years: Politics and Constitutions*, Ibadan: Heinemann, 1989, p.161



Even if the 2023 general elections go ahead as scheduled, there are concerns that the elections may be inconclusive in several constituencies across the country to the extent that a constitutional crisis and a political impasse over the declaration of election results occurs.



Chapter

8

➤ Designing a Framework for Securing and Deploying Security Personnel for 2023 Elections

Daunting as the current security challenges are, there are promising indications, from previous experience and lessons learned from the country's general elections and off-cycle elections and current realities, that the complex "insecurity question" is resolvable and is being aggressively tackled. The first indication is that the NAF have had limited but significant success in containing the current

"asymmetric security challenges," through the military operations detailed in Table V. With reinforcement provided by inter-agency cooperation with other security agencies in the country, and with emphasis on non-kinetic operations "with the aim of winning the hearts and minds as well as getting the buy-in of the populace with respect to NAF efforts."³⁸

Table V: Major Security Operations by the Nigerian Armed Forces

Operations Name	Geopolitical Zone	Target
HADIN KAI	Northeast	BHT/ISWAP
HADIN DAJI WHIRL PUNCH	Northwest	Banditry
SAFE HAVEN WHIRL STRIKE	North-central	Herders/Farmers and other criminalities
UDO KA	Southeast	Secessionist agitations groups
DELTA SAFE	South-south	Oil Theft and related criminalities
AWATSE	Southwest	Banditry, Kidnapping and related criminalities

Source: General L.E.O. Iboror, *Contemporary Security Environment and National Development: Efforts of the Armed Forces of Nigeria*, Distinguished NIIA Lecture, delivered at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria, 25 August 2022, pp.18-19

³⁸General L.E.O. Iboror, *Contemporary Security Environment and National Development: Efforts of the Armed Forces of Nigeria*, Distinguished NIIA Lecture, delivered at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria, 25 August 2022, p19.



The second indication is that INEC has developed considerable experience since it established the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in 2011, and its Election Monitoring and Support Centre (EMSC) in 2018, with anticipating, scoping, and addressing election insecurity questions.

Table VI: Membership of ICCES

1. INEC (Chair)	12. Nigerian Immigration Service
2. Office of the National Security Adviser (Co-Chair)	13. National Drug Law Enforcement Agency
3. Nigeria Police Force	14. Federal Road Safety Corps
4. Police Service Commission	15. Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps
5. Ministry of Police Affairs	16. Nigerian Correctional Service
6. Nigerian Air Force	17. National Youth Service Corps
7. Nigerian Navy	
8. Nigerian Army	
9. Department of State Security	
10. National Intelligence Agency	
11. Nigerian Customs Service	

Source: INEC, Report of the 2019 General Elections, p.39

ICCES and EMSC serve as early warning mechanisms to anticipate, scope, and diminish or avert risks to the peaceful conduct of free and fair elections in the country. This is in addition to the election risk management (ER) toolkit developed by The Electoral Institute (TEI) in INEC, with support from the African Union and International IDEA, "to enable the commission to gather information about risks factors associated with elections, be able to analyse them and deploy effective measures to contain or mitigate them, towards peaceful and violent free elections."³⁹ Also valuable in developing scoping maps

of potential risks to the conduct of free and fair elections are "preliminary" reports, essentially in the form of election security assessments, identifying election security risk factors ahead of the various elections undertaken by civil society groups, notably the Centre for Democracy and Development, the CLEEN Foundation, Yiaga, and the Civil Society Situation Room.

The third indication is the oft-repeated public commitment of the President of Nigeria, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation, guarantee-

³⁹Attahiru Jega, Election Management in Nigeria, p.176



ing the conduct of free and fair elections in the country. It is worth noting that the off-cycle governorship elections held between 2020 and 2022 have generally witnessed non-partisan and professional conduct by security personnel deployed to police and secure the election process, especially on election day.

The fourth indication is borne out of the process of inductive reason, from the observation that historically the various fractions of the country's mainstream political class have seen it to be in their interest to ensure that general elections are held, even if poorly conducted, with dire security challenges facing the country. The conclusion is that these same class interests will make them ensure the 2023 general elections are held, despite the grave contradictions within and between the major political parties that are pouring more fuel on and aggravating the ignitable "insecurity question" ahead of the 2023 general elections.

