
Impact of the Elections on Governance: Lessons Learned

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Introduction

Being in politics can be seen as the most lucrative profession in Nigeria today. Somehow, the country must find a way to make political office less attractive compared to other professions. This may ensure that the public gets the type of services it deserves from political office holders. There is no gainsaying that the pressure of the international community on Nigeria and its leaders to democratise has helped the nation to embrace democracy, if only to be seen to conform to international requirements of civilized political leadership. Leadership is critical to improving public governance, and good leaders are needed at all levels of the society – the presidency, state level, military and security agencies, public service, private sector and within families. Reducing corruption and primitive accumulation in Nigeria, which obviously has implications for elections and governance, demands that positive fundamental societal values be re-emphasised as the basic norm of good governance.

With respect to building and strengthening political institutions and enthroneing the rule of law, these more often than not derive their legitimacy from long-term usage. While it is good that Nigeria successfully held three consecutive elections between 1999 and 2007, it is also disheartening that all three elections were adjudged not to be free and fair. The Nigerian electorate is currently disenchanted with politicians and their politics and the poor quality of public service delivery. It is not surprising, therefore, that many Nigerians were apprehensive of the outcome of the 2011 general elections in the country against the backdrop of the shortcomings that characterised the last three elections. As we saw later, the

2011 elections were better organised and declared credible by the international community. President Jonathan did promise that he would not interfere with the work of Attahiru Jega's INEC, and it did appear that, indeed, there was very little interference in the management of the elections by the different agencies involved. The Presidency and the leadership of INEC were instrumental to the success of this election, and INEC, in particular, must be commended this time around for its integrity and unbiased management of the elections. Unrepentant politicians found it difficult to subvert the electoral process, and many who had hitherto benefitted from rigged elections failed in the elections. The opposition parties to the PDP also made substantial gains in electoral votes.

Impact of the Elections on the Democratisation Process

A representative democracy is representative to the extent that it 'absolutely depends upon the integrity of elections' (Kurfi 1983; 259). When the integrity of the processes leading up to the elections, and the elections proper are compromised, then democracy is in jeopardy. The inability to conduct free and fair elections acceptable to all in the 1964/65 and 1983 led to the collapse of the First and Second Republics (Dudley 1982; Osaghae 2002). Osaghae (2002:152) has enumerated four related reasons why elections have been problematic in Nigeria, namely:

- (a) The ethno-regional character of the political parties and the zero-sum nature of politics which compel politicians to seek to win by any means, fair or foul.
- (b) The manner in which electoral commissions are constituted which does not insulate them from partisanship.
- (c) The misuse of state-owned media by incumbent parties to the disadvantage of rivals and;
- (d) The partisan use of the police and other security forces.

A critical examination of the reasons given above for electoral shortcomings show that while some effort has been made to make the present parties, namely, the PDP, ANPP, APGA, CPC etc. broad-based, very little has been achieved with respect to changing attitudes to politics, the misuse of the media and the police and other security agencies. However, it is only with respect to INEC that one could venture to say that perhaps, the body is becoming relatively independent from the control of the Executive and other forces in society. Again, while we will like to see the building of a stronger INEC institutionally, the reason for its success now is committed leadership, and a leadership with integrity. Nigeria surely needs leaders with integrity to guide the state.

Against this backdrop and examining the three previous elections held before 2011 in the country from 1999, we find that indeed little changed, as each election instead of improving on the previous one became worse. This position is

evident from the various studies carried out by scholars in this volume, whether at the local, state or national level. In short, it was a miracle that the country did not implode before 2011. Perhaps, the reason for this could be attributed to the collective memory of a people that had gone through three years of an excruciating civil war (1967 – 1970), and seen the devastating effects of war on development. Nigerians wanted no more of this. Within the period under study, Nigeria, rather than enjoy democratic consolidation, actually experienced democratic erosion, making many to question the veracity of democracy as an organising principle of governance.

Having said this, the Local Government elections of 2007, for example, as local as it was supposed to be, did not afford Nigerians the opportunity of freedom of choice as their votes did not count. The desire of politicians to win at all costs, the open partisanship of the police and the electoral management authorities constrained citizens' freedom of choice from the available political alternatives. Indeed, both local and international observers and monitors generally agreed that the elections were fraught with serious irregularities and that they fell short of international standards and expectations (TMG 2008a:13).

