NIGERIAN UNITY AND THE 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract
The forthcoming 2015 general elections are going to be the most heated of all elections in Nigerian democratic history considering the war of words and pocket of violence traded between the two major political parties (ruling People’s Democratic Party-PDP and All Progressives Congress-APC). Therefore, the centrality of this paper deals with the consideration of the major hurdles facing Nigerian democratic consolidation at this moment. With the use of qualitative data, attempts have been made at seeing Nigeria's democratic transition, possible implications of the threat on Nigeria's national unity, hard-earned democratization, peace and security. The paper recommended that Nigerian unity should not be compromised with any personal, ethnic/regional and religious interest. It also maintained that the judiciary should stay up and resolves her independence and justice adjudication question so as to restore confidence and hope in political conflicts resolution. Adherence to all these and many others will keep Nigerians and its democracy one, after 2015 general elections.

Key words: Nigerian Unity, General Elections, Democracy, Election Rigging, Peace and Security

1. Introduction
As political animals that we are, nothing seems to have gripped the imagination of Nigerians as the issue of the coming 2015 general elections, which in my view is a watershed moment in the history of our dear country. The way we are able to handle this very important event will largely determine how successful we will be in our efforts at remaining a united, indivisible and stable country. Already, the fault lines are apparent and politicians are ready to exploit them to the fullest to achieve their sometimes not so noble objectives. The North is determined to have it back and its leaders are pulling all the stops to see that that happens. On the other hand, the body language of the incumbent president strongly suggests he wants another term in office. The unfolding scenario may portend danger to our nation if Nigerians from all parts of the country do not close ranks and put the interest of the nation first. The post-election violence of 2011 should be a reminder that election matters in the country have become serious business, which must be handled with the utmost seriousness and patriotism in order to avoid repeat of history (Abubakar, 2014).

Nations from the four corners of the world are enthusiastically waiting the February 14, 2015 general elections in Nigeria. Though they do not live in Nigeria, they will be affected in one way or the other by who becomes the President basically that it is the largest hob of African economy. This is due to the view of Yusifu (1990) who noted that the current trend towards the democratisation of political regimes in Africa is creating openings which in spite of everything, may result in economic and political changes.

According to Jega (2001:1) Nigeria’s current transition to democracy commenced on May 29, 1999, at the end of General Abubakar’s short transition from military to civil rule, when President Obasanjo assumed power as an elected civilian Head of State and Government. For the past four decades, democracy has been an acceptable platform of intercourse among nations on the
The global acceptability of democracy stems from its ideals and ethics that it equips itself with. Ajayi (1998), in Lawal and Olukayode (2012:449) assumed that a major trend since the end of the cold war has been the enabling environment for enhancing the global propagation of the liberal democratic paradigm, incidentally, the democratic movement albeit rudimentarily, was flagged off in the colonial Nigeria with the benevolent introduction of the elective principle by the 1922 Clifford Constitution and invariably, through the introduction of party politics.

The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides a legal framework of Nigeria’s national unity. Specifically, section one under the General Provision in part one states that, Nigeria is one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign state to be known by the name Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Therefore, Federalism has not been a reverberating achievement in Africa; although unitary regimes have had no improved testimony one promising political system has been the constantly federal and occasionally democratic government of Nigeria. According to Ademolekun and Kincaid (1991:173), the principal challenges facing Nigeria, which are not unlike those facing other heterogeneous African countries, are national unity, democratic politics, and socioeconomic development. This has become a test because; an incomplete democratic transition increases the risk of international and civil war in countries that lack the institutional capacity to sustain democratic politics. The combination of increasing mass political participation and weak political institutions creates the motive and the opportunity for both rising and declining elites to play the nationalist card in an attempt to rally popular support against domestic and foreign rivals (Mansfield and Synder, 2009: 381). More recently still, there have been waves of unrest in which erstwhile neighbours are pitted against each other and those assailed are told to ‘go home’ and are expelled from specific geo-physical spaces. Furthermore, the assailed ethnic groups are frequently referred to as ‘settlers’ by other groups who claim to be ‘indigenes’ of particular geo-political settings. In these contestations, the same language once used to rally Nigerians of diverse origins in the anti-colonial struggles has resurfaced (Alubo, 2001, in Alubo, 2004:136). Specifically, the nation building struggle is being further imperilled by these new challenges and contentions.

