NIGERIA 2015: ELECTION REPORT

Outline:

A. FACTORS AND EVENTS THAT SHAPED OUTCOMES OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

1. Insecurity especially the threat of BOKO HARAM
   - Number of deaths, refugees and displaced citizens in the North-East (statistics from Council on Foreign Relations)
   - Missing Chibok girls
   - Baga massacre and loss of territories by the Nigerian military/government

2. Poor economic performance
   - Unpopular approach to petrol subsidy reform – withdrawal of petrol subsidies on Jan 1, 2012
   - Naira devaluation and volatile foreign exchange rate
   - Decline in revenue and savings (ECA, SWF and foreign reserves)
   - Rising debt profile
   - Unprecedented import waivers
   - Inability to fund budgetary proposals (delayed salaries)
     i. In Benue, workers insisted that they voted against the incumbent because of the non-payment of salaries for 6 months.

3. Perception of Corruption
   - Oduagate scandal
   - Non-trial of government officials and agents by the EFCC or ICPC despite prevalence of public allegations
     i. Petrol subsidy payment racket
     ii. Alleged missing $20 billion dollars

4. New media
   - Rise of social media
   - Agenda-setting by social media

5. Endorsements and patronages
   - Lobbyist groups and associations e.g. TAN
   - Influence of national leaders e.g. Obasanjo and Babangida
   - The use of Obas, traditional rulers and other leaders to rally voters
   - Religion and ethnic politics
   - The support of ethnic militia groups – MASSOB, OPC etc
6. Role of think tanks and research institutes incl. opinion polls
   - CPPA
   - Afrobarometer
   - Chatham House (Well-received Buhari speech)

7. Strategic engagement and international community
   - Political mergers and coalitions – realignment of political forces
   - International community
   - Diaspora community

8. Increased effectiveness of INEC
   - Deployment of new technology (card readers)

B. UNIQUENESS OF THE POLL
1. The use of new technology for voter accreditation – card readers
2. The competitiveness of the polls – no winner emerged until the final round of vote count
3. The Jega factor – carriage and integrity of INEC and its Chairman in coordinating the process
4. Nigeria’s first female presidential candidate
5. Outliers: the election is mainly between two parties

C. FACTS FROM THE ELECTION
1. Voter apathy: prevalent in some of Nigeria’s most educated and economically viable regions. Paradoxically, states decimated by the insurgency exhibited the overall highest voter turnout.
2. Stronghold check: The aggregate votes from the North-West exceeded the votes from the South-East and the South-South.
3. South-East: Voted the least for the APC candidate with less than 20,000 votes in 4 out of 5 states.
4. South-West: Had the best balance of votes (even distribution).
5. South-South: Had the most uneven votes between both candidates of the PDP and the APC.

D. FUTURE IMPACT/PROJECTIONS
Legislative configuration
1. But for one seat to the Labour party, only two parties (APC and PDP) constitute the Senate
2. With the governing party having no Senate representative from the South-East, the Senate President will not emerge from this region.
3. David Mark, Senate President for two terms with a fifth appearance in the Senate will become a floor member of the Senate.