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PRESS RELEASE
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U.S. and U.K Press Statements on Upcoming Nigerian Elections

U.S. Statement

[Begin]

The conduct of the upcoming elections in Nigeria is important not only for Nigeria, but for the African continent.

The United States government does not support any specific candidate or party in Nigeria's upcoming elections. The United States supports the Nigerian democratic process itself. We support a genuinely free, fair, transparent, and peaceful electoral process.

We, and other democratic nations, will be paying close attention to actions of individuals who interfere in the democratic process or instigate violence against the civilian population before, during, or after the elections. We will not hesitate to consider consequences - including visa restrictions - for those found to be responsible for election-related violence or undermining the democratic process. Under U.S. immigration law, certain violations may also lead to restrictions on family members.

We welcome the signing of peace pledges by Nigerian candidates and their commitment to a peaceful electoral process.
(End)

UK Statement

[Begin]

23 days to the Presidential and National Assembly elections and 37 days to the Gubernatorial and State Assembly elections, the British High Commission in Abuja would like to reaffirm our strong support for free, fair and peaceful elections in Nigeria.

We and our international partners remain committed supporters of Nigeria's democracy. We do not support any party or individual and believe that the Nigerian people should be able to choose their leaders in an environment free from hate speech and insecurity.

We continue to provide significant support to Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission and to Nigerian civil society to help them deliver credible elections. We also regularly engage with actors across the political spectrum to encourage them to respect electoral rules and maintain an atmosphere of peace and calm. We will be deploying an extensive

observation mission for the forthcoming elections, including coordinating with the EU's Election Observation Mission. Our monitors will in particular be looking out for any attempts to encourage or use violence to influence the elections, including on social media. We would like to remind all Nigerians that where the UK is aware of such attempts, this may have consequences for individuals. These could include their eligibility to travel to the UK, their ability to access UK based funds or lead to prosecution under international law.

The UK is a friend and partner of Nigeria. We hope our continued support will play a role in helping Nigeria take a further step towards consolidating the progress made since democracy returned in 1999. [End]

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Relevant information about U.S. policies and programs in Nigeria can be found on our websites:
<http://nigeria.usembassy.gov> and www.usaid.gov/ng