This work centres on the examination of the nature of major challenges to democratic consolidation, Nigeria’s democratic transition, possible implications of the threats to Nigeria’s national unity and hard-earned democratization; and prospective recommendations that will keep Nigerians and its democracy one, after 2015 general elections.

2. The Challenges

Nigeria’s democracy was 14 years on the 29th May, 2014 with no enormous news of transformation and little cause for celebration by the common people. The truth however is that within this phase, the country has recorded modest achievements in the;

- Maintenance of democratic and political stability,
• Creation of institutions that will support democratic governance, like the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Nigerian Legislative Institute, etc., and
• Formulation of economic policies aimed at improving human development.

However, the major challenge still remains the institutionalization of our democracy. After 54 years of independence and 14 years of continuous democratic rule, majority of Nigerians suffer from lack of basic amenities of life. One of the reasons is not farfetched from the mystified democratic system. At 54, Nigeria appeared to have derailed from the tracks of development. Igwokwe (2014:12) highlighted that a lot of people have blamed the presidential system of government which was adopted in 1979 as the major problem. He wondered if Nigeria would have done better if she had continued to practice the parliamentary system of government. In addition, they are run-away corruption; blood-cuddling terrorist activities and forms of insecurity; mind-boggling acts of impunity by those in the corridors of power; epileptic power supply; an all but collapsed economy, leaving on its trail a burgeoning army of unemployed youth; decrepit infrastructure; to mention but a few. These issues in the view of Bolawole (2014:17) are well known to Nigerians. Categorically, this assertion is made in corroborated that;

Elections in Nigeria have historically been conflict ridden. The campaigns preceding elections are invariably marked by pettiness, intolerance, and violence. Already there are several reported incidences of intra-party, as well as, inter-party violence, conflicts, including abductions and assassinations. And the elections and their outcomes have often been neither free nor fair, characterized by violations of the process (both inadvertent and wilful), corrupt conduct by officials, rigging of results and so on. Again, reports indicate that incidences of these were pervasive during the party primaries, and that some candidates are busy scheming to ensure a favourable outcome for themselves, by hook or crook, in the oncoming elections (Jega & Ibeanu 2007, in Unanaw and Ogbadule, 2014:12).

In the submission of Udama and Unale (1993); Akhojie (1996); Edeh (1999); Ogbonaya (2000); and Gbinijie (2014), the Nigerian so-called democratic mood and modality is in contrast to the definition and tenets of democracy. It is a consummate misnomer. It can be specifically noted that, democracy in Nigeria is the wresting and larceny of power by rigging, thuggery, assassinations, Kidnappings and total Machiavellian acrobatics together with the stealing of power by a criminal league, concourse and clique called Political Party for and through their individual members leading to the pauperization of the franchise and breach of all tenets of universal adult suffrage (Gbinijie, 2014).

2.1 Absence of Democratic Dividends

The symptoms of the old corrupt dictatorship are again so early, rearing their heads. In the...National Assembly composed largely of former active supporters and apologists of military dictatorship, legislative bills to alleviate corruption and economic deprivation are being ignored. The various vote-catching populist steps taken by the incoming successors are dying just as soon as they have been proclaimed with fanfare. ...strategic power still resides in the hands of former actors in the old dictatorship. The general mood among the people and in the land is that of sagacity. The claim of liberation will depend on real and substantial economic and social alleviation of the people who have suffered so much and who have been
Delivering of democratic dividends is in two perspectives. First is the creation and maintenance of basic infrastructural facilities on one hand, and another is the democratic institutions like:

- The Judiciary,
- Security Agencies,
- Constitutionalism and the law,
- Independent National Electoral Commission, and
- The Civil Society Organizations.

Unfortunately, the way and manner in which democratic system is operated in Nigeria is a type that is remote from its philosophy and ideals. Therefore, Fagbohun (2013:15) believed that there are no essential basic amenities of life even in amidst of (14years) uninterrupted democratic rule and there is practically no democratic culture in Nigeria. The dividends of democracy as they often advertised are tokens and far below anticipation of the majority of Nigerians. Trivialities are presented as proof and special favours being done to the hapless victims of poor governance or lack of governance in the name of ‘dividends of democracy’. Komolafe (2008:2) vividly pictured this notable issue when he said that;