The elections were regulated by the 1999 Constitution, the Electoral Act adopted in 2006 as appropriate, as well as regulations and guidelines issued by INEC. The Electoral Act 2006 was an improvement on the Electoral Act 2002 which regulated the conduct of the 2003 general elections. The 2006 Act contained measures aimed at strengthening the independence of INEC, including the appointment of the Secretary of the Commission by INEC and the creation of a fund to provide INEC with financial autonomy. Nonetheless, this was not established for the 2007 elections. A number of problems were not addressed in the 2006 Electoral Act, especially relating to the independence of INEC. The President continued to be involved indirectly in the appointment of INEC Commissioners. Also, at the federal level, all Commissioners were still appointed by the President, after consultations with the Council of State and confirmation by the Senate (dominated by representatives from the PDP). At the state level, all 37 Resident Electoral Commissioners (RECs) were appointed directly by the President (TMG 2008b:3). Nigeria, a federal republic, has aggregated enormous amount of powers to the presidency via the 1999 Constitution, which many believe is a hangover of military rule.

Other significant lacunae which later came to haunt the 2007 elections included the lack of requirement for results to be announced at the polling station and for a breakdown of polling station results to be displayed at all superior levels of the election. There was also a lack of adequate procedures for the handling of complaints and appeals before Election Day, and the lack of time limits for the publication of results and for the determination of election petitions. Significantly, there was no provision on the use of state resources

during campaigns or provisions to promote transparency in the appointment of polling staff or access to INEC decisions. Notably, petitions could only be filed by candidates and political parties (TMG 2008b:3). This effectively derogates the rights of the electorate to challenge any electoral outcome.

In effect, the 2007 state and federal elections fell short of basic international and regional standards for democratic elections. They were marred by poor organisation, lack of essential transparency, widespread procedural irregularities, significant evidence of fraud, particularly during the result collation process, voter disenfranchisement at different stages of the process, impersonation of voters, under-aged voting, vote solicitation by party agents, thumb-printing of ballot papers by INEC officials, no level playing ground for contestants and numerous incidents of violence. The elections did not meet the expectation of the Nigerian people. The politicians had learned nothing, so politics remained a do-or-die affair which shut decent Nigerians out.

Impact at the National and State Levels

The conduct of the 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections in Nigeria did not have positive impact on the polity and its development. Although grudgingly accepted by the international community amidst vociferous condemnations by local monitors and civil society organisations, the elections did not contribute to the advancement of the Nigerian democratic project, but rather created doubts in the minds of many. Rather than change the attitude of people towards politics in the country, these elections only succeeded in creating apathy and strengthening the resolve of many not to participate in the political process, especially since the people's votes often do not count in deciding who wins an election.

Related to this is the corruption of the entire political process before, during and after the elections. Politics in Nigeria has always been a game of money, with politicians bribing themselves, party stalwarts, government officials and INEC staff to gain advantage over others. This situation was so bad that party primaries were so bastardized that incompetent individuals were thrown up and eventually became local government chairmen, members of state Houses of Assembly, 'selected' members of the National Assembly and Ministers. Ultimately, good governance suffered as some of these individuals neither had the experience nor qualifications to occupy the positions they did; in short, many of them lacked legitimacy. Some were alleged certificate forgers, people of questionable background and character, impersonators and touts. These were the days of the 'political god-fathers' who superintended over their territories and rode roughshod over anyone who dared to challenge their overlordship. They selected those who would occupy political positions in their domains. Although the phenomenon of 'god-fatherism' is on the decrease, it is yet to abate in Nigeria's political landscape. In fact, one can say that this phenomenon, although less

brazen now, has become even more sophisticated to the extent that the violence associated with it although less visible or physical, is now more psychological. It is psychological in that it makes the average Nigerian sceptical and docile about competitive politics and elections in the country.

Prior to 2011, beatings, kidnappings and murder were not unheard of. Again it appears that the politicians have decided not to learn from history. The PDP National Convention of 8 March 2008 saw the 'selection' (not election) of officers based on zoning and the parochial interests of the 'Governors' Forum'. This scenario repeated itself in the internal politics of the party and of other parties toward the 2011 general elections. At a convention purportedly called to elect a new national executive, no ballot was cast for any candidate – those that emerged as national executive members did so by 'consensus', the party's nomenclature for imposition (TMG 2008c). This trend appears particularly ingrained in the ruling PDP, where more often than not, qualified candidates are not given the opportunity to contest freely during the party primaries. Hence, it is the case that those who indicated interest in contesting the party's nomination for the 2015 general elections were persuaded otherwise by the party machinery, with President Goodluck Jonathan emerging as the 'adopted' candidate through 'consensus'. This may not be good for the party in the future, as transparency is sacrificed on the altar of expediency. It is obviously not good for the growth of democracy in the country. Again, this practice has implications for the war against corruption, both in cash or kind.

