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PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

February 25, 2019
PR-006/2019

**Statement by U.S. Ambassador W. Stuart Symington on the
Nigerian Elections**

I congratulate the tens of millions of Nigerians who stood patiently in long lines to vote this week and the hundreds of thousands who worked together with INEC to conduct the elections. As noted by many observer groups in their preliminary reports, this election was predominantly peaceful, and it was proof of the Nigerian people's resