

ELECTION SECURITY THREAT ASSESSMENT: TOWARDS 2015 ELECTIONS

Seventh Edition
November, 2014



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Seventh Security Threat Assessment: Towards 2015 Elections October 2014

Background/Political Context

This month presented us with lots of intrigues, squabbles, accusation and counter-accusation and security threats ahead of 2015 elections. President Goodluck Jonathan on the 11th declared his intention to contest for the 2015 presidential race just a day after a suicide bomber denoted bomb in a secondary school in Yobe State, killing 48 and injuring 78 students.¹ On October 20th 2014, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Aminu Tambuwal, defected to the All Progressives Congress (APC) from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). This was not without attendant issues leading to the withdrawal of his security aids and call for removal by the PDP as speaker of the House. The party congress held across the country to elect party delegates were not without violence and squabbles.

The continuous advancement and sophistication of the Boko Haram group has been used by politicians to further hit up the polity. The rumors President Goodluck automatic endorsement of ticket for governors seeking to be elected into the senate and serving their last tenure in office led to protest by senate who refused to seat till the President receded his decision and issued automatic ticket for serving senators wishing to return back to the senate. However, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) governors won a major victory by securing the nod of the Presidency to control the political structures in their states.² Also, the People's Democratic Party, PDP after a series of marathon meeting with PDP members in the House of Representatives, a committee was set to agree on automatic tickets for members.³ However, the letter by the President for the extension of state of emergency in the north is yet to scale through in both houses of the National Assembly. However, the request has generated

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²<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/11/2015-pdp-hands-party-structures-govs/#sthash.jR6xQvFz.dpuf>

³ <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/11/muazu-pdp-leadership-meet-pdp-reps-fail-table-tambuwal-issue/#sthash.f46bx1gJ.dpuf>

tense political contestation and divides in the house and among party members. Meanwhile, members of the opposition All Progressives Congress have collected no fewer than 120 signatures to commence the impeachment process against President Jonathan. The lawmakers are said to be angry that the Executive is ridiculing the leadership of the House⁴. Also, Vanguard newspaper reports quoted an anonymous APC senator saying the Senate President, David Mark and his principle officers have been the ones pleading against his impeachment⁵. At the state levels, lots of dynamics that are symptomatic of 2015 are playing out in different forms. In Rivers states, the continuous hit between the federal and the state has continued to generate fierce contest at inter-party and intra-party levels of the political entanglement. Just on November 19, Governor Chubuikwe Rotimi Amaechi, during an APC rally in Abuja, issued a threat that the party will establish a parallel government if it loses the 2015 election. People's Democratic Party has suspended a governorship aspirant of the party in Cross River State Mr Goddy Jeddy Agba and others for allegedly corrupting the just concluded ward delegate congress in the State. Also, the last has not been heard of Taraba as the former deputy governor Abubakar Danladi was sworn-in on the 11th after a supreme court ruling nullifying his earlier impeachment in 2012.

The allegation of poor performance against the present administration led by President Goodluck Jonathan as been below average and as grossly being corrupt as alleged by former president Olusegun Obasanjo of, has reverberated in different quarters in different manners. This is coming at a time when government has introduced an austerity measure which is perceived to be targeted at mainly poor people in the country. The subsequent respond by the Presidency has also not helped to galvanize need public support or sympathy. This security threat assessment is the outcome of a field work that was undertaken across the thirty six states of the federation and the Federal Capital Abuja. The objectives of this STA are threefold to:

⁴ <http://theeagleonline.com.ng/rep-move-to-impeach-jonathan-reject-emergency-rule/>

⁵ http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/11/mark-behind-delay-jonathans-impeachment-apc-senator/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter#sthash.8KnySQBz.dpuf

- (i) Track and analyze emerging trends that can either make or mar INEC's preparedness towards the 2015 elections with specific reference to a credible and violence free election;
- (ii) Identify security hotspots, players and drivers of violence and;
- iii) Provide specific recommendations to INEC, other institutions and actors towards violence free elections.

Preparations for the Elections

INEC has continued with the distribution of the Permanent Voters Cards (PVC) across the country following the schedule for distribution which was earlier made public by the Commission. The third phase of distribution of PVC were scheduled in thirteen states began on Friday, 7th November and ended on Sunday, 9th November. The states were Adamawa, Borno, Edo, Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Lagos, Nasarawa, Niger, Ogun, Plateau and Rivers. The failure of the exercise in Lagos manifested in streets protest by residents, storming the Lagos office of the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to vent their spleen. The Lagos exercise was scheduled to hold in Agege, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Ibeju-Lekki, Ifako- Ijaiye, Ikeja, Ikorodu, Kosofe, Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland, Mushin and Ojo while it was postponed in Alimosho, Amuwo Odofin, Apapa, Badagry, Epe, Oshodi- Isolo, Somolu, Surulere and Eti-Osa from Nov. 28 to Nov. 30. The inconsistencies surrounding the third phase of PVC distribution which commenced 7 - 9 November 2014 and the Continuous Voter Registration coordinated from 13 - 17 November⁶ are enormous. For instance, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Edo State has declared that a total of 4,658 permanent voter cards (PVCs) were snatched in nine local government areas of the state during distribution. Edo State Resident Electoral Commissioner Mr. Baritor Kpagih in his recent media briefing confirmed that the discrepancies was recorded in 11 out of the 18 local governments in the state with Orhionmwon Local Government Area ahead others with 3,661 PVCs that were snatched in eight polling units. He presented the outline for fresh voters registration exercise,

⁶ See more at: <http://www.mydailynewswatchng.com/2015-inec-to-start-phase-iii-pvc-distribution-in-13-states/#sthash.sL8TXHPL.dpuf>

adding that 883,058 PVCs out of 1,531,580, representing about 57.7 per cent were distributed during the three-day exercise. 648,522 PVCs were yet to be collected. Thugs invaded INEC center in Abeokuta, Ogun State with guns and other weapons during the continuous voter Registration exercise in St Mary African Church School, Oke-Efon, Abeokuta. 10 persons have sustained injuries as a result. INEC is obviously dealing with some logistical challenges and providing limited information. In Lagos, reports indicated that INEC officials didn't show up. In Ogun, Plateau and Kano where they showed up, they didn't have all the cards for their polling units. The APC has in response accused INEC of colluding with PDP to rig the election.