Closely associated with this was the corruption of members of the police and security services. This greatly aided corrupt politicians to rig the elections. In Nigeria, this has given rise to the focus on electoral security as critical to the conduct of free and fair elections. Indeed, it is difficult to find any election in Nigeria that was not manipulated or rigged without the purported cooperation, through action or inaction of security personnel. For the governorship and presidential elections of 2007, although overtly the majority of security personnel appeared to have conducted themselves according to the INEC guidelines and the guidelines of the Police Service Commission, certain inadequacies impeded the performance of the security personnel that included inadequate number of security personnel at the polling stations, dearth of communication equipment, lack of vehicles for movement and lack of arrangement for the feeding of the security personnel (NHRC 2007). This again laid them open to being compromised by party agents and politicians. However, we should not lose sight of the fact that the problem of corruption in Nigeria is more structural than this. The penchant for the acquisition and retention of power by any and all means because the state is everything creates a conducive environment for corruption to thrive. Although beyond the scope of this work, this immediately takes us to the issue of Nigeria's practice of federalism; a federalism in which the centre has incrementally

arrogated to itself immense constitutional and political powers, to the extent that the states and local governments have become mere political appendages to whosoever controls the centre. Perhaps, this is why Nigeria's fiscal federalism is so problematic, especially against the backdrop of an economy largely sustained by oil revenues, distributed from the centre. Nigerians have rightly alluded to the process of sharing this revenue as steeped in 'distributive politics'. Indeed, this is why the call for a Sovereign National Conference or National Dialogue was so loud. It was basically to discuss this defective federal structure and, through consensus, agree on how the polity should be organised to make progress. It is said by many that Nigeria has been making movements, but in a circle, never forward, because the immense energies of her people are trapped in the contraption of a defective federal structure. While a section of the elected politicians and elite are afraid of losing their privileged positions in the pecking order, others are simply afraid of the consequences of a political reform gone wrong. In other words, they are simply scared! The energies of Nigerian peoples and the Nigerian state need to be released to enhance its development, and this is only possible through struggles from below, as the elite have proven incapable of initiating this change.

And what of the body expected to organize and supervise the elections – INEC? This is a body that has been much maligned by the electorate. Often, it has fallen prey to its officials being corrupted by the political parties and wealthy individuals. It has been suggested that some INEC officials may have been planted by politicians or parties for the purpose of influencing the work of the body or for providing critical information about what the body was planning (Onu and Momoh 2005:9). Nigeria needs to begin to think more seriously of how best to assure the integrity of the administration of elections and the electoral process. Perhaps, it is with a view to addressing this matter that the late President Umaru Yar'Adua set up an Electoral Reform Committee on 28 August 2007 to revisit the history of elections in Nigeria and the Electoral Act of 2006 and make recommendations on possible amendments. The Reform Committee was chaired by Justice Muhammadu Uwais (rtd).

The Committee submitted what could be regarded as novel recommendations to the government on electoral reforms. For a long time, the House of Representatives and the Senate bickered over whether to accept all the recommendations or not, or even to include new, but largely selfish amendments in the original report before they could pass it into law. This was after a Review Committee had gone through the Report. On the key issues addressed by the Uwais committee, they included that of appointment of the INEC Chairman, which was recommended as per section 153 of the 1999 Constitution to be amended to have this removed from the list of federal executive bodies. In addition, the Chairman and members of the INEC Board may only be removed by Senate on the recommendation of the National Judicial Council (NJC) by two-thirds majority of the Senate

which shall include at least 10 members of the minority parties in the Senate. In other words, the Committee made it difficult to have the INEC Chairman removed by anybody. On the funding of INEC, it recommended that section 84 of the 1999 Constitution be amended to read that 'the election expenditure and the recurrent expenditure of the INEC Commission offices (in addition to salaries and allowances of the Chairman and members mentioned in Subsection 4 of this section) shall be first charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation' (Alliance for Credible Elections n.d). This was to make INEC financially independent from an incumbent government. Again, on electoral offenses, the Committee recommended the establishment of an Electoral Offenses Commission and a penalty of 10 years disqualification from contesting for any election for all offenses relating to registration of voters, in addition to other penalties in the Act. It recommended that the disqualification period for any candidate, upon conviction, for corrupt practices under section 31 of the Electoral Act 2006 should be increased to ten years.