> There have been occasions when state governments advertised regular “payment of salaries” to civil servants in their employment as “achievement”. You may wonder if a governor that collects billions of naira from the Federation Account monthly without any worthwhile capital projects being executed should not least pay a few thousands of civil servants who, in most cases, do not earn living wages. In another State when the government should be telling the people how many thousands of pupils have been enrolled into tens, if not hundreds, of quality schools and recruitment of thousands of teachers, the government was inaugurating the renovation of 50-year old school as a ‘dividend of democracy’. Rather than come up with how the government has reduced the percentage of households without pipe-borne water from say 80percent to even 50 percent, the government would be celebrating the drilling of five boreholes as achievements. We do not hear stories of how tens of communities have been provided with primary healthcare centres, what we hear is the loud noise celebrating how government repaints the building of a hospital that was built in the First Republic. Potholes are filled in few dilapidated roads and a day is then set-aside in the business of governance to inaugurating them. Even in colonial days, road rehabilitation used to be routine affair of the Public Works Department (PWD) all over the country.

The annual celebration of deceit in the name of “dividends of democracy” is actually an indication of an acute crisis of conceptualisation of development. Expansion and rehabilitation which characterises the democratic anniversary across the three tiers of government poses challenge to democratic sustainability and accountability in Nigeria. If the performances of Ahmadu Bello (in the North), Obafemi Awolowo (in the West) and Michael Okpara (in the East) were like what are today celebrated as “dividends of democracy”, no one would be invoking their names with utmost reference (Komolafe, 2008:3).
In the same development, the extent to which Nigerian government has consistently damaged the democratic values is incontrovertible. To this end, Ali (2013) noted that political party is peopled by individuals who have no business doing the State work. He added that they are bunch of rogues and charlatans who are bent on actualizing anti people’s agenda with the instrument of the state. To them democracy is an enterprise, and making money of which it is normal and an accepted corollary.

One thing Nigerian politicians are skilful at doing is stealing from the treasury and scheming to perpetuate themselves in office. They are careless and would go extra mile to achieve this political greed even if it entails shedding the innocent blood. The interests of the people are always in jeopardy. Political alliances are formed to foster and to perpetuate selfish political goal; strategizing on how best to further plunder the national resources and treasury. This has been the colour of Nigeria democracy from the first republic (Ali, 2013).

In Nigeria political system, patronage and rent-seeking are way of life. Those who are in government are desperate to hold on to power at all cost while those who want to come on board are going about it in a do or die manner. Hence, Nigeria’s political temperature is always at a boiling point, the essence of service is largely misunderstood. Those who seek public office do so for egocentric reasons ranging from stealing to personal enrichment at the detriment of helpless Nigeria. As a matter of fact, there seems to be no fundamental difference between the so called democratic rule in Nigeria and the hitherto practiced military rule. In this ugly situation, it is difficult if not impossible to talk about democratic ethics in Nigeria.

Consequently, fourteen years into democratic and presidential system of government in Nigeria, it can be said that the country still requires very strong pillars for the sustenance of its democratization before it can eventually, arrive at democratic value orientations, assurance, patience and resilience to make these institution sustainable. Jega (2001:1) submitted that the efforts to build these pillars are daily confronted and challenged by substantial threats, which manifest themselves, for example, in the reckless misrule by elected officials, corrupt practices by public officials, insensitivity to and intolerance of opposing views and perspectives, communal and ethno-religious conflicts and general insecurity of lives and property, all of which creates apprehensions about the possibility of authoritarian reversal. Matters are not helped but are rather aggravated by the wide gulf which exists between the rhetoric and the reality of so-called international assistance for democratic sustainability, especially from the international actors who have made the exportation of democracy their thriving business. Jega emphatically stated accordingly that;

There is, of course, a strong relationship between good governance and democratic consolidation. It can be said the more purposeful, focused and concerted the move towards good under a civilian dispensation – defined in terms of transparency and accountability of public officials, responsible conduct, as well as their responsiveness to the demands need and aspirations of the governed – the greater the chances of successful democratic transition and consolidation. Conversely, the more public and elected officials exhibit irresponsibility, seem unaccountable and unresponsive to popular needs and aspiration, and the more poorly they conduct
themselves in governance and state-craft, the greater the threats to democratic consolidation and sustainability.

As a result the above, there seems to be this gnawing gap as pointed by Bolaji (2010) between the high quality of policy designs and the sincerity of public officials to implement these policies for the good of the people.