Also, former Ghanaian President Kufour has led a team of ECOWAS members to APC secretariat and advised about the peaceful conduct of 2015 election. The Nigeria police was rated high in preparation for the elections by the team when it paid a visit to the Force Headquarters.

Party congresses to elect delegates for its primaries were held in November as well. The PDP in compliance with present dynamics and the timetable set out by INEC, has reviewed its timetable for primary elections.

As the 2015 elections draw nearer, the political landscape of the South East geopolitical zone has continued to change in response to the dynamics of power struggle within and between political parties. Incumbent governors of some States like Abia, Ebonyi and Enugu have all professed to the zoning formula as a mechanism of power shift to achieve equity and douse sense of marginalization. They are equally mobilizing support for their preferred candidates.

Political activities in the northeast are nearing their peak and becoming more charged in all the states of the region. Aspirants for governorship and the National Assembly elections seem unperturbed by the conflict going on in the region. In particular the clamour for governorship race in nearly all the states appears threatening. In Adamawa State, the zoning of the governorship to the central zone within the People's Democratic Party is taking a new twist.

The situation in Rivers State might get worse, as both internal crisis within the PDP and its relationship with the APC degenerate. Continued political animosity between President Goodluck Jonathan and his family on the one hand and Governor Chubuikwe Rotimi Amechi on the other has security implications. Secret arms build-up in Rivers State is alarming. Both ex-militants and youths in many parts of the state are in possession of dangerous weapons such as AK 47, mainly for the elections. In Isiokpo and parts of Ikwerre Local Government Area, youths are paid by politicians to guard weapons in the bush or remote forested part of communities. Just on November 19, Governor Chubuikwe Rotimi Amechi, during an APC rally in Abuja, issued a threat that the party will establish a parallel government if it loses the 2015 election.

Gender Dimension of the Election

The refusal of the People Democratic Party to issue party nomination form to Professor Akasoba Zainab Duke-Abiola, one of the PDP presidential aspirant and has subsequent decision to appropriate the court has against added to the number of ligations the PDP is battling with. She has refuted claim that she was given her nomination form by the national secretariat of the PDP. While this might signal political exclusion it might further add to the signal before international community that political parties in Nigeria do not encourage female participation. Another female House of Assembly aspirant in the just conclude PDP primaries for Olamaboro constituency in Kogi State, Comrade Mabe Yakubu, has threatened to drag the alleged winner, Yunusa Gabriel Olufu to court if the party refuses to call for a fresh primary within the stipulated time. She alleged that she was threatened at gun point to step down for the alleged winner. One of the female aspirants in the APC Lagos gubernatorial race Tobun Agbesanwo has alleged subtle plan by the Kemi Nelson, the APC South west Women Leader to discriminate against women in the forth coming election in the state.

In Taraba State, Senator Aisha Jummai Al-Hassan, representing Taraba North Senatorial District beat other candidates for the APC ticket in Taraba to achieve a landslide victory. In Adamawa State, a female, APC screening committee disqualified female guber aspirant for not been able to provide her

tax clearance and required number of nominators. In the South West, Ms Kofoworola Bucknor - Akelere, former Deputy Governor of Lagos State is vying for the governorship election in Lagos state. At present, two of the six houses of assembly in the SW are under the leadership of female speakers (Oyo - Rt. Hon. Monsurat Jumoke Sunmonu and Ondo - Rt. Hon. Akindele Jumoke Yetunde). Lagos and Osun States are at present having female deputy governors while Senator Oluremi Tinubu, one of the eight senators in the current Senate is from Lagos. The majority leader of the House of Representatives Hon. (Mrs.) Mulikat Akande-Adeola is from Ogbomoso, Oyo State. (She's re-contesting in 2015 and hopes to clinch the House of Rep's Speaker's seat if zoned by PDP to the South West.) Hon. Abike Dabiri Erewa is a third term member of House of Reps representing Ikorodu Federal Constituency of Lagos State.

In the South East, Senator Chris Anyanwu, representing Imo East senatorial district has indicated interest for the governorship position in Imo state. Erhiatake Ibori, daughter of the former governor of Delta State, James Ibori who is running for a seat in the Delta State House of Assembly emerged one of the winners of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) primaries for the 2015 state House of Assembly election.

Presence and Activities of Non-State Actors

The presence of non-state actors is increasing in the north-east and this could be potentially dangerous in the long run. A group of hunters are presently being hailed for the liberation of Maiha and Mubi towns previously controlled by Boko Haram. There is also the sudden rise of the civilian JTF in Yola, a replica of the situation in Maiduguri. Members of Vigilante in Borno State have beheaded about forty-one Boko Haram fighters after a failed attempt by the insurgents to attack Gur village .The gun battle between the insurgents and the Vigilante jointly with the military lasted for about two hours. These two groups have played significant roles in counter- insurgency operations in Adamawa but it is unlikely that they will remain apolitical during the 2015 elections especially when they are currently being supported by politicians. For instance, it is on record that former Vice President and currently an APC

presidential aspirant, Atiku Abubakar has been reported to provide financial and logistical support to the vigilante hunters to carry on with counter-insurgency operations. It is feared that this may translate to a ready-made pool of 'non-state force' for use by Atiku in 2015 which calls for concern given the volatile nature of Adamawa politics. In the same light, newspapers have reports that the Governor of Adamawa State Bala Ngilari, has engaged 10,000 hunters and vigilantes to assist the military in fighting Boko Haram Insurgents. When this adds to the already existing pool of active non-state actors already present especially in Borno, Bauchi and Gombe states discussed in previous STA reports, the 2015 elections in the northeast may be quite difficult to conduct or manage.