Also, on the issue of elected persons remaining in office pending determination of appeal, the Committee recommended that section 149 of the Electoral Act 2006 be repealed, and that no elected person should assume office until the case against him or her in the Tribunal or Court is disposed of. Furthermore, on the determination of election petitions, it recommends that the Electoral Act 2006 be amended to shift the burden of proof from the petitioners to INEC to show on the balance of probability that disputed elections were indeed, free and fair and candidates declared winners were truly the choices of the electorate (Alliance for Credible Elections n.d). Most interestingly, the Uwais Committee recommended the retention of the Open Secret Ballot System for the country, which basically allows a voter to go into a polling booth to mark his/her ballot in secrecy and drop it in the ballot box in the open. However, in all these recommendations, and after the work of the Review Committees, the House of Representatives and the Senate were expected to pass the Act into law. However, the 2006 Electoral Act was subsequently replaced by the 2010 Electoral Act as Amended which sought to redress some of the shortcomings of the 2006 Act. This Act was used in the conduct of the much appreciated 2011 elections. However, if we are to go by the views expressed by the then Chairman, Justice Muhammadu Uwais that 'the will to bring change is not there' (Coalition of Democrats for Election Reforms 2010), then we do not have much hope for optimism. For him, politicians are usually reluctant to modify the existing electoral system because there tended to be significant transitional costs that accompany the move from one system to another. Of critical concern to politicians is that the reforms may lead to their losing upcoming elections or losing electoral dominance. The process and outcome of the 2011 elections were therefore instructive, as they indicated some progress.

The elections under survey also brought out the best and worst from the public and the civil society. While some were willing to be used by corrupt politicians as thugs and instruments of disenfranchisement of the populace, others organised to challenge high-handed government officials, corrupt parties and politicians as well as the various human rights abuses associated with stolen mandates. On the whole, while the civil society remained weak, it showed flashes of potency often led by a few individuals who over the years acted as bastions or strong defenders of democracy. These included individuals like the late Gani Fawhenmi, the late Chima Ubani, Wole Soyinka, Pat Utomi, Olisa Agbakoba, Ayo Obe, Shehu Sani, Tunde Bakare, Reuben Abati, Col. Abubakar Umar (rtd), Kayode Fayemi and Abubakar Momoh. Worthy of mention are also organisations like NADECO, and to some extent the G34. These were individuals and organisations that sacrificed in different ways to ensure that Nigerians enjoy democracy and progress today. We cannot but salute their tenacity in the midst of intimidation and a decadent political culture.

Lessons Learned

What lessons have we learned from the conduct of the 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections and the aftermath from Nigeria? It is that bad elections invariably produce poor or bad governments. Why? The resulting government will not only lack legitimacy, it will spend a disproportionate amount of time and state resources trying to prove its legitimacy, or ensuring regime survival. Here, public service delivery is not the object of governance, but regime survival, and the accumulation of resources to ensure this survival. Invariably, what suffers is good governance as the people continue to look for and yearn for the forever elusive good roads, clean water, decent housing, qualitative education, basic health services and personal security. Infrastructural development is critical to the development of democracy anywhere. Without the minimal provision of good roads, housing, clean water, telephony and power for example, it will be difficult to effectively sensitise the people and organise people-friendly elections. The provision of these infrastructure has to do with good governance, which has much to do with the relationship between the governments and the governed. This is generally the process of steering the state and society towards the realisation of collective aspirations. Key actors in the governance project therefore include the state, the private sector, the people and the civil society; however the state remains pivotal in this project. But, to what degree has governance in Nigeria been effective to the extent that collective good has been upheld and attained? The answer to this is logically linked to the quality of the democratic and electoral processes that produced those who governed Nigeria from 1999 to date. The overwhelming verdict is that the processes had been compromised and deleterious to good governance. Governance can only be 'good' when operated in accordance with legal and ethical principles as conceived by society (Adejumobi 2004).