But despite these reasons to believe the polls will go ahead in February as planned, there are still reasons to believe that insecurity will inhibit their holding.

One set of concerns revolves around the capacity of INEC, notably its preparedness, to stand high above the partisan political fray and diligently play the role of an impartial umpire firmly committed to the

conduct of a credible 2023 general election. Despite repeated and full elaboration of categorical assurances by INEC of its preparedness to conduct the elections, including beefing up measures to prevent the hacking of technology deployed for the conduct of the elections, and evidence confirming it by independent close observers, unsubstantiated allegations made, going into the last stretch of the elections, about a compromised distribution and padding of the voters' register and attempts to remove the Chairman of INEC because he is seen, in some political circles, as the arrow-head of their opposition against the electronic transmission of election results, may become a self-fulfilling prophecy that beclouds and sullies the road to the elections, and even brings up latent divisions over it within the commission.

The second set of contrary indications arises from the lingering controversy within the two major political parties over the outcome of their party primaries to select candidates, especially presidential candidates, for the general elections. The controversy has heightened the negative polarising dimensions of ethno-religious identity politics, North versus South, Christian versus Muslim, across the country, with its potential to descend into violent ethno-political and religious conflict during electioneering campaigns and especially after the elections, if the outcome of the presiden-



tial election is viewed from a blurred ethnopolitical and religious lens, such as occurred after the declaration of the presidential elections in 2011. Efforts by INEC, first championed under the Chairmanship of Dr. Abel Guobadia (2000-2005)⁴⁰ to get the country's political parties to assent to a Code of Conduct for Political Parties, and attempts since the 2011 to strengthen the all-party Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) as parties for promoting inter-party and intra-party harmony and cooperation for the conduct of peaceful, free, and fair elections in the country have had limited success. Moreover, the assiduous efforts of the National Peace Committee (NPC) since 2015 to create harmonious inter-party relations and douse the potential for inter-party acrimony to assume violent political conflict have not been as long-lasting as to create a peaceful environment for electoral politics, beyond the immediate electioneering campaign period. The reason for this is partly because the activities of the NPC have tended to be restricted to the signing of a peace accord among the political parties in the penultimate months to the election day, because the peace accord initiative is limited to the presidential candidates, and because there are no follow-up mechanisms for monitoring compliance with, and enforcement of the terms of the

peace accord. The broader picture is of course the general indifference, even resistance of the country's political parties and their supporters towards attempts of INEC at developing and enforcing a code of conduct for political parties.

The third contrary indication is the possibility of a hung first round of the presidential election, if the leading candidate with the "highest number of votes cast at the election," fails to meet the constitutional spread requirement of obtaining not less than "one-quarter of the votes cast in each of at least two-thirds of all the States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja."⁴¹ The possibility may trigger fresh rounds of political brickbats and bargaining that may further aggravate the underlying mutual distrust that predisposes to violent ethnopolitical conflict and unbearably raise the price of the country's federalism for the country's major and minority ethnic groups to a breaking point.

Another concern the surrounds the possibility of a delayed release of approved budgeted funds and/or consideration and approval of extra-budgetary requests to INEC, to meet shortfalls in the approved budget caused by inflation, or new line-item requests, especially due to increased integrity costs of election technology

⁴⁰Abel Guobadia, *Reflections of a Nigerian Electoral Umpire*, Benin City: MindexPublishing Company Limited, 2009, pp.73-76

⁴¹See 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), Sections 134(2),134(3) and 134(4)



and election administration election technological cost for reinforcing the secured deployment of technology for the 2023 general elections. Although the budgetary and procurement process has been greatly improved to enhance the administrative and financial autonomy of INEC, including the provision of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) for the recurrent expenditure and salaries of the Commission to be a direct charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund⁴² of the Federation, and recent post-2011 exemptions granted INEC to approach the country's Federal Executive Council for approval of budget for the procurement of sensitive security election materials, the bureaucratic politics of the country's budgetary and procurement processes is so byzantine and riddled with rent-seeking activities that can cause serious delays in budgetary and procurement releases to INEC, to the point of causing serious disruptions to INEC's schedule of purchases of election materials.⁴³