The incursions made by the most devastating group among the non-state actors, Boko Haram, equally calls for additional concern. The fierce battle currently going on in the northern part of Adamawa (Mubi, Maiha and Hong) between Boko Haram and Nigerian forces leading to expansion and contraction in the size of the newly created 'Islamic caliphate' is a serious security concern. Elsewhere in the northeast, the increase in the frequency of bomb blasts attributed to non-state actors is equally a big challenge for the conduct of elections. Series of bomb blasts and suicide attempts in Gombe, Bauchi and Yobe states are indeed danger signals. In Gombe State, there is the recent reemergence of '*yan kalare*' a group set up by former Governor of Gombe State, Danjuma Goje and used as political thugs during his tenure are alleged to be responsible for rising scale of pockets of violence in the State. The group is also said to be responsible for the recent pelting of Governor Ibrahim Dankwambo in the State.

The continuous sophistication of the Boko Haram group is already playing out in different dimensions. The Emir of Kano, Sanusi Lamido had earlier in the month called on Nigerians to defend themselves against the Boko Haram insurgents, this was further re-echoed by former vice president Atiku Abubakar. The bombing of Kano Central Mosque where the Emir worships and the scores of death that followed; the Yobe state secondary school bombing and president declaration for 2015 Presidential race the following day and the

attack on Yobe State Capital which almost fell in the hands of insurgents has further damped the hope in victory against the insurgent by the Nigeria security forces and the commitment of government to tackling it to a logical conclusion. Kaduna has continued to experience increasing cases of violence especially in southern Kaduna. As the electoral politics heightens, some of the ethno-religious contentions in the state will continue to boil. The South West zone has also been affected by Boko Haram insurgency, especially in Kaduna, Kano, Katsina and Sokoto. Zamfara and Katsina have also been experiencing increasing cases of cattle rustling and rural banditry resulting in wanton destruction of lives and property.

With the increasing cases of cattle rustling, especially in Zamfara, Kaduna and Katsina states, several community vigilante groups have been established. The Zamfara State government has recruited 4,540 security guards ostensibly in response to the security challenges in the state. The State Governor, Abdulaziz Yari, disclosed that the personnel would be deployed to the state's 227 districts "so that every citizen in the state will feel secured". The outfits are said to comprise Nigerian Legion, Association of Retired Police Officers of Nigeria, Vigilante Group, Man 'O' War and the Peace Corps. Others are the Boys Scout, the Red Crescent, Local Hunters Association and the Association of Retired SSS operatives in the state. Kano state government had earlier recruited 395 security personnel, apart from the 402 female recently recruited. Increasingly state governments are beginning to recruit their own security personnel, this is not simply a result of escalating insecurity in the zone, it is also reaction to the increasing partisan control of the federal security institutions like the military, Police and DSS by the PDP controlled federal government.

In north central, a dusk to dawn curfew was imposed on Lafia after a deadly violence. The violence erupted in Lafia as rival cult groups clashed. The crisis grounded economic activities as shop owners closed. Youth suspected to be of Eggon extraction were said to have invaded the palace of Emir of Lafia, Isah Mustapha Agwai 1 which led to the death of two people. The following day, gunmen attacked Alakyo village, the ancestral home of the spiritual leader

of Ombatse militia, Lega Agu, also known as Baba Alakyo. Prior to violence, 32 internally displaced persons were murdered on their way by some gunmen after the governor of state Al-Makura, asked them to return back to their villages. Prior to this crisis, the chief driver to the governor was assassinated on 7th November, on his way to his home village Keana with his wife. On Friday 28th November 2014, two police officer on patrol were on ambushed and killed by unknown gunmen along Wamba road in Akwanga Local Government Area. Gunmen also attacked and confiscated the car and other valuables including party documents of Mr Yunana Iliya, the PDP chairman of Nassarawa State. This happened shortly after he addressed a world conference calling for State of emergency to be imposed in his State. In Kano, Kaduna, Katsina with the history of youth militancy, particularly the *yan'daba*, electoral politics is always an opportunity to perpetrate violence on behalf of their principals. The cases of raids and mass killings by bandits in southern Kaduna are also attracting non state security response from the communities. Militant youths called Area boys are major players in electoral politics and security in Sokoto state.

Within the South-South region, ex-militants have remained very visible in the political space in Rivers state, especially as local power brokers and security contractors. Within the period under review, cult groups such as *Deywell* and *Deygham* have clashed severally, including a recent one in the Diobu area of Port Harcourt with the police responding at the double. As well, Ibaa and Etche have been flashpoint communities. In Okrika, Ateke Tom has remained very influential, calling the shots when it comes to local politics.

Thugs invaded INEC center in Abeokuta, Ogun State with guns and other weapons during the continuous voter Registration exercise in St Mary African Church School, Oke-Efon, Abeokuta. 10 persons have sustained injuries as a result.

Edo South Senatorial District remains an area to watch for possible violence despite seeming APC youths' peaceful or favourable outlook with President Jonathan when it comes to the presidential elections next year. Also, three

female police officer who went to make an arrest at Oregbeni quarters in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area of Edo were beaten and stripped naked. However, the activities of cult groups, robbers and kidnappers in the state remains worrisome and disturbing.

In Delta state, Warri and Bomadi are places to watch closely. These are places of origin of Governor Oduaghan and Manager respectively. Both have strong support of top ex-militants.