2.2 Political militancy

As a matter of fact, elections in the view of Biggins (2008) pose a few dangers. Achebe (Achebe, 2012:245) supported this view with an assertion that the political crisis in Nigeria across States of the federation is triggered by the usual corrupt practice in which individuals with lots of money and time to spare (many of them half-baked, poorly educated thugs) sponsor their chosen candidates and push them right through to the desired political position, bribing, threatening, and on occasion, murdering any opposition in the process. Another responsible factor is the use and dump manipulative tendencies of Nigerian political leadership. As a result of this, Iwundu, and Thom-Otuya (2013:18) said, when youths are unable to speak up to defend themselves and those who used them for their self-seeking political ambition, dump them after achieving their selfish ambition and fail to disarm them, the answer is not farfetched, it is to unleash terror and violence on their exploiters and cohorts. This explains why the rich are not happy. Again, Abbas (2012), in Fagbohun (2013:9) illustrates with emphasis that;

With unprecedented political thuggery and uncontrolled violence, characterized by wanton destruction of lives and property, election period in Nigeria is best described as warfare… Incidence of intra-party and inter-party conflicts and violence have led to endemic abductions and assassinations of opponents and innocent victims, flagrant and official rigging of election results. Further violations of established process have invariably transformed election periods in Nigeria to as a-matter-of-do-or-die or a matter-of-life-and-death… or that of by hook or crook… This electoral politics has, of course signalled serious dangers for democratic and partisan politics in Nigeria.

One paramount reason for political thuggery is the wholesale determination of political lords to perpetrate themselves in power at whatever cost. Those who have tasted the sweetness of political power know that when they relinquish it, they are likely to live in frustration and regret throughout their lives. Therefore, they struggle to remain in power by exterminating all hindrances including human lives through the use of thugs (Abekhale and Tor-Anyiin, 2013:92).

Another obvious reason for political thuggery is the desire of the ruling class to plant unpopular candidates who would be a stooge and be manipulated to their advantage. They ensure that their candidate wins at all cost. This has given rise to the emergence of terrorist groups’ threatening the peace and unity of the country. Akukwe (2012) posited that;

The former Governor of Borno State Senator Ali Modu Sheriff recruited some members of the sect hitherto practicing their faith in relative peace, armed them and mobilized them as thugs to help him win re-election… Encouraged by the promise they unleashed mayhem on political opponents of the Governor and helped secure second term victory for Sheriff. The Governor, just like his colleagues all over the
country reneged on the promises to include them in power sharing. After successful rigging and thuggery operations no effort was made to retrieve the arms from the sect. With excess and idle munitions in the armoury the sect started a series of local attacks until fifth columnists infiltrated their ranks, gave them sophisticated trainings, fundings and intelligence. Other State Governors did the same in their respective States. Odili sponsored cults in Rivers state, Chimaroke had killer squad in Enugu State that put the fear of hell into people, Mbadinuju's Bakassi killed the NBA chairman and wife in Anambra State-the public reaction against it cost him the next elections. Yuguda has his own which he used against opponents in Bauchi State even in the recent past election. Alao Akala used NURTW touts he inherited from his political godfather Adelibiu against opponents. Ibori in Delta State and Alameisigha in Bayelsa State all sponsored cults for electoral purposes. This use of thugs is the vogue among State Governors, the only difference between them and Borno State is that either the ring leaders were personally settled at the expense of their followers or they were intimidated and blackmailed into submission by security agencies of the various States.

This politically weird means of power acquisition as opined by Gbanijie (2014) has often given rise to despotism, political impunity, unthinkable corruption and fascism. There is also the unpleasant factor of the violence associated with partisan politics that is often designed to keep balanced, well educated, fair-minded Nigerians away (Achebe, 2012:245). Political leaders use armed intimidation against political opponents, sponsor various armed thuggery groups and they exploit State armed apparatus to give them cover. This is the kind of illegality that birthed Boko Haram terrorist which has maimed countless persons all over the northern States in Nigeria.

3. Democratic Transition

(True) democracy is the political principle and practice that recognizes the institutionalization of liberal structures of governance that enfranchises and gives the people the rights to elect and impeach/recall their leaders. Consequently, Achebe (2012:245) educated that the question of choice in selecting a leader in Nigeria is often an academic exercise, due to the election rigging, violence, and intimidation of the general public, particularly by those in power, by those also with the means – the rich and influential. Democracy concretizes the basis of their participation in the decision–making process and enhances their freedoms. Indeed, a government of the people, by the people for the people (Gbanijie, 2014).