But there are also indications that INEC, drawing on lessons learned from previous experiences in 2011 and 2019 when logistic challenges led to the postponement of the 2011 and 2019 general elections has taken precautionary measures to ensure that its preparedness and logistics

operations for the 2023 general elections are not irredeemably disrupted to cause a postponement of the 2023 general elections. Addressing the inauguration of the Electoral Operations and Logistics Committee, on 5 November 2022, the INEC Chairman assured Nigerians that "we are determined to ensure that never again should elections be postponed at the eleventh hour on account of logistics. That is why we are mobilising every national asset and starting the engagements early."⁴⁴

A final concern arises from the anxieties caused by and the probable disruptive consequences for the election of pre-election legal cases, emanating from disputed party primaries, including the process for conducting them, and under whose authority, and the qualifications of nominated candidates, with two of such pending cases involving the presidential candidates of two of the major political parties. It is noteworthy in this respect that the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court on November 2, 2022 issued a circular that stated that, "in view of the large volume of pre-election cases filed so far; with the imminent attendant risk of lapsing, it has become necessary to constitute a Task Force to speedily dispose of the matters, particularly in those Judicial Divisions with a glut of them," within

⁴²1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (First Alteration Act, 2010), adding Subsection 3 to Section 81, and Subsection 8 to Section 84 of the 1999 Constitution.

⁴³For elaboration of this observation, see, L. Adele Jinadu, "Case Study of Nigeria," in ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions (ECONEC), Cost of Elections in the ECOWAS Region: Country Study of Benin Republic, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, and Senegal, Abuja: ECONEC, 2019, pp.115-117

Fadehan Oyeyemi, "2023: Federal High Court sets up task force for disposal of pre-election suits, Daily Post November 2, 2022,

<https://www.dailypost.ng/2022/11/02/2023-federal-high-court-sets-up-task-force-for-disposal-of-pre-election-suits>, accessed November 5, 2022

⁴⁴Sodiq Omolayo, "We Won't Postpone 2023 Elections on Account of Logistics, INEC Assures Nigerian," The Guardian, Lagos: November 5, 2022, p. 4

⁴⁵Fadehan Oyeyemi, "2023: Federal High Court sets up task force for disposal of pre-election suits, Daily Post November 2, 2022,

<https://www.dailypost.ng/2022/11/02/2023-federal-high-court-sets-up-task-force-for-disposal-of-pre-election-suits>, accessed November 5, 2022

Chapter

9

➤ Recommendations: Nature of Role of Major Security Personnel Deployment Stakeholders

Based on the foregoing Sections, Table IX puts forward recommendations about the framework for securing the 2023 general elections and for

deploying of security personnel to that end between December 2022 and March 2023.

<p>Independent National Electoral Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Map out areas of insecurity according to levels of insecurity for surveillance and preventive measures to douse the risks of insecurity before February 2023. [See Appendix A] ● Take measures before the 2023 general elections to establish community-based task forces at selected polling units across the country to take pre-emptive action against criminal breaches of the electoral law on election-day [See Appendix B]. ● Strengthen internal preventive measures against hacking of INEC IRev Portal and electronic transmission of results on election day ● Quickly integrate new INEC members and RECs to minimise the adverse impact of a high rate of turnovers in membership of INEC and RECs. ● Intensify training and retraining of INEC permanent and ad hoc staff for election-related duty ● Hold regular meetings with the political parties on arrangements for the 2023 general elections to reassure them of INECs commitment to conducting free and fair elections in 2023 and beyond. ● Issue a code of electoral conduct after consultations with and acceptance by the political parties. ● Improve logistics operations to ensure timely deployment and transportation of election officials and the delivery of election materials before, and on election day, to ensure prompt commencement of accreditation and voting process on election day
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Federal Government of Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen INEC's independence through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Immediate release of appropriated INEC annual and election-year budget. ii. Provide exemption from the regular budget and procurement process from INEC to strengthen its financial independence and to avoid delays in its procurement of sensitive election materials. iii. Avoid abuse of power of incumbency for party political advantage. iv. Grant INEC the power to deploy security agencies for election-related assignments.
State governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid abuse of power of incumbency for party political advantage.
Political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commit strongly to the Peace Accord agreed with the National Peace Committee and subsisting Code of Conduct for Political Parties. ● Resolve outstanding disputes arising from party primaries ahead of the 2023 general elections. ● Conduct peaceful and issue-based electioneering campaigns. ● Embark on vigorous civic and voter education on importance and desirability of democratic citizenship and mandate protection.
Ministries, departments & agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support/complement INEC preparations for the 2023 general elections, based on INEC's request and timelines.
The Judiciary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expeditiously complete and determine all pre-election petitions and address issues around conflicting judgements.
Security agencies (Police, Armed Forces, Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with INEC, and under its direction, to secure the 2023 general elections. ● Take active part in the decisions and activities of ICCES to secure the 2023 general elections, including the deployment of security personnel for election-related assignments.
Democracy promoting agencies (Human Rights Commission, ICPC, EFCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support/complement needs of INEC for the 2023 general elections and coordinate their general election-related activities to prevent human rights abuses and corruption.
CSOs and NGOs, including the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support/complement needs of INEC for the 2023 general elections. ● Coordinate their 2023 general election-related activities, such as civic and voter education to promote the integrity and diversity of the election. ● Engage political parties on the need for a violence-free and issue-based electioneering campaign culture.
Community- and faith-based organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support/complement needs of INEC for the 2023 general elections. ● Coordinate their general election-related activities to promote the integrity of polls, and support peace initiatives with political parties. ● Pursue civic and voter education activities at the community level to raise consciousness about and commitment to democratic citizenship and mandate protection.