Migration and Internal Displacement

Consequent upon the rising level of insurgency in the north east, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of internally displaced persons more than any other time spread across the states but especially in Borno and Adamawa. At present, nearly half of Borno's population has been displaced; the corresponding estimate for Adamawa State is one-third most of who are living in its capital, Yola. National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has recently reported that it has officially registered 700,000 IDPs in the three states of Borno, Bauchi and Yobe. Two issues arise from the burgeoning presence of IDPs in the region. The heavy caseload in these areas no doubt poses security risks while the IDPs themselves are likely to be missed out of the elections. Additionally, the 'Bama Development Foundation; has said it had registered 180,000 internally displaced persons from Bama who are taking refuge in Maiduguri, the Borno State Capital. It is as a result of the latter that Senator Ali Ndume (APC, Borno South) recently sponsored a motion to amend the nation's Electoral Act to allow IDPs vote in camps. The motion is currently being debated. In Nasawara, Yobe, Borno and Adamawa, the number of displaced persons are still on the rise owing to different violent clashes resulting in scores of death and huge displacement.

Recent Developments within the State Houses of Assembly

Activities in the State House of Assembly are reflecting some of the tensions in the political climate as we get closer to the 2015 general elections.

Former Ekiti state lawmaker Dr. Adewale Omirin was recently impeached by seven PDP law makers out 26 members of Ekiti State House of Assembly.

Replacing him is Mr. Dele Olugbemi who recently defected to the People's Democratic Party from the All Progressives Congress. The Minority Leader, Hon. Samuel Ajibola, said the decision became imperative following "Omirin and his deputy absence without official notice," adding that "the business of the House cannot grind to a halt as government is a continuum." The lawmakers, according to Ajibola, found "Omirin guilty of revealing official secrets, misappropriation of Assembly funds and signing of bonds with the past executive without the knowledge of other members of the House⁷." As a result of this, the High court Judge handling the case against Ekiti State Governor Ayodele Fayoshe has stepped down alleging threat to life. However Hon. Justice Daramola the Chief Judge had reassigned the case to the same judge Hon. Justice Ogunyemi who returned the filed earlier. The scenario in Ekiti State where about 300 policemen and other security agencies allegedly provided cover for sitting of 7 PDP lawmakers out of 26 members of Ekiti State House of Assembly on Monday, November 17, 2014 is a curtain raiser to what may happen during the 2015 elections⁸.

Gale of defection enveloped Ogun State as eight members of the House of Assembly decamped to PDP and Social Democratic Party (SDP).

The Embattled Speaker of Ebonyi State house of Assembly Mr Chukwuma Nwazunku had formerly petitioned President Goodluck Jonathan to withhold the approval of the 15 billion Naira bond applied for by the state government. Furthermore, his impeachment on 10 November suggests the risk of violence. Hon Nwazunku was earlier impeached in July, he was however saved by the Governor who compelled the House members to reverse the action and reinstate Hon Nwazunku as Speaker. His latest impeachment is not unconnected to his opposition to 2015 consensus candidate of Prof Onyebuchi Chukwu adopted by the Governor and his associates. This time around, the Governor sanctioned his impeachment the moment Hon

⁷ <http://saharareporters.com/2014/11/20/seven-lawmakers-%E2%80%9Cimpeach%E2%80%9D-ekiti-speaker>

⁸ See Punch of 18th Nov, 2014

Nwazunku joined forces with those opposed to the Governor's preferred candidate.

Violent Hot Spots

We categorized the states according to the perceived level of threat using traffic light signals (green, amber and red). Red indicates presence of insurgency, intensity of politics with presence of different gladiators, violence that can lead to loss of lives and properties, Amber indicates presence of tension that have not escalated to earlier category under Red and Green is anything not Red or Amber. Most States fit into various categories depending on the level at which the analysis is done, that is either national or regional level. However, in this edition, analysis was done at the regional level to ensure that all possible threats and hotspots are identified and mapped accordingly.

- **RED: NC – Benue, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau; NE – Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, Taraba, Bauchi, Gombe, NW – Kaduna, Kano and Kastina SS – Rivers; SW – Ekiti SE Imo**
- **AMBER: NC Federal Capital Territory, Kogi, and Kwara; NW – Zamfara, Sokoto, SE – Enugu, Imo, Abia, Anambra, and Ebonyi; SS – Delta and Edo; SW –Lagos, Ogun Ondo and Oyo**
- **GREEN SS – Cross River and Bayelsa; NW- Jigawa, Kebbi SW- Osun**

Possible Senatorial Districts For Violence:

Regional Analysis

In the North East, the continued bombings, killings and expanding sphere by the insurgents has cast doubts on the conduct of elections in the region in 2015. Internally displaced persons are on the increase due to insecurity in the region. Across the zone, the following LGAs are very volatile due to insurgency. (Borno) – Maiduguri, Bama, Gwoza, Konduga, Ngala, Marte, Dikwa Abadam, Kala-Balge, Kaga (Bauchi) – Bauchi municipal, Azare; (Adamawa): Yola, Mubi, Madagali, Michika, Hong, Gombi, Maiha (Gombe): Gombe; (Taraba): Jalingo, Wukari, Ibbi; (Yobe): Damaturu, Gujba, Gulani, Potiskum, Aguta and Ohaji in Egbema Local Government..

In periods like this in the North West, Kano, Kaduna, Zamfara and Katsina should be carefully watched. In Sokoto, after a relative lull period of a few months, there are reported skirmishes between political parties and their candidates. Party thugs and youth gangs are beginning to operate in the open in service of their political clients. In Kano, there are growing contention between and within the two parties, while the ever increasing ethno-religious tension in Kaduna state is continuing to impact on inter party and intra party relations. The violence in southern Kaduna is increasingly impacting on citizens' relationship with their elected representatives, including the state government. The situation has appreciable influence on the on-going permutations around candidates and political party affiliation of the zone that used to be almost exclusively PDP. It appears in southern Kaduna, Kaduna city, Katsina and Kano city will be major flashpoints. The nature of violence may not necessarily be partisan; it could take different dimension including ethnic or religious, banditry and targeted assassination. Southern Kaduna has been experiencing ranging spate of banditry and violence with strong possibility of escalating reprisals attacks in other parts of the state.