Present democratisation process in Nigeria suffers from several problems which Aworolo and Lawal (2009:172) identified as:

- First, it is being carried out within inefficient and non-viable rules.
- Second, the process itself allows for manipulation of existing rules.
- Third, the counteracting agencies charged with policing and enforcement of the laws and those who work in those agencies are not properly constrained by the laws and INEC itself is not divested of this 'pathology' and as such cannot be relied upon to play a role expected of an umpire since it is the party in power that appoints its officials and funds its operation.
So it can be said that the masses - as the followership from Achebe (2012:245)’s perspective are concerned about – don’t really have a choice of leadership, because there’s not a true democratic process (sic).

4. National Unity: The threat and Consequences

We have resolved that we are not going to be the cause of Nigeria breaking up. But if others decide that the country should be divided, and they insist that Nigeria should break up, we won’t say no because we realise there is nothing we are getting in the current arrangement that other sections of the country are not getting. If they insist, why don’t we sit down and talk and at the end everybody agrees that Nigeria should be divided… let it be (Abdullahi, 2014).

Nigeria remains the most populous country in Africa with a diverse cultural legacy. Its’ population according to the 2006 census is over 160 million with not less than 250 ethnic groups with three (3) major dominants. The majority groups include the Hausa/Fulani in the North-East, the Yorubas in the South/West and the Igbo speaking people in the South-Eastern part. These groups because of their population opportunistic positions as explained by Abdulrahman (2006) in Abdullah and Saka (2007:22), have been seen as consistently dominating the political as well as economic scene before and after the attainment of independence in 1960 and this has led to agitations for States creation by the marginalized groups. They said however that the more States were created, the more the complaints of marginalization and inequality by new minorities against the new majorities in each State. Consequently, the unity of the country since political independence in 1960 was hampered by the propagation of ethno-religious and political uproar necessitated on one hand by cultural, communal and religious differences and on the other hand by fear of political supremacy nursed by the marginal groups.

National unity is a feeling of being united as a country, especially in times of trouble. However, there are visible indications of diversity in almost every face of peoples’ life in Nigeria. These differences as pointed out by Okobia (2000:1) among other factors have all along hindered the effective unification of the Nigerian people.

Biggins (2008) for instance assumed that in Congo, street children are used by political parties to create public disorder during mass demonstrations in which the authorities use excessive force which sometimes lead to death of these innocent children. Those who survived are thrown in jail where they experience physical and sexual abuse. Nigeria is not an exception. To this end, Fagbohun (2013:9) said what has been the cost to the Nigerian nation? The first military coup d’état of 15th January, 1966 had immediate justification in the violent crisis that followed the 1964 general elections. Since then, Nigeria has had to grapple at every election with disturbing and undesirable consequences:

- Loss of lives and property. It has led to the entire family being wiped out. We have witnessed the destruction of countless property worth billions of Naira,
- Nigerian society at large and small communities have been divided,
Social and moral values have been desecrated thereby leading to loss of hallowed cultural norms.

- There has been disruption of environmental controls with attendant health implications. Corpse are thrown into drainages and water wells thereby creating health hazards, and
- There is general deepening of poverty and hunger.

To this end, Ede (1999) reiterated that the symptoms of the old corrupt dictatorship (that often led to the military coups and attendance violence) are here again and so early, rearing their (ugly) heads. Hence, if the violence trend continues, and particularly if the vote is close, marred or followed by widespread violence, it would deepen Nigeria’s already grave security and governance crisis (ICG, 2014).

There is an impending challenge to the unity of the nation ahead of 2015 general elections. On this note, Ali (2013) perceived that If Muhammadu Buhari (and the opposition All Progressives Congress-APC) on one hand wins the election; he will not allow his victory to be hijacked like Bashorun Abiola’s “Hope 92”. He will fight back. His fight will likely shift the Northern political paradigm. Those of them who are in the (President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan’s) Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and have been advocating for a shift of power back to the North will betray President Jonathan and shift their allegiance to Buhari in the spirit of Arewa. Supportively, the International Crisis Group-ICG (2014), in Aderinokun e’tal (2014:1), Nigeria is heading towards a very volatile and vicious electoral contest in 2015. They highlighted thus;

Factional feuds within both parties could degenerate into violence during their national and state primaries. Competing claims to the presidency between Northern leaders and their Niger Delta counterparts could also result in violence in either or both regions, particularly after the pools. As in 2011, clashes could erupt in some Northern States if the APC, whose frontrunners are all northerners, loses the pools, there is similarly a high risk of violence if the PDP loses the presidency, particularly in the Niger Delta, home region of the Party’s candidate, President Goodluck Jonathan....

