

PRESS RELEASE

February 24, 2023.

WEST AFRICA DEMOCRACY SOLIDARITY NETWORK CALLS FOR PEACEFUL, FAIR, AND CREDIBLE 2023 NIGERIAN ELECTIONS

The West Africa Democracy Solidarity (WADEMOS) Network wishes all Nigerians a trouble-free and peaceful elections as the country goes to the polls on February 25, 2023, to elect a new president and members of the Federal House of Assembly, and on March 11, 2023, to elect governors and representatives of the State House of Assembly.

The WADEMOS Network also extends its best wishes to all contestants involved in the national and sub-national elections, which will be the seventh consecutive elections since the country's return to multi-party democracy in 1999.

As a Network, we acknowledge the assurances from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the security agencies on their preparedness to supervise peaceful, fair and credible general elections. WADEMOS urges Nigerians to turn out in their numbers on election days to exercise their franchise and civic responsibility. We also call on the INEC, political parties, and all stakeholders to respect the framework, rules, and regulations governing the elections and resort to appropriate legal processes and institutional mechanisms for addressing their grievances.

"We encourage citizens and political parties to avoid inflammatory language and hate speech, which could trigger violence during the elections. The INEC and civil society organizations (CSOs) must also enhance their communication protocols and structures to provide timely information to counter fake news and misinformation during and after the elections," Dr. Kojo Pumpuni Asante, head of the WADEMOS election observation mission, remarked.

The WADEMOS Network commends the efforts of civil society, particularly our Nigerian member-organizations - CDD-West Africa, YIAGA Africa, Women in Politics Forum and the Transitional Monitoring Group - who have deployed a number of innovative observation platforms to monitor the credibility and conduct of the elections.

The Network deeply regrets and condemns unreservedly the death of senatorial candidate Oyibo Chukwu and the five other supporters of the Labour Party in Enugu State. We urge the security agencies to demonstrate their responsiveness to such attacks and arrest the perpetrators to serve as a deterrent to all unscrupulous elements seeking to perpetrate violence during this election.

Being integral to sustaining the political and economic stability in West Africa, WADEMOS recognizes the importance of this election as a pacesetter for the upcoming presidential elections in the sub-region this year. Considering the unfavorable political environment confronting the region, the Nigerian election should reignite hope in democracy in the sub-region.

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WANEP | Center for Democracy and Development-West Africa, Nigeria | StatView International, Guinea | Center for Democratic Governance (CDG), Burkina Faso

About WADEMOS Network

The West Africa Democracy Solidarity (“WADEMOS”) Network is a non-partisan, independent civil society-led transnational democracy solidarity network consisting of over thirty-five (35) civil society organizations located in 15 countries in West Africa. The purpose of the WADEMOS Network is to mobilize, coordinate, and leverage the collective power of civil society and other pro-democracy actors, resources, and opportunities within the West African Region to advance, defend, and reinvigorate democracy and promote democratic norms and reforms in the sub-region.

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