The last few weeks have recorded increasing cases of violence in Katsina state. In an apparent echo of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda, Governor Shema of Katsina has placed the state on the map of electoral violence when he was caught on cameral calling the opposition "political cockroaches" that should be exterminated. In a public rally, he denounced the "tolerance" of his party, and called for violent reaction. He has however made a feeble attempt to deny, but he was caught on cameral and the tape has gone viral on the social media. Although he was widely condemned by the civil society and the international community, his party, PDP is yet to react to the situation neither have the security agencies.

As the country moves closer to the 2015 election, the internal contradictions of the two major parties have begun to manifest in all the states. These contradictions have strong potential for violence. The political contentions coupled with identity based historical grievances could degenerate into violence. The two major parties in region still harbour disgruntle members. As

we move close to 2015 elections a lot of them will begin to express their grievances this could impact on security and even the conduct of election in most of the state.

There are serious security breaches in Imo State, notably in the form of kidnappings and other criminal activities. Hon. Kingsley Nkemka was recently assassinated, raising fears of possible political assassination ahead of the elections. Also, the Imo Security Network has been accused of trying to assassinate Hon. Jerry Alagboso, and many others have complained of the gradual resurgence of kidnapping in the State. Notwithstanding, the presence of the military has helped to provide a sense of security. The level of security needs to be raised in the State in the light of threats to life. Therefore, concerted efforts at bolstering the level of security will help reduce the risk of politically motivated assassination and kidnappings ahead of 2015 elections.

The likely areas of violence include Isiala-Mbano region, where both Ararume and Ohakim come from; Mbaise, the stronghold of both Ihedioha and Anyanwu; and Owerri zone, where Agbaso, Iheanacho, and many others who may not be very prominent now hold sway.

In Rivers state, the key actors have remained APC and PDP politicians and their followers. The 23 local government areas of the state are hotspots for possible violence before, during and after the elections. Communities where ex-militants reside such as Okrika, could be prone to violence during campaigns and the elections. Ogba-Egbema, Abua, Obio-Akpor, Port Harcourt, Ogu-Bolo, Ikwerre, Emohua, Asaritoru, Akukutoru, Degema, Eleme, Khana, Eleme, and Ndoni local government areas are specific areas to watch for violence.

States to watch closely for violence in the South West ahead of the elections are Oyo, Ogun, Osun and Ekiti States. In Oyo, the potential for conflict is high because of the present strength of three political parties' viz. APC, Accord and PDP. Oyo traditionally has history of electoral violence and with the determination of the opposition parties to wrestle power from incumbent

Governor Abiola Ajimobi an epic battle of intrigues and political tension is unraveling. Towns and cities to closely monitor for violence in Oyo State include Ibadan, Ogbomoso, Oyo and Saki.

In Ogun, the defections of APC state and federal lawmakers into opposition PDP and SDP parties has increased political tension in the Gateway State. The frosty relationship between the Governor, Ibikunle Amosun and his estranged deputy, Prince Segun Adesegun and the decampment of APC Chieftain and former governor, Chief Segun Osoba to SDP are ill-wind that has put the return of Governor Ibikunle Amosun to Oke Imosan government house in 2015 in jeopardy. Some of the towns to watch closely are Abeokuta, Ijebu-Igbo, Sagamu, Ilaro and other part of Yewa-land. In Osun, the election petition tribunal has commenced smooth operations after the initial hiccups which have led to the disbandment of two previous tribunals earlier set up to hear the PDP petition against the APC in the August 9 governorship election. The current three man panel is headed by Hon. Justice Elizabeth Ikpejime. All is said to be calm in the state as at now. However, some towns to watch for violence include Ile-Ife, Ilesa, Ede and Iwo.

The scenario in Ekiti is frightening. The state governor Ayo Fayose has heightened the political space of the state to take control of the State House of Assembly. Tensions in the state are caused by his misconduct.⁹ Towns to watch for violence are Ado, Emure, Afao, Ikere and Ikole-Ekiti The signal here is Red.

The major challenge in Lagos state is the unhealthy rivalry between APC and PDP. The two dominant party in the state are at daggers drawn fighting proxy wars by using street gangs to unleash terror against each other's supporters. Beyond that, PDP in the state is also factionalised into Chief Bode George and Senator Musliu Obanikoro's camps. Both camps have been throwing verbal missiles at each other.

⁹ <http://www.punchng.com/news/ekiti-reopens-murder-case-against-apc-chairman/>

Since Governor Olusegun Mimiko of Ondo State decamped from Labour Party to PDP on October 2, 2014, there has been a lot of brouhaha in the Ondo State PDP. The executive of the party before the coming of the governor and his lieutenants as well as aspirants to various elective positions had been resisting the takeover of the party by the new joiners. They have gone to court to ward off the dissolution of the executives while the November 1 Ward congress of the PDP in Ondo State had been greeted with a lot of complaints. Some aspirants are threatening to mobilise their supporters to cast protest vote against the party in 2015.

At a press conference on Sunday, November 16, the Chairman, Ondo PDP Aspirants Forum, Femi Adekanmbi said that a panel set up by the party's national body disqualified original members of the Ondo PDP from contesting political positions after the politicians had spent huge sums of money on their campaigns."¹⁰ The towns to watch out for violence here is Akure, Owo, Igbokoda, Ore and Ikare.

Police and government security forces

The defection of Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives heated the polity throughout the month of November. The refusal of the police to discontinue his recognition as the speaker and subsequent withdrawal of security details was welcomed in public space with mixed reactions. The alleged recruitment of Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) members to provide security for the speaker signals the danger of government continued abuse of security forces to intimidate and harass opposition. The invasion of the house of representative by police personnel and the subsequent attempt to prevent the speaker and members of the House of Rep from accessing the green chambers has further implicated the police as taking part with the ruling party. The IGP Abba Suleiman during his invitation by the house of Representatives committee on police to appear and explain the invasion of the National Assembly by the police was quoted by newspaper reports alleging his refusal to recognize Tambuwal as speaker but choose to address him as 'one Mr. Tambuwal'.