The Boko Haram insurgency and the state of emergency in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe could prevent voting in parts of those north-eastern states. If this occurs, the opposition APC, which has large following in those (and other northern) States, could lose a significant number of votes, reject the presidential pools’ outcome and question the elected government’s legitimacy.

An election not held in all States may also fall short of the constitutional requirements for electing a president, namely that the winner score 25 percent of the votes in two-thirds of the 36 States, thereby raising serious legal disputes.

Ethnic political clown will surface and if this situation comes to pass, it will create political mess of colossal magnitude; and its consequence will shake Nigeria to its foundation. Ishaka (2014:7) pointed out that, the contribution of political crisis as one of the immediate causes of the military coup of 1966 and the remote causes of the tragic civil war should not be lost on the current political class. Equally disturbing are the increasing availability of firearms, the rise in communal violence across several Northern and some parts of South-Western States like Nasarawa, Benue,
Kogi, Taraba, Gombe, Osun, Ekiti, Oyo, etc., since 2013 and deepening criminality in the Niger Delta. All of these will eventually create significant challenges to the:

- Continuous existence of the nation as an indivisible entity,
- Legitimacy of government in power after the election,
- Sustainability of Nigerian democracy,
- Sanctity of peace and security that ought to guarantee the safety of a nation, and
- Attitude of the electorates.

The resultant effect of these is not different from the civil war which is akin to bloodshed and wanton destruction. This should as well fuel the issue of the need for the sincere and sound reform of the electoral process.

5. Conclusion

Nigeria is now a scuffle country, almost everybody does what he or she likes. Only very small numbers of people are willing to protest about the wrong things going on. This basically hangs on the facts that, given the opportunities most will do the same. There seems to be an unwritten and unspoken agreement between leadership and the followership to an extent that each is free to operate according to he/she likes. The selected few rulers’ rules as they like, likewise the subjects follow as it pleases them. The government has no consideration of the public, and vice versa. Indiscipline and free-for-all is now the order of the day. Today, in Nigeria, citizens cannot sleep with their two eyes closed due to non-existence of security of life and property. There is no job security even in the public sector any longer. Electoral victory now belongs to the ‘spoilt’. Majority of the civil/public servants are now being lured into corruption by some politicians who head various Ministries, Parastatals and Boards. There are no employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled human resource. All these are examples of a failed State which fuel political and national instability. Achebe (2004:250) exemplified this when he defined a failed State as;

...one that is unable to perform its duties on several levels which is when violence cascades into all-out internal war, when standards of living massively deteriorate, when the infrastructure of ordinary life decays, and when the greed of rulers overwhelms their responsibilities to better their people and their surroundings.

6. Recommendations

Antecedents of truncation of democratic regimes in Nigeria since independence in 1960 have been due to coups and wars in the world over. It should become a necessary flashback to politicians on the dangers inherent in being silly around elections rigging, corruption and the violent signals it portends to the 2015 general elections. There cannot be stable and standardized democratic transition without adequate electoral reforms and holistic mass attitudinal reorientation. It is further recommended that;
Nigeria unity should be seen by all and sundry as sacrosanct. It means that President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan’s second term ambition is not worth the shedding of even a drop of the blood of any Nigerian as well as the agitators for power shift to the Northern Nigeria.

There should be consciousness that a stolen mandate will certainly not receive support of the people. The threat for parallel government by the opposition parties should be taken as a serious national matter by the security agencies, the INEC, the ruling People’s Democratic Party, and the local/international observers not to rig the forthcoming general elections.

The blood of the martyrs of Nationalists (in the pre-independence) and Nigerian democracy since 1963 should not be allowed to be in vain. Political stakeholders should tread the elections with more caution for the overall interest of the yet delicate democracy in Nigeria.

Peace and security of the nation is not a negotiable matter. It is said that one should not throw stone into the market because you may not know whom it will hit. Anybody can be a casualty (low or highly placed). It has occurred severally in Nigeria since the first Military coup on January 15, 1963. The list is plenty.

The Judiciary should stay up and resolve her independence and justice adjudication question. It should discharge its crucial duties with probity and transparency, remaining unbiased and steadfast.

Most importantly the electorates should be ready to move from the (sidon-look politics) into political activism so as to determine the direction of our nascent democracy.

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