

# Electoral Politics in the Fourth Republic of Nigeria's Democratic

## Governance

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### Abstract

Electoral politics remains one of the leading notable sources of conflict, political breakdown and social disequilibrium in the Fourth Republic of Nigeria's democracy. Despite the appreciation that only credible election can consolidate and sustain Nigeria's nascent democracy, its electoral process often result to confrontations that continue to threaten the political stability, peace and the very existence of the nation. While intellectual discourse have focused essentially on the mutually reinforcing questions of political violence and electoral fraud, less attention is given to the role of security agencies in achieving credible election. This study generated both primary and secondary data. Questionnaires were administered among 1200 respondents in Lagos, Ogun and Oyo States, Nigeria. Findings revealed that it is how the Nigeria Police perform their roles of electoral security that needs attention and not the issue of whether these roles are being executed. It is therefore concluded that any electoral reforms in Nigeria that excludes reformation of the security agencies is an incomplete exercise.

**Key Words:** Election, Democracy, Security agency, Nigeria

### Introduction

Elections in Nigeria continue to elicit more than casual interest by Nigerian scholars due to the fact that despite the appreciation that only credible election can consolidate and sustain the country's nascent democracy, over the years, Nigeria continues to witness with growing disappointments and apprehension inability to conduct peaceful, free and fair, open elections whose results are widely accepted and respected across the country (Igbuzor, 2010; Osumah & Aghemelo, 2010, Ekweremadu, 2011). All the elections that have ever been conducted in Nigeria since independence have generated increasingly bitter controversies and grievances on a national scale because of the twin problems of mass violence and fraud that have become central elements of the history of elections and of the electoral process in the country (Gberie, 2011). Despite the marked improvement in the conduct of the 2011 elections, the process was not free from malpractices and violence (Bekoe, 2011; Gberie, 2011; National Democratic Institute, 2012). Thus over the years, electoral processes in the history of Nigeria's democratic governance have continued to be marred by extraordinary displays of rigging, dodgy, "do or die" affair, ballot snatching at gun points, violence and acrimony, thuggery, boycotts, threats and criminal manipulations of voters' list, brazen falsification of election results, the use of security agencies against political opponents and the intimidation of voters (Rawlence and Albin-Lackey, 2007; Nnadozie, 2007; Adigbuo, 2008, Onike, 2010 Omotola, 2010, Bekoe, 2011). In fact elections remain one of the leading notable sources of conflict which often result to confrontations that continue to threaten the political stability and peace of the nation (Gueye & Hounkpe, 2010; Idowu, 2010).

Scholars have attributed this problem of election credibility in Nigeria to the weak institutionalization of the agencies of electoral administration, particularly the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the political parties and security agencies in the country arguing that elections can only engender the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria if the electoral processes are reformed in ways that fundamentally address the autonomy

and capability of INEC to discharge its responsibilities effectively (Obi, 2008) and the security agencies high degree of neutrality, alertness, and commitment to maintaining law and order in the electoral process (Adigbuo, 2008; Omotola, 2010; Idowu, 2010). Observations reveal that the mode of involving Security Forces and how they carry out their duties while participating in the electoral process in Nigeria are part of the sources of violence and insecurity during elections (Gueye & Hounkpe, 2010). Unfortunately, there is however no informed emphasis on the central role played by the security agency during elections in Nigeria (Idowu, 2010). Existing literature tends to be based on the reports of election monitoring and not on analytical studies (Kohnert, 2004; Obi, 2008). Few of the existing analyses on the subject deal essentially with the mutually reinforcing questions of political violence and electoral fraud and only touch upon the security agencies tangentially. Outside the developed democracies, and recently from the Latin American and post-communist European experiences, very little is known about the role of security agencies in achieving credible election. This knowledge gap is most acute in Nigeria and Africa in general. Against this backdrop, this essay seeks to empirically investigate the relationships between the role of the security agencies and the quest for credible elections in Nigeria. The questions that this study seeks to answer therefore include the following; what has been the role of the security agencies in the electoral politics Nigeria's Fourth Republic? How have they been carrying out their functions of ensuring security of voters, candidates and election materials during elections and how can they be positioned for electoral security needed for the desired credible elections in Nigeria's democratic government?