¹⁰ <http://www.punchng.com/news/2015-ondo-aspirants-threaten-to-work-against-pdp/>

Twice invasions of APC data Centre in Lagos by the State Security Service (SSS) and the subsequent refusal to release arrested officials in the invasion even after a court order has been criticized in different quarters. The opposition has used this complement their argument that the government is harassing its members and officials and described it as provocative. If this is placed side by side with the statement by the governor of River State, it could signal a time bomb waiting to explode.

Synthesis of Key Risk Factors

I. Boko Haram insurgency in the north east: Until the situation in the north east is addressed we cannot rule out the possibility of more attacks across the country. In the last three years, all the states in the north east and some parts of North West (Kano, Kaduna and Jigawa) have been attacked by Boko Haram. It is even more likely now that electioneering is fast picking up. Criminal elements and political party thugs can disguise as Boko Haram to perpetuate mayhem on opposition groups;

II. Partisanship of security institutions: There are strong cases of partisan control of security institutions in the country. The federal government has been partisan in its use of the police and the state security service. This could be major threat to security. As we get close to elections, the feeling of political repression could be major risk factors. The incidence of police invasion of the national assembly and how police supported a minority group to impeach the Speaker of Ekiti State house of Assembly is not only clear reflection of partisanship that also indicates the possibility of security agencies being compromised during the 2015 elections. In reaction to this, opposition states are setting up their own security outfits which could serve as counterforce to the federal security agencies. The leadership of APC led a peaceful demonstration to the police Headquarters in Abuja in respect of this.

III. Electoral manipulation: – Vote rigging or perceived rigging will be the major trigger of violence in the region especially the gubernatorial and Presidential elections. It was perceived vote rigging that triggered the 2011 post-election violence. It appears certain that vote rigging or perceived manipulation of the electoral will trigger violence in Kano, Kaduna and Katsina state;

IV. Deliberate attempt by INEC to disenfranchise many Nigerians through the PVC is an issue of great concern;

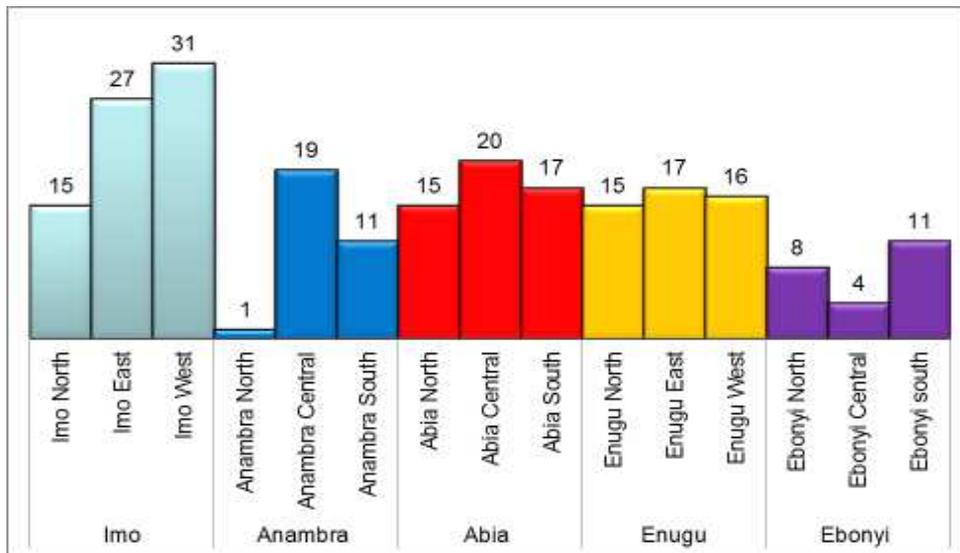
V. Increasing population of non-state actors;

VI. Increasing population of internally displaced persons;

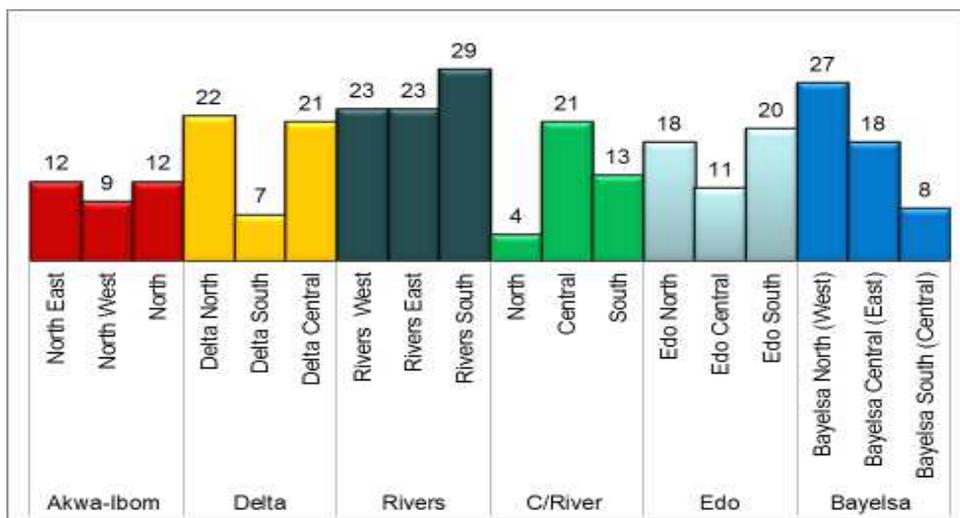
VII. Expanding sphere of Boko Haram's territory.

VIII. Politics of power shift: Contention over candidates including zoning of presidential or gubernatorial candidates. There are emerging contentions over where the President of the country should come from. This is a continuation of the controversy that preceded the 2011 election and has continued to shape the national politics since then. Like the situation in 2011, if the ruling elite fail to manage the situation properly, it could escalate into a huge national crisis. Similar situation are also emerging at the state level – senatorial districts within states are demanding for a fair share or taste of the governorship in Katsina, Kaduna, Sokoto and Kebbi state are states to watch in this regard. In Kebbi state for instance the tension between the southern and northern Senatorial district over the governorship seat is almost palpable. Similar situation can be observed in Katsina between Daura and Funtua zones.