The electorate and general population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop an active and vigilant political culture of engagement with the electoral process and democratic governance ● Electoral choice to be informed by issues, record, and character of candidates
African EMBs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If approached by INEC, share experience on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) conduct of elections under grave problems of national and externally induced security challenges. (b) challenges of deploying ICT to the conduct of general elections, including the possibility of hacking the election IT portal.
International community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Undertake a needs assessment and based on its findings, develop a short-term plan of support towards INEC's preparation for the 2023 general elections. ● Support INEC, if it requests them, with non-budget appropriated costs of its election-related activities for the 2023 general elections. ● Convene, in partnership with INEC and relevant civil society organisations, a meeting of IPAC early in January 2023 to engage with its members on the imperative of a peaceful conduct of the 2023 general elections ● Initiate and partner with INEC and the National Peace Committee the extension of the Peace Accord among the presidential candidates to the state and local governments with the involvement of important traditional rulers and local influential figures to give the Peace Accord a more local and community-based resonance.

Appendix A

➤ Scoping and Mapping Areas of Electoral Risks Ahead of 2023 General Elections

Given the ubiquity and cross-national scope of the current security situation in the country, and the short timeframe to the 2023 general elections it is necessary to identify and take a sample of security risks to the elections, from areas of selected states in each geopolitical zone where security personnel should be deployed to pre-empt outbreaks of violent political, especially election conflicts.

To this end, INEC should, through its Electoral Institute and ICCES, in partnership with the CDD and Cleen Foundation, which have done excellent work in risk measurement and assessment ahead of previous general

elections since 1999, should establish a working group.

The mandate of this Working Group should be to identify and recommend such risks risk areas in selected areas in selected states in each of the country's geopolitical zones.

The working group should report back by the end of December 2022, with recommendation on the areas where security personnel should be deployed and when, between January and February 2023, to undertake reconnaissance and advise on what level of security personnel to deploy for election-related assignment in the areas.



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Appendix B

➤ Establishment of Community-Based Election-Day Task Forces for Peaceful Elections

Using structures, it has established, through the activities of its ICCES, through the national, state and local governments, INEC should modify and strengthen the structures by establishing and routinising something analogous to a Neighbourhood Watch to protect the sanctity of the electoral process and the people's electoral mandate from predatory activities, such as violence, vote trading on election day, as was done by INEC during the local government elections on a non-party basis in 1987, and general elections for governorship and houses of assembly in 1991, and for the general elections to the National Assembly in 1992, and in recent elections in Ghana and Zambia, with considerable success.

In addition to members of ICCES at the local and ward levels, the task forces should include members drawn from the political parties, civil society-, faith- and community-based groups in the selected risk areas already identified [See Appendix A], with the mandate to include ensuring less rancorous electioneering and other party activities before election day; serving as another layer of early warning mechanisms ahead of election day; and ultimately preventing contraventions of the electoral law and criminal code, including intervening proactively to douse potential signs of violent conflict on election day.

About the EU-SDGN Programme

The European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) is the EU's flagship democracy support programme in Nigeria. The programme is designed to complement the efforts of the Nigerian government to improve and strengthen democracy.