### **The Nexus of Election, Security and Democracy**

Elections have been seen as the major feature of democracy to the extent that not only it is impossible to imagine a democratic regime without elections (Nnadozie, 2007) but also there is now a real risk of confusing the holding of regular, reasonably competitive and transparent elections with democracy (Hounkpe & Gueye, 2010). Indeed, in direct democracies of Ancient Greece, elections were used to take decisions in various fields. For example, elections were used to nominate people to the most important positions and for which a minimum level of competence is considered as vital. The indispensability of election to democracy appears obvious in contemporary democracies described as representative democracy. The contemporary representative democracy defined as a system in which people are governed through their representatives, election remains the most appropriate widespread mechanism for selecting their representatives who will be responsible for governing on behalf and for the people (Hounkpe & Gueye, 2010). Today therefore, a political system which does not select its leaders through competitive, free and fair elections can hardly be considered as a democracy. Election has been defined by Osumah & Aghemelo (2010) as a process through which the people choose their leaders and indicate their policies and program preference and consequently invest a government with authority to rule. They see election as one of the means by which a society may organize itself and make specified formal decisions, adding that where voting is free, it acts simultaneously as a system for making certain decisions regarding the power relations in a society, and a method for seeking political obedience with a minimum of sacrifice of the individual's freedom. Eya (2003) however, sees election as the selection of a person or persons for office as by ballot and making choice as between alternatives. Ozor (2010) succinctly gives a more encompassing and comprehensive definition of election when he noted that the term connotes the procedure through which qualified adult voters elect their politically preferred representatives to parliament legislature of a county (or any other public positions) for the purpose of forming and running the government of the country. Thus Osumah (2002) elucidates what the basic objective of election is which is to select the official decision makers who are supposed to represent citizens-interest. Elections, according to him extend and enhance the amount of popular participation in the political system.

An electoral contest and context in which political parties compete for the votes of citizens at regular intervals have been viewed as the common defining property of democracy (Adigbuo, 2008). In fact, the quality of elections is part of the criteria for assessing the level of consolidation of new democracies. Elections are therefore considered as vital and indispensable for determining the democratic nature of a political system. When election is not managed quite satisfactorily, it can pave the way for deeper ethnic and regional divisions, loss of legitimacy of elected authorities, protest, violent contestation, social explosion, doubt about institutions, violence, and instability or even threaten the entire democratization process. In fact, poor management of elections is a real and prolific source of conflicts, violence, insecurity and instability (Hounkpe & Gueye, 2010).

The cornerstone of competitive elections and democracy is free and fair election. The credibility and legitimacy accorded an election victory is determined by the extent to which the process is free and fair (Garuba, 2007; Bogaards, Malhijs, 2007). Free and fair election serves the purpose of legitimizing such government. In this regard, elections strengthen people's attachment to the state and (or) area the government of the day, it creates an assurance to the people, about the political system in which they are. Election is one of the cardinal features of democratic government and no matter how much a country boasts of being democratic, the fact remains that the

quality of democratic rights is a function of credible election. This is because according to Omotola (2010) democracy as a participatory form of government can only be practically ensured through competitive election. As noted by Ogundiya & Baba (2007) democracy is a form of government by persons freely chosen by the citizens who also hold them accountable and responsible for their actions while in government. Democracy is therefore unthinkable without elections. Election holds a central position in a democratic government to the extent that any problem associated with the electoral process has direct impact on the political system. This makes free and fair elections which are unimpeded by violence and intimidation central to functional democracy.

While free and fair election has been regarded as the hallmark of a democratic government, election malpractices and violence have been regarded as an obstacle to the consolidation of democratic institutions (Fischer, 2010; Omotola, 2010). Democracy is not immutable. In fact, the institutions of democracy are fragile in the sense that they take a long time to build up but can collapse significantly more quickly, not least through violence. This makes the issue of security very crucial in all the stages of the electoral process - pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral phases. Its importance is such that it involves almost all players in the electoral process ranging from ordinary citizens to leaders of public institutions. Various groups of citizens can present various degrees of vulnerability to insecurity during the electoral process. Sometimes beyond the said stakeholders, the issue of electoral security involves actors outside (regional or non regional) the country where elections are being held.