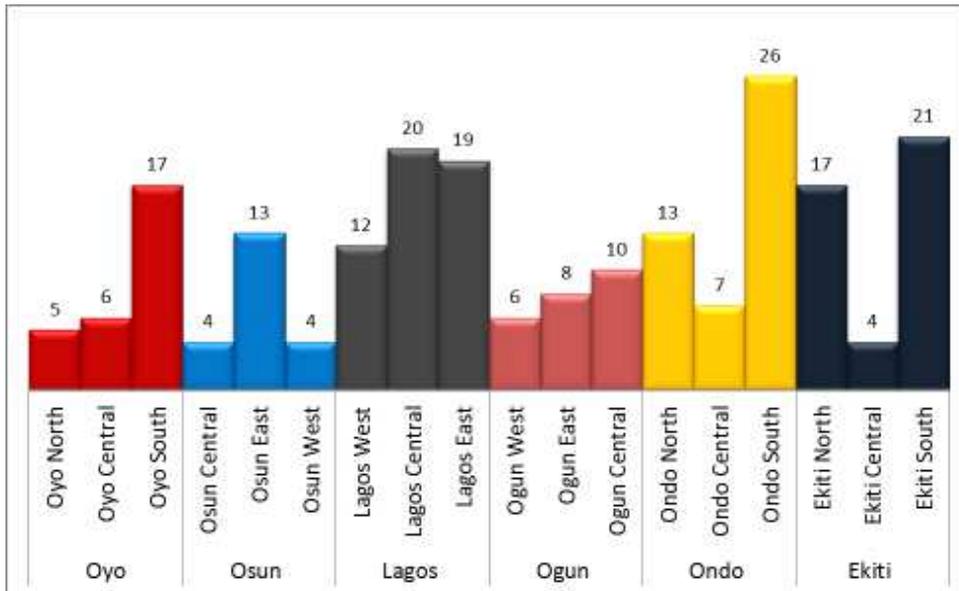
Possible Senatorial districts for violence:



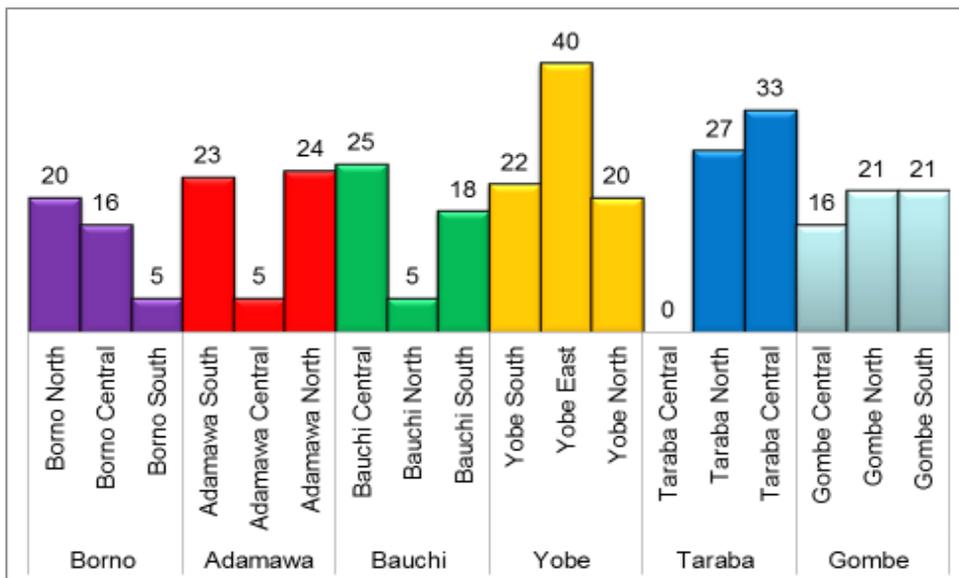
Data source is from CLEEN Foundation Election Viability Poll



