



## **POLICE SERVICE COMMISSION**

### **REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF POLICE CONDUCT DURING THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS HELD ON FEBRUARY 23<sup>RD</sup> AND MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2019**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Police Service Commission (PSC) is a statutory body established pursuant to Section 153 (1) (m), Paragraph 30, Part 1 of the Third Schedule to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) which provides as follow:

**“The Commission shall have power to -**

**(a) appoint persons to offices (other than office of the Inspector-General of Police) in the Nigeria Police Force;**

**(b) dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding any office referred to in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph”**

Pursuant to the above constitutional powers, the PSC monitored the conduct of Police Officers deployed for election duty during the 2019 General Elections in the country. The Presidential and National Assembly Elections were held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February while the Governorship, State Assembly and Federal Capital Territory Area Councils elections were held on 9<sup>th</sup> March.

The objective, besides instilling confidence in the electoral process, is also aimed at strengthening the nascent democracy and ensuring professionalism in the officers and men of the Nigeria Police Force.

It should be noted that in the past the PSC monitored the conduct of police officers during the 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 general elections as well as most

of the staggered elections. The reports on these elections especially the 2011 and 2015 elections indicated that the police officers who participated in the elections conducted themselves substantially in a professional manner.

Upon accreditation by the Independent National Electoral Commission, (INEC), the PSC deployed about 400 Monitors across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory to monitor the Police officers' conduct during the last elections. While the Honourable Chairman, PSC served as the National Coordinator, the Honourable Commissioners served as Zonal Coordinators together with majority of the PSC Senior Staff who were also coordinators at the state level.

## **2.00 PRE-ELECTION SENSITIZATION**

Prior to the elections, the PSC carried out sensitization tours of the six geopolitical zones in the country between 15<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2019 to create awareness amongst the police and the public on the planned monitoring exercise. The PSC also collaborated with civil society organizations to further create awareness and with technical assistance from CLEEN Foundation, the PSC dedicated Telephone Lines were published in some National Newspapers. The public was advised to reach the PSC monitors through the dedicated lines to report cases of police officers' misconduct as well as commendations for good conduct.

## **3.0 ELECTION DAY MONITORING**

The PSC Team randomly covered the 774 Local Government Areas of the country as well as the Federal Capital Territory.

The PSC monitors observed that the policemen at the Polling Units were assisted by officers from National Security Civil and Defence Corp (NSCDC), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and Federal Road Safety Corp (FRSC).

There was an average of one policeman per polling unit with one or two officers from the aforementioned agencies.

The highways and major road junctions in almost all the states were manned by fully armed soldiers and police men who were also on patrol.

The summary of the monitoring exercise as reported by the PSC monitors is as follows:

<b>S/N</b>	<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1	Number of States Covered	36 + FCT
2	Number of towns visited	1003
3	Number of LGAs Visited	479
4	Number of Poling Units Visited	3090
5	Average Number of police officers per polling unit	1
6	Number of Telephone calls received	299

The Telephone calls received from the public were mainly complaints regarding inadequate security and tension at some polling units, late arrival of materials and snatching/burning of ballot boxes. The summary of other reported incidences from the states were as follows:

- Fatal shooting by security forces in some states, especially in Rivers and Kogi;
- Unwarranted assault of a voter by a police man at a collation center in Anambra State. The officer was later queried by the State Police Command;
- Arrest of Observers, including a PSC monitor in Ondo State.
- Invasion of INEC Collation centers by thugs and persons in military uniforms, especially in River State.

- The Police Officers in obosi, Anambra State were commended for their professional conduct.

#### **4.0 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS BY PSC MONITORS**

- i. The Police Officers on election duty arrived early at most of the Polling Units and were professional, approachable and had the requisite accreditation tags for easy identification.
- ii. The elections were characterized by inadequate security personnel at the Polling Units with only one or two policemen and in some cases none at all. The Police was not adequately complemented by other security agencies. This created tense moments and in some cases degenerating to snatching of ballot boxes and fatal shooting by miscreants. The lesson is that staggered election created a false impression of adequate security in the country, which could not be replicated in a nationwide election.
- iii. Militarization of the electoral process in some states such as Rivers, where suspected Armed Military men obstructed Police in the discharge of their constitutional responsibility as the lead Agency in both internal and election security.
- iv. INEC cancelled some of the elections which resulted in scheduled re-run of some National and State Assembly Elections in some states. INEC also declared the results of the gubernatorial elections inconclusive in six States of Sokoto, Kano, Benue, Bauchi, Adamawa and Rivers. A new date for the re-run has been fixed for 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019

## 5.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- i. There is need for massive recruitment of police men for general policing and to forestall incidences of inadequate security during elections. An average of 15, 000 to 25,000 per year for the next five years is recommended.
- ii. The Police should be strengthened in Men and materials and encouraged to exercise its constitutional responsibilities of providing security during elections and should only be assisted by other security agencies where necessary.
- iii. The Commission shall direct the acting Inspector-General of Police to identify and send condolence letters to the families of the police men who lost their lives during the elections and ensure prompt settlement of their insurance claims and other entitlements where applicable.
- iv. The Commission together with the Police shall identify, investigate and discipline all officers who were alleged to have compromised the electoral process and in the same vein identify, commend and reward all Police men with reports of gallantry and good conduct.
- v. The Commission shall advise the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to convene a post-election Conference of all the security agencies that participated in the elections to reflect on the issues arising from the elections including what should be the role of the military during elections.
- vi. INEC should endeavor to improve its perennial logistics problems to ensure that voting materials get to the voting centers at the appropriate time to help douse tension and avoid promoting voter apathy.

- vii. There is urgent need for electoral reforms that would encompass empowering the police to effectively deal with security challenges during elections through deployment of motorized armed personnel patrol covering cluster of polling booths and withdrawal of registration certificate of many political parties that fail to make any impact during General Elections.
- viii. The PSC shall send monitors to the rescheduled elections in the five states where elections were declared inconclusive. This is necessary especially as the competition appears to be very intense and the role of the police, paramount.
- ix. In view of recent violence associated with elections in Nigeria, the PSC should establish insurance covers for its staff deployed for monitoring and
- x. The PSC shall endeavour to make adequate and early preparations for the monitoring of Police conduct during elections in Nigeria which is possible with early release of funds.

## **6.00 CONCLUSION**

The Police Service Commission appreciates the challenges faced by the Nigeria Police Force, the lead security agency in election security and would continue to work assiduously to ensure that its manifest inadequate manpower is addressed. The Commission will also make representations to government on additional funding for the Force to assist it acquire necessary logistics for its operations. The Commission would however, continue to ensure that the Police operates within the dictates of the law and any one found to have compromised rules of engagement during elections would face appropriate disciplinary action.

**Alhaji Musiliu Adeola Smith, IGP (rtd), CFR, fwc**  
**Honourable Chairman/National Coordinator**