Fischer (2010) defined election security as 'the process of protecting electoral stakeholders, information, facilities or events. This definition is similar to Sisk (2008) who defined Electoral security as the process of protecting electoral stakeholders such as voters, candidates, poll workers, media, and observers; electoral information such as vote results, registration data, and campaign material; electoral facilities such as polling stations and counting centers; and electoral events such as campaign rallies against death, damage, or disruption. Three kinds of electoral security are very crucial. First is the physical security which concerns securing facilities and materials. These include the electoral commission offices, registration and polling stations, political party offices, election observer offices, media organizations, ballot boxes, ballot papers (voted and un-voted), voters' register, computers and communication systems employed in voter registration and vote tabulation among others (USAID, 2010). The second is personal security. This concerns the protection of all electoral stakeholders, including candidates, voters, public officials, election workers, security forces, party agents, election observers and media representatives (Fischer, 2008). Personal security is very important because people can be victims of assassination, torture, sexual assault, strategic displacement, physical injury, blackmail or intimidation in attempts to influence their involvement and choices in an election. The third is electoral events. Events can be official in nature, such as voter registration programs or Election Day activities, but also associated events such as campaign rallies, debates, and political party and coalition meetings (Fischer, 2008; USAID, 2010).

The centrality of electoral security to credible, free and fair election makes the roles of security agencies very vital in every democratic election. They are required to protect all eligible citizens participating in the electoral process (Ayoade, 1999). Their ability to play these roles without engaging in intimidation, coercion or violence against the citizens is crucial to the success of the elections. If they are found wanting in the discharge of these duties in any election, the citizens may not have confidence in the electoral process and may question the credibility and legitimacy of any government that emerges from the process and the lack of credible government is *sine qua non* for instability in a polity and ultimately democratic breakdown (Akpan, 2008, Ozon, 2009).

While the role of security agencies is very vital in electoral security, there are key issues that must be considered in the process of discharging its electoral functions. The first is the issues of overzealous versus the principle of minimum force (Chukwuma (2001). In this regards, the question of what kind of force (excessive, minimum, engagement with the people concerned) to be used to, for example, to deal with a potentially volatile situation of unrest, is very vital. Secondly is the Principle of Rule of Law which must inform the conduct or course of action of the police and other security agencies during the election period. The cardinal principle of the rule of law ought to be the test-the yardstick upon which to weigh the conducts of the security agencies. The third germane issue is the principle of non-discrimination in the dispensing of justice and policing elections. The fourth is the issue of enforcement of law versus making of laws. The police is a law enforcement agency and not a law making body. Critical attention must therefore be geared towards the passing of haphazard rules and regulations by the Police Force with no basis in law (Alemika, 2003). Fifthly, is respect for human dignity and human rights in execution of its duties. This entails non-intervention since the right at play here is civil and political right which requires the government to stay away as the populace exercises their rights. Lastly is the issue of accountability mechanisms (internal and external) which relates to the existence of mechanism to deal with impunity exhibited by errant officers and the effectiveness and efficiency of such mechanism in dispensing justice in the event of breaching the above principles (Chukwuma, 2001).

## Electoral Politics and Democracy in Nigeria

Despite the vital place that election holds in democracy in this 21st century, the organization of free and fair elections remains a real challenge for new democracies in West Africa, particularly Nigeria (Reynolds, 2009; Hounkpe & Gueye, 2010). The political process leading to democratic governance has been misconstrued by majority of Nigerians as an opportunity to better ones livelihood and consequently, politics is seen as the gateway to paradise on earth (National Human Rights Commission, 2007; Osumah & Aghemelo, 2010; Omotola, 2010). On the down side, this lifestyle built on the looting of taxpayer's funds has turned the quest for elective office into a very dangerous business. Politics today is the cause of a great number of deaths in Nigeria through the acts of violence, thuggery, political assassinations and crimes that are linked with the quest for power (Animashaun, 2010). In the course of all this, many criminal offences are committed. Security personnel are often mobilized to harass or intimidate political opponents and voters or take sides in undermining free, fair and credible balloting (Idowu, 2010). The 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 elections in the Fourth Republic of Nigeria's democracy were not free from the activities of thugs, ballot box snatchers, armed robbers, kidnappers, assassins, confusionists, arsonists, who often have a field day during these elections (Hounkpe & Gueye, 2010, Omotola, 2010, Bekoe, 2011, National Democratic Institute, 2012 ). Election malpractices and violence have thus become a recurring decimal in Nigeria's political history and constitute enormous concern to the survival of Nigeria's democracy (INEC, 2011).