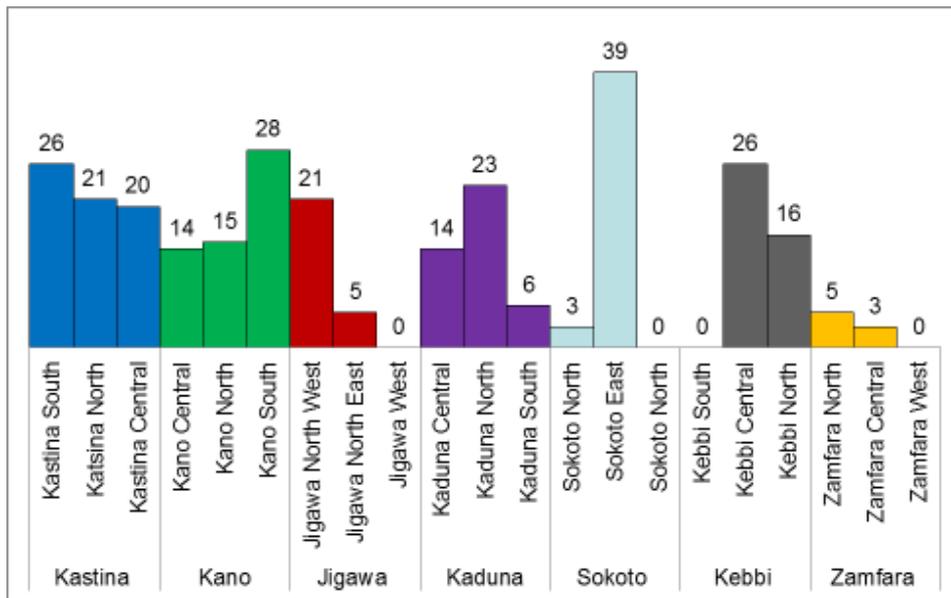
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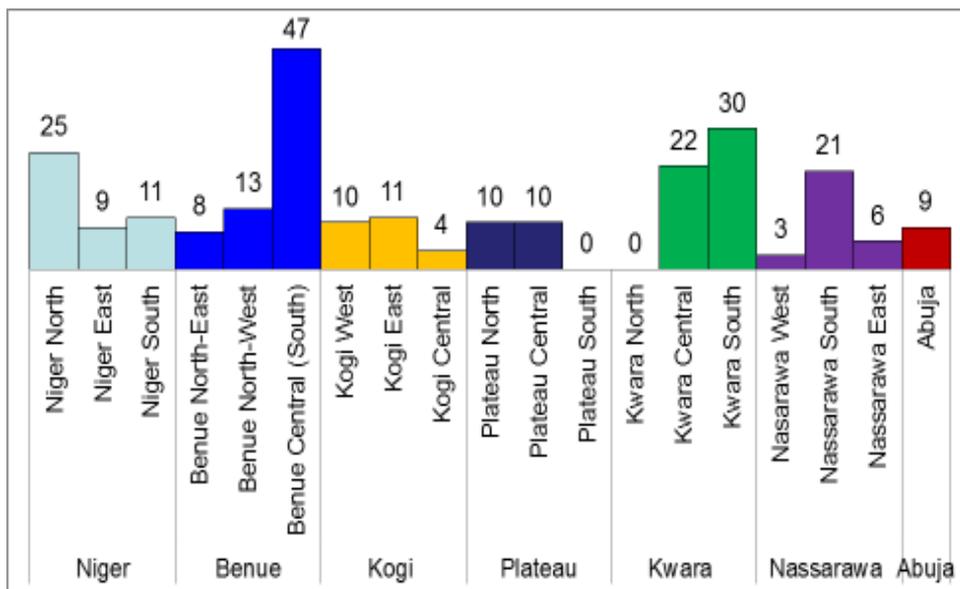
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Recommendations

To mitigate possible violence will require a nuanced understanding of the politics across the six geo-political zones and respond to some of the key concerns of the people.

- I. *PVC and Continues Voter Registration.* The increasing accusation of possible disenfranchisement by opposition political parties could be major threats to the election. INEC should respond to this with all seriousness. All the cases of missing data in voters registered should be addressed through extended continuous voter registration. INEC should ensure all registered voters received their PVC.

- II. *The electoral commission should ensure free, fair and credible election.* This can be achieved only if INEC commences early preparation for the elections. Some of these preparatory issues should include update of electoral laws, effective distribution of PVCs, update of voters register and training of ad hoc staff.

- III. *Political Parties and Inter party dialogue should be encouraged.* Although some of the gains are been reversed, Sokoto state government sets a good example a few months ago when it taken a number of steps to remove potential triggers and force candidates to adhere to agreed-upon norms. For example, in the North West, state officials banned the large campaign posters that have previously instigated fights between opposing supporters. Roundabouts were rented to banks for advertising space instead. Sustaining this initiative will require support from relevant quarters and replication in other states. Also, the PDP as a ruling party should be able to allow contestants to vie openly and be given the mandate instead of imposing candidates on the parties to the detriment of those others who had been spending their money and making efforts in the same direction.

- IV. *Election related stakeholders – including security agencies, INEC, political parties and civil society groups must work together in preparation for the 2015 election and mainstream conflict management in their plans.* A quarterly security

situation review can be very helpful to INEC, law enforcement agencies and CSOs.

- V. *The cases of violence in some parts of the country are partly reflection of the level of small arms.* Efforts should be made to reduce the level of small arms in the zone. It may be important to revisit the report of Presidential Committee on Small Arms and the Presidential committee on Post Elections violence. These committees have made useful recommendations on how to deal with these issues.
- VI. The electoral commission and relevant agencies should engage different stakeholders including youth groups, political parties, security agencies, religious leaders, traditional rulers and women on the need for violence free election.
- VII. The federal and state governments should intensify effort in addressing the Boko Haram insurgences to avoid disruption of election activities.
- VIII. The government and political parties should also encourage issues based politics and avoid religion and ethnic identity based mobilization.
- IX. *Public Enlightenment on Electoral Process:* Such enlightenment should educate the public on the difference between constitutional provisions of universal franchise and internal power sharing arrangements of parties. The risk of violence by aggrieved communities who feel cheated as result of outcomes that do not respect zoning arrangements of parties will be mitigated if citizens are informed that constitutional provisions override party arrangements.
- X. *Support for Robust Security Initiatives:* The state governments and security agencies should work to improve security at all the nooks and crannies of the States to forestall intimidation of voters and opposing party supporters. The creation of State-level Election Security Teams (SESTs) comprising various stakeholders like representatives of

political parties, security agencies, civil society organisations and labour unions, among others, will assist in providing a level playing grounds for electoral contests in the zone. There is need for tailored capacity building for security agencies in the States on election security and management ahead of the 2015 elections. Ensure impartial engagement of security agencies, build interagency collaboration including collaborating with state government instituted security bodies.

XI. *Elite Crisis Mitigating Interventions:* A key driver of violence is the zero-sum politics that have been linked to unsettled disagreement between political elites. Many of these conflicts are already brewing across States in the zone. It is necessary for some eminent persons with leverage to intervene to mediate in these conflicts as intra-party mediation mechanisms have been weakened by impunity.

XII. *Training of Journalists on Conflict Sensitive Reporting:* The manner the media has been reporting and is likely to report political rivalry and differences has implications for election security. A cursory examination of newspapers reveals high levels of sensationalism which if left unchecked could contribute to political or election-related violence. Media practitioners should be exposed to training on reporting of political conflicts to mitigate risk of their reports becoming triggers for violence.