



RECLAIMNAIJA POST – ELECTION CONFERENCE

Shehu Musa Yar’adua Centre, Abuja

May 26, 2011

COMMUNIQUÉ



The Community Life Project (CLP) organized a *ReclaimNaija* Post Election Conference on the 2011 elections on May 26, 2011 at the Yar’Adua Centre in Abuja. The conference was organized to provide space for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Security Agencies, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Donors and other Stakeholders to exchange ideas and share experiences on the successes and challenges of the 2011 elections. In addition, the conference was organized to help set the agenda for proactively improving the electoral process and CSOs’ engagement and interventions towards 2015.

The conference was attended by representatives of INEC, Security Agencies, NYSC, Donor Agencies, CSOs and other Stakeholders.

OBSERVATIONS

1. Nigerians are very eager for knowledge and are willing to participate and ensure credible electoral process in Nigeria. The citizens had a buy-in into the commitment of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan and INEC Chairman, Professor Attahiru Jega to conduct a credible, free and fair elections
2. The co-operation between CSOs, INEC and Security Agencies engendered by the Civil Society Situation Room during the 2011 elections are quite commendable.
3. The setting up of Situation Room by INEC enabled it to monitor what was happening at the field and communicate with Security Agencies for intervention.
4. The large scale use of different types of media –both traditional and new media (radio, television, TV dramas, jingles, new media, bulk SMS messaging, and newspapers) helped a lot in bringing credibility to the electoral process. In particular, social media helped during the elections to expose irregularities and bring about quick intervention.
5. There are a lot of things done well by INEC which increased the success of the elections including systematic training of staff; the establishment of the Inter-Agency Co-ordinating Committee on election security; comprehensive planning; citizen/CSO participation and social media. However, there were challenges with internal processes, deployment and ICT. In addition, display of voters register was not adequately done before the 2011 elections.
6. The open and instant declaration of results enhanced confidence and credibility in the electoral process.
7. High visibility of Security Agents at elections is a sign of a transitional society. In more mature democracies, armed security officials are not a feature of the electoral process.
8. Survey of security during the April, 2011 elections indicates that there was a high level of performance especially in the areas of punctuality (59.3 %); deployment (74%); approachability (91%); impartiality (86.3%); perception of safety and security (84.6%) and overall conduct of Security Agencies (80%).
9. The use of NYSC staff contributed immensely to the success of the elections and helped to reduce rigging.
10. Logistics is key in ensuring security during elections. Whenever there are logistical challenges in terms of late arrival of materials and officials and incomplete or insufficient electoral materials, security is challenged.

11. Most of the Security Agencies did not budget for the 2011 elections in their annual budget.
12. The success or failure of any election depends on the Stakeholders performing their duties (INEC, Political Parties, Election Observers, Media and Security Agencies).
13. The Security Agencies can make a difference in the outcome of elections. It is therefore important that security officers display the highest level of integrity, neutrality, professionalism and sense of duty. Without adequate security, there cannot be free, fair and credible elections.
14. The establishment of the Inter-Agency Committee on election security and the co-ordination and co-operation that it engendered among the Security Agencies contributed largely to the performance of Security Agencies during the elections.

RESOLUTIONS

GENERAL

- There is the need to review the legal framework for electronic accreditation and voting in 2015.
- Nigerians should remain resilient and committed to promoting electoral transparency and accountable governance for eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

INEC

- INEC should institutionalize what has worked during the 2011 April general elections.
- INEC should make more information available to Nigerians including analysis of the voters register showing the percentage of men, persons with disability, women and youth as well as other demographics.
- INEC should published poll by poll result on the April 2011 election on its website.
- INEC should embark on massive re-organisation and repositioning of the organization ahead of the 2015 elections.
- The messaging on elections including voting processes should be disability friendly.
- INEC should accredit observers in good time at least one month before the commencement of the 2015 elections.
- INEC should embark on continuous voter registration in accordance with the law.
- INEC should monitor political party activities, management of funds and other operations in accordance with the electoral act.
- INEC should revisit the voters register and ensure that those whose names were missing are included and double registration eliminated.
- INEC should investigate its staff who have allegedly committed electoral offences with a view to punishing those involved in accordance with the law.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The National Assembly and INEC should ensure early delineation of constituency and polling units ahead of the 2015 elections.

SECURITY AGENCIES

- The Security Agencies should be more systematic in their deployment of personnel to ensure that critical areas are not left out.
- Security Agencies should ensure diligent prosecution of election offenders in an open and transparent manner.

- Security Agencies should be responsible for the welfare of their staff including logistical arrangements during elections.
- Security Agencies should make adequate budgetary provisions for the 2015 general elections.

POLITICAL PARTIES

- Political parties should ensure internal party democracy especially in the nomination of candidates for elections.
- Parties should carry out effective voter education to minimize invalid votes.

NYSC

- NYSC should make adequate budgetary provision for their participation in the 2015 general elections.
- NYSC should synergise better with Security Agencies and INEC to provide adequate training for corps members and ensure their safety.

CSOs

- CSOs should advocate for local philanthropy and government support for civil society work.
- CSOs should build partnerships among themselves to reduce duplication of efforts.

DONORS

- Donor Agencies should be more systematic in planning for the funding of election work with openness and transparency.
- Funding should be given to civil society organizations on time in preparation for the 2015 elections and the programme design should give flexibility for local peculiarities.

GOVERNMENT

- The government should immortalize the NYSC members who paid the supreme price and gave their life for the 2011 general elections.
- The government should also support other individuals and families including the police who lost their lives and properties due to election related violence.
- President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan should engage CSOs as he is engaging other sectors of the Nigerian society.

The conference commended Community Life Project (CLP) for carrying out massive voter education before the elections and for organizing the post election conference.



Ms. Ngozi Iwere
Community Life Project (CLP)



Dr. Aisha Akanbi
FOMWAN



Dr. Otive Igbuzor
Centre LSD



Comrade Segun Sango
Democratic Socialist Movement



Prince O. K. Miller
Delta State Motorcyclist Association (DSMA)