Of interest however is the role of security personnel in aiding and abetting election malpractices in the country. Assessment of electoral security in Nigeria's democracy particularly since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1999, indicate that the public is wary of the security personnel made up of the army officers, Nigeria Police, Civil Defence Corps and State Security Service who have turned into small gods aiding and abetting electoral irregularities in the country (Chukwuma, 2001; **Idowu, 2010, National Democratic Institute, 2012**). Their authority, power, and access to firearms, have on many occasions been used to intimidate the population and in extreme situations, reacted violently to constitutionally protected rights and activities such as opposition campaigns or rallies (Alemika, 2003). In the past electoral process in Nigeria's Fourth Republic – the 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 general elections, these security agencies have been very lethal and overly forceful in disbanding legally constituted gatherings and engaged in running battles with the civil society and opposition curtailing them to exercise their constitutional right to demonstration, assembly and balloting (Animashaun, 2010, INEC, 2011, Gberie1, 2011, Jega, 2012).

Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution lays down the functions of the Nigeria Police to include protection of life and property, preservation of law and order, prevention and detection of crime (Nigeria's Constitution, 1999). Accordingly, the main role of the Police during an election is to protect of life and property, to preserve electoral law, to prevent and detect electoral crime, to maintain order and to create, by means of effective policing, a favourable climate in which a democratic election can take place. The poor skills and irrationality by which the police performs this function has however often led to loss of life, injuries and destruction of property as the police conduct has always catalyzed instead of diluting chaos (Hounkpe & Gueye, 2010).The systematic and reciprocal suspicion by the citizens towards the Police seriously complicates the involvement of the Nigeria Police in the electoral process. They are perceived by all key stakeholders in the process as biased in favour of those in power (Idowu, 2010). This atmosphere makes engagement between the police and indeed the entire security forces in the country and majority of stakeholders potentially explosive. From the foregoing therefore, it can be argued that the success or failure of any election or electoral processes in Nigeria depends largely in the conduct of the Nigeria Security Agencies especially the Police and its officers on Election duties.

### Methodology of the Study

The goal of the study is assessing the role of security agencies in Nigeria's electoral politics in the Fourth Republic with specific focus on the 2011 general elections. Specific objectives were to examine the effectiveness of the Nigerian Police and the extent of its neutrality in the 2011 general elections. The focus was on the Nigeria's police due to the fact that it is the institution charged with the delivery of public security. Section 4 of the Police Act and Regulations CAP 359 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990, empowers the police to prevent and detect of crime, to apprehend of offenders, preserve law and order, protect life and property and duly enforce all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged, and to perform such (military) duties within or without Nigeria as may be required by them by, or under the authority of, this or any other Act. Due to

security challenge of the country at the time of this investigation, the study was carried out in three (Lagos, Ogun and Oyo) South Western States of Nigeria.

Based on the aforementioned research questions, the following hypothesis were raised

H<sub>1</sub>. *That the Nigerian Police officers were not effective in ensuring electoral security in the 2011 senatorial election of Lagos, Ogun and Oyo states, Nigeria*

H<sub>2</sub>. *That the Nigerian Police officers were not neutral and vigilant in the 2011 senatorial election in Lagos, Ogun and Oyo states, Nigeria.*

The methodological approach to this study is an exploratory one. The study utilised two sources of data. The first is basically sourcing secondary data from published and unpublished materials such as government gazettes, bulletin, magazines, journals, newspapers, articles, relevant textbooks, materials from internet and term papers. The second type of data that was gathered was primary data collected through the use of well structured questionnaires administered to the electorate and residents selected from each of the three South Western States. These three States are particularly suitable as study area because, apart from the fact that they are the most populous States in the South Western Nigeria, (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2009), they are seen as among the most politically enlightened, vibrant States in the federation. Using a combination of stratified and random sampling, a total of 1200 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents (400 copies for each of the three states). Out of this number, 1,038 (86.5%) valid and complete responses were received and analyzed. The study uses five-point anchored Likert scale and also the instrument was adapted from similar study (Hossain, et' al, 2009) which established their validity. The reliability of the collected data was tested. The Cronbach's Alpha for the collected data is 0.946. In social studies research, 0.70 or more alpha value will be good enough to insure data reliability. Data gathered were analyzed based on statistical description using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 15.0).