The experience from these elections and the aftermath is that the social contract remained wobbly, the dividends of democracy remained undelivered, while the people generally remained apathetic praying that one day it shall be well. In other words, a key lesson from the elections is that incumbent governments should not be allowed to superintend electoral reforms or the processes leading to elections, or organise elections aimed at changing governments. The people are important in the political equation to the extent that they are able to organise from below in the form of social movements to contest and challenge policies considered detrimental to them and the country. This is not just for Nigeria, but applicable to all countries under the stranglehold of autocracy, be it military or civilian. Electoral reforms are important to the extent that they emanate from informed practices in the political and electoral processes found to be defective and needing amendment for the conduct of freer and fairer elections. Any country not ready to embrace electoral reforms is not ready for change and is a willing candidate for political and social uprising.

Conclusion

That democracy is the transcendent system of government in the world today is not in doubt. While liberal democracy is popular, the preference is for popular democracy from below through representation, in which the people remain the focal point of governance and not the market. As earlier opined, popular democracy for a country like Nigeria entails that the basic principles of democracy has its roots from the culture and norms of the Nigerian society. Since democracy is work in progress, it implies that continuously, there will be challenges to its workings. And in a popular democracy, this is encapsulated in the popular struggles expected from the people. It is a democracy that is focused on meeting the needs and material conditions of Nigerians, not necessarily the market. However, it is enough for us to note that the experiences from the general elections of 1999, 2003 and 2007 in Nigeria show that the country still has a long way to go in approximating any semblance of representative popular democracy. But, what kind of political system does Nigeria need? At the risk of ruffling feathers, we will say that considering the country's level of economic and technological development, it is commonsensical for the country to avoid extreme capitalism, though capitalism encourages competition and efficiency; it is also important for the country to avoid extreme state control of the political and economic spaces, but to thread in between the two extremes. In other words, were the country to embrace popular democracy dictated by the people, it is probable that the state will not only be more relevant to the people, but the people will also be able to claim ownership of the state and protect the state from political opportunists and foreign entrepreneurs that have colluded with the national elite over the years to exploit and undermine the country. Blessed with immense natural and

human resources in arable land, good weather, oil and gas resources, a courageous embrace of social democratic governance based on ensuring that the people have access to basic needs of housing, water, food, health, education and security will elicit the right attitude to governance and lead to the protection of people's rights in all spheres. In this scenario, it is only the people, not the rich, not the elite and not foreign interests, that matter. Anything that is not of the public good is not a priority. However, this does not mean that spaces are not left for the blossoming of the creative energies of the people. It is the astute balancing of public good with individual and group creativity that will ensure the progress of the country. In all this, governance and leadership are critical and can only thrive when good leaders emerge from a process that is transparent and determined by the need to protect the general good.

The end of democracy is the provision of security and the good life for the citizens, where this is lacking democracy even if transparent and fair, will still be inadequate. However, Nigeria's democracy remains problematic (TMG 2007), and requires proactive attitude and ingenuity to negotiate the many obstacles it presents. From the several dimensions of the elections addressed in this study, from conceptual issues surrounding the state to the character of the political parties, local and state governance issues, presidential and National Assembly matters, the role of INEC to the role of the civil society, it is in order to say that though Nigeria's Fourth Republic has been problematic, it has also provided us with the ingredients to understand and re-structure the country's politics for the general good.

Instructive is the fact that late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua at his inauguration actually acknowledged the monumental fraud perpetuated in the election that produced him as President and promised that Nigerians will never witness such fraud again in their history. Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to see this through. Nonetheless he demonstrated his seriousness by inaugurating the Electoral Reform Committee. Since the 2003 elections to date, the country's judiciary has been bedevilled by electoral litigations, with the tribunals under siege to either declare retention or vacation of political offices, a sign that the elections were truly compromised. In short, as a result of judicial interventions, no fewer than 10 states of the federation were affected by technical nullifications or otherwise of election results. The more visible ones being the removal of the purportedly elected Governors of Rivers, Edo, Ekiti, Ondo, Osun, Anambra and Delta States many years after the elections were held. This is simply alarming and calls for drastic measures to ensure that this kind of anomaly never again occurs in Nigeria's electoral process.

