

FOREIGN OBSERVERS AND SECURITY CONCERNS IN THE CONDUCT OF 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Certainly, the provision of necessary security in the conduct of democratic elections is essential in achieving free, fair and credible outcome. Thus, in the build up to 2019 general elections in Nigeria, the issue of security constituted one of the major preoccupations of foreign observers. Fundamentally, foreign observers from both governmental and non-governmental organizations focus on the level of preparation for election in any given country. Indeed, foreign observers monitor the casting of votes by eligible voters and the counting of votes by the officials of the electoral body. This is particularly significant in determining whether the outcome of election is credible and acceptable or otherwise in any given country. Foreign observers serve as important watchdogs in the conduct of democratic elections in any part of the world. Their verdicts on the conduct of elections help to confer or deny legitimacy to a government. As a matter of fact, the views of foreign observers are very critical to the survival of democracy in emerging democracies like Nigeria. Methodologically, the study adopted qualitative method in both data collection and analysis. Data collected were analyzed using textual analysis of the documents. Therefore, the argument is that the concern of foreign observers on security is seen as critical in ensuring peaceful and orderly conduct of elections. Also, it can be stated that the importance attached to security by all the stakeholders during the 2019 elections led to the signing of peace accord by the presidential candidates of different political parties. However, in spite of the mechanisms put in place the study found that some pockets of electoral violence occurred in some states in Nigeria.

Keywords: foreign observers, election, security, democracy, monitor etc.