#### **Data Analysis and Research Findings**

**Table 1: Demographic Profile**

Age Distribution of Respondents		
Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 30	360	34.6
31 – 40	366	35.2
41 and above	312	30
Distribution of Respondents by Gender		
Male	602	58
Female	436	42
Distribution of Marital Status of Respondents		
Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	365	35.2
Married	480	46.2
Divorced	90	8.7
Widow	103	9.9
Occupational Distribution of Respondents		
Place of Work	Frequency	Percentage
Government Establishments	114	32.9
Private Establishments	136	39.3
NGOs	32	9.3
Others (students & unemployed)	64	18.5
Educational Distribution of Respondents		
Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Tertiary Education	747	72
Secondary School Education	197	19
Primary School	94	9

The table above shows that more of the respondents (65.2%) were above 31 years of age, there is a high level of literacy among the respondents as 72 % of them have education qualification up to tertiary level while 19% had maximum of secondary education and only 9%, primary School education. These afforded the researcher the opportunity to gather very useful information as respondents are experienced, understood and are able to contribute to the subject matter.

**Table 2. Regression Analysis: Police effectiveness in Electoral Security, Vigilance and Non-Partisanship in Election.**

**Table 2a. ANOVA (Police Efficiency in Electoral Security)**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	89.322	5	17.864	15.733	1.222
	Residual	163.511	144	1.135		
	Total	252.833	149			

- (a) **Predictors: (Constant),** There was Peaceful election  
 The Police officers did not scare away voters  
 The police officers ensured security of voters  
 The police officers ensured security of candidates  
 The police officers ensured security of ballot papers  
 The police Officers protected ballot boxes
- (b) **Dependent Variable:** Electoral Security.

The result of the multiple regression test above (ANOVA table) indicates an F-cal of 15.733 at the level of significant of 1 .22. According to the rule when the level of significant is less than 0.05 the hypothesis is rejected while it is accepted when more than 0.05. Therefore hypothesis is accepted indicating that The Nigerian Police were not effective in carrying out there function of ensuring security of voters, candidates and election materials and peaceful elections in the 2011 senatorial election process of Ogun state. While the Nigeria police officers were suppose to be at the election venue for the purpose of securing voters, candidates and election materials, they were however found to be non-challant to the display of stealing of ballot boxes and papers during the elections. While party thugs and gangsters intimidate political opponents, security officers were found to be aiding this display of thuggery and gangsterism. As observed by the National Democratic Institute (2012), security officials during the electoral process were not willing or unable to ensure a safe and peaceful campaign environment, and prevent intimidation and harassment by thugs.

**Table 2b. ANOVA (Police Neutrality and Vigilance)**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	89.322	5	17.864	15.733	0.167
	Residual	163.511	144	1.135		
	Total	252.833	149			

- (a) **Predictors: (Constant),** Police officers did not aid stealing of ballot boxes  
 Police officers did not aid stealing of ballot papers  
 Police officers were very vigilant during elections  
 Police officers monitored counting of ballot papers  
 Police Officers didn't support any party or candidate
- (b) **Dependent Variables:** neutrality and vigilance of the police in election

The result of the multiple regression test above (ANOVA table) indicates 15.733 Fcal at the associated significant level of 0.167 which is far more than the conventional significant level of 0.05. Hypothesis 2 is therefore accepted establishing that the Nigerian Police were not neutral and vigilant in the 2011 general election in Lagos, Ogun and Oyo States, Nigeria. Political neutrality is on one the tenets of the security officer and the election umpires. The security personnel at election venue have the responsibility of maintaining law and order, secure voters as well as candidates in the process of elections. Furthermore they are supposed to guarantee the safety of ballot papers and boxes. However, in the 2011 general elections in these states, the men of the Nigeria Police were found supporting candidates in their nefarious act of rigging. They showed open display of unconstitutional support for rigging, victimization and intimidation activities. As reported by National Democratic Institute (2012), there were expression of police bias, excessive use force and a lack of enforcement against those who perpetrated violence against opposition parties, denied permits for campaign events and

outright intimidated or harassed their candidates and supporters. Jega (2012) also noted that misuse of security orderlies by politicians, especially incumbents, attacks on opponents, attacks on members of the public, violence at campaigns, intimidation of voters, snatching of election materials, kidnapping and assassination of political opponents characterised the 2011 electoral process despite the election was acclaimed as the best that Nigeria ever had. Since the 1999 elections, security agencies, particularly the police, have been accused of being involved in the various forms of election rigging in Nigeria. The police are often compromised and partisan in their electoral functions. They lack operational independence from the executive and are therefore vulnerable to executive interference. They are also often used by political actors to facilitate or perpetuate electoral fraud, coerce voters and intimidation opponents (Nwagu, 2011).

### **Conclusion**

Election has been recognized as one of the salient determinant of the quality of democratic government. Elections in Nigeria however continue to suffer wanton abuses and gross violation of its sanctity. While it has been argued that the roles of security agencies are very critical to the success of election as credible election requires among others high degree of neutrality, alertness, and commitment of security personnel to maintaining law and order, ensuring security of voters, candidates and election materials, the Nigerian Police is however not effective in carrying out the function of ensuring security of voters, candidates and election materials and peaceful elections as they are found to continuously show non-challant attitudes to stealing of ballot boxes and papers during elections in the country. In the 2011 general elections especially the Lagos, Ogun and Oyo states general elections, they were not neutral and vigilant but showed open support for candidates and connived with and aided party thugs and gangsters in their nefarious act of rigging, victimization and intimidation of political opponents during the election in the state. Because of their authority, power, and access to firearms, the Nigeria Police can intimidate and have on occasion intimidated the population. In extreme situations, they react violently to constitutionally protected rights and activities such as opposition campaigns or rallies.

The findings of this study reveal that it is how security officers in Nigeria perform their roles of electoral security that needs attention and not the issue of whether these roles are being executed. There is no doubt about the fact that security agencies have great roles to play in electoral security in Nigeria, however, attention must be given to the way in which these roles are being executed by the security agencies especially the Nigeria Police. Nigerian government have been making frantic efforts at reforming the country's electoral process, we however argue that any electoral reforms in that excludes reformation of the security agencies is an incomplete exercise. Furthermore effective collaboration among the various security agencies and with the INEC in the country and the way they manage confidential information and security reports is critical to election success in Nigeria.

### **Policy recommendations**

The security agencies are responsible for general maintenance of law and order. They are expected to ensure security during voters' registration, party congresses and conventions, political campaigns/meetings and rallies, voting and post-election events such as election tribunals and crises that may be fallout of elections. These are roles that traditionally belong to the police, but popular vigilance is inevitable for these functions to be carried out. Special training, orientation programmes prior elections should be conducted to sensitize the various security agencies in their roles in elections. This should be done to improve the role of police of during elections. Security Officers redeployed specifically for electoral responsibilities should be remunerated. This remuneration should be in the form of electoral allowance for the security officers paid differently from their normal salaries. This reward should be handsome enough to enable them stand their grand against being bribed by the desperate politicians.

The role of the security agencies in electoral process is very crucial. However, there is no provision of such in the Nigeria Electoral Act of 2006 as amended in 2010. Although the 1999 Constitution and Nigeria Police Act elaborate the general functions of the Police, there is need for specific details of the role of the Nigeria police and other security agencies in relations to election. Therefore, the functions of the various security agencies during elections should be specified in the Nigeria Electoral Act.

While local and international monitoring groups have been very keen at reporting cases of electoral conducts in Nigeria, often, the activities of the security agencies are not covered. A legislation that will enable them monitor the activities of the various security agencies during elections should be enacted.

Civic vigilance is necessary in election. In the event that the police engage in compromising roles, people around should alert the media who investigates any such story and disseminates it: tender such as election tribunals if relevant as evidence. Police authorities should instantly punish their personnel involved in such acts.

To mitigate violence in elections, there is need for adequate security planning between the election management body (INEC), police and other security agencies involved in the elections. Civil society organizations and the

National Orientation Agency should embark on early civic education while political parties should educate their supporters on proper conducts all through the electioneering period.

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