The surprising part of the ironies of Nigeria's political and electoral processes is that in spite of the shortcomings, the willingness of the international community to accept the results, reinforced the country's acceptance back into the comity of nations after about sixteen years of unbroken military rule. Nigeria is obviously

key in the calculations of the major powers that need it to protect and pursue their interests in the West African region and the continent. In this, the purportedly elected two-time civilian President, Olusegun Obasanjo did not disappoint, and played the role to the hilt. To his credit, however, is the effort he and his team made in getting the country back into the comity of nations and once again giving the country some space to continue its experimentation with democracy. It suffices to opine that whilst democracy as a concept is attractive, there are different types of democracy; and the best type for each country is that democracy that grows out of the experiences and peculiarities of a particular people. Nigeria cannot be different. And thus, the disposition is not to be despondent or dismissive about democracy when it is not yet working well.

Recommendations

Based on the multiplicity of issues raised in this study on Nigeria's politics and government, electoral process and elections, the following recommendations are offered as ways to re-position the country's democracy and improve its electoral process. While some of the recommendations may have been proffered by the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), others have arisen from the observations and experiences garnered during the elections as discovered in this study:

- Early preparation of a fresh voters register is imperative to having a comprehensive and credible voters list for elections. This will restore confidence in the electoral process.
- INEC should be adequately funded to enable it prepare properly and resist interference from corrupt politicians.
- Voter education and mobilisation of people by the government, political parties and civil society should be embarked upon early enough to elicit a buy-in by the people.
- Internal democracy should be entrenched within the political parties to ensure that credible candidates are presented for elections.
- Court procedure rules should be reviewed to enhance the speed with which electoral matters are addressed.
- Enlightenment is also necessary for the political parties, candidates and the electorate to desist from the culture of disputing every election, of refusing to accept defeat and disrespecting the rule of law.
- Citizens need to be assured that term limits will always be respected as a means of building confidence, as certainty and predictability assures stakeholders that if they lose, they can try again.
- Political parties and individuals who commit electoral offenses should be seriously sanctioned as provided for in the subsisting Electoral Act and laws.

- There is a need to effectively regulate the behaviour and activities of contestants, voters, officials and other stakeholders in the entire electoral process through the framing of rules and their application in order to reduce the chances of having the electoral process compromised.
- There is the need to involve the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and community based organisations (CBOs) as well as the media as partners in the electoral process. Engaging these bodies is necessary to enhance sensitisation, while drawing attention to instances of potential violence, violence and fraud in the electoral process.
- While public office is to be dignified, it should be demystified through instituting accountability checks to make contestants and the general public realise that winning an elective office is a call to service not a means of self aggrandisement and/or primitive accumulation.
- Political parties should draw up a code of conduct to be subscribed to by candidates standing on their platforms.

Adequate and early training of security personnel, election monitors and INEC officials is essential for the orderly and successful conduct of elections. Security personnel should provide for the free movement of monitors during elections.

- Adequate arrangements should be made to provide for the welfare of security and electoral officers such that they do not have to leave their duty posts during elections, even as effort is made to improve their attitudinal disposition to electoral duty.
- Political parties should endeavour to grow their parties based on ideology and the need to provide an alternative and capable platform for national stability and development.
- Elections at the local and state levels are as important as those at the centre, and all stakeholders are urged to pay closer attention to the conduct of elections at these levels.
- Sensitisation is necessary for the electorate to know their elected officials at the State and National Assemblies and to collectively call them to order when found wanting.
- Measures should be put in place to comprehensively scrutinise the credentials and health condition of all Presidential aspirants. This is critical to ensuring national stability and progress.
- Political parties, the private sector and civil society are called upon to actively support the passage of progressive electoral bills, as this is the foundation for democratic rebirth and growth in the country.

We conclude by stating that politics remains the master science. If this is not so, why is everybody interested in being a part of it? Politics holds the key to progress in society, perhaps, this is why it is so problematic. Over the centuries, men have striven to master the art and science of politics, of governance and of elections without being able to do so. The reason for this is because politics is the quest to understand human behaviour as we seek power and the use of power. This is a complex game, as men and women exercise their freewill in the struggle for the authoritative allocation of values, limited only by the rules and regulations guiding the process of political interaction. Nigeria is still struggling to have some control over its democratic and electoral processes, a situation made worse by the character of its elite, who are still quagmired in a cesspool of primordial encumbrances. Following the various contributions in this book and the recommendations above, we hope that our efforts will in some way contribute to a clearer understanding of the practice of democracy and to charting the way forward for better politics, better elections, better governance and progress for Nigeria.

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