

INTERIM STATEMENT BY NIGERIA CIVIL SOCIETY SITUATION ROOM ON THE KOGI WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT AND AJAOKUTA FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY SUPPLEMENTARY ELECTIONS

Issued: 4:00pm, Saturday 30th November 2019

On Saturday, 30th November 2019, the Independent National Electoral Commission conducted supplementary elections in Kogi West Senatorial District (53 PUs across 7 LGAs) and Ajaokuta Federal Constituency (22 PUs across 11 Wards in Ajaokuta LGA). The Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (Situation Room) was on ground to receive reports and observe these elections. Our general observations are as follows:

- In majority of the Polling Units observed, INEC officials were present before 8.00am and as early as 7.30am. Voting also commenced early as at 8.00am.
- Smart Card Readers were fully deployed and only few incidences of card reader failures, notably at PU22/13/08/004 at Mopa Muro Ward and PU22/12/04/006 at Lokoja Ward (both in Lokoja LGA).
- A minimum of 3 police officers was observed at most Polling Units. Police officers conducted themselves professionally. Situation Room noted an incident of impersonation of security officers at PU22/02/08/006, LGEA School Achagana, at Achagana Ward, Ajaokuta where some persons in police uniforms arrived at the Polling Unit at about 11:08am. It was later discovered that they were fake policemen and were apprehended by members of the community and handed over to the Police.
- The number of voters at the Polling Units were low with most of the PU concluding voting before the official end of poll by 2.00pm.
- Vote buying was observed in almost all Polling Units. This was carried out in the open and under the full glare of the security officers and INEC Officials posted to the Polling Units.
- At least four of the Situation Room Observers were threatened and asked to leave the various Polling Units in which they were observing. In one incident, a security officer deleted all photos taken by a Situation Room observer and asked the observer to leave the Polling Unit. Also, there was another case of police officers hampering the movement of observers along the highway even though observers were with accredited tags on their vehicles.

Conclusion

- i. Situation Room notes that the Kogi West Senatorial District election took place with reduced incidents of violence compared to the earlier election held on 16th November 2019;
- ii. Situation Room notes however that the now usual incidents of vote-buying still occurred in this election;
- iii. Situation Room calls for transparent collation of final results for this election;

- iv. In addition, Situation Room calls on the candidates, political parties and their supporters to exercise restraint and avail themselves of election dispute mechanisms for election complaints; and
- v. Situation Room also calls on INEC to ensure that all election materials and evidence used in this election are preserved with integrity and made available to interested parties and candidates who may wish to proceed to court to challenge the results of the election.

SIGNED:

Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room

Clement Nwankwo - Convener

Esther Uzoma, Alternate Chair, Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room

The Situation Room is made up of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working in support of credible and transparent elections in Nigeria and includes such groups as Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC), CLEEN Foundation, Action Aid Nigeria, Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Proactive Gender Initiative (PGI), Enough is Enough Nigeria, WANGONET, Partners for Electoral Reform, Centre for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD), Nigeria Women Trust Fund, JDPC and Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth & Advancement (YIAGA). Others are Development Dynamics, Stakeholders Democracy Network, Human Rights Monitor, Reclaim Naija, Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, CITAD, Alliance for Credible Elections (ACE), RECHDI, WREP, CISLAC and several other CSOs numbering more than seventy.

Contact information:

Website: situationroom.placng.org

Email: situationroom@placng.org

Twitter: @situationroomng

#NigeriaSituationRoom

Facebook: [Facebook.com/situationroomnigeria](https://www.facebook.com/situationroomnigeria)

Hotlines: 08185888999, 09095050505, 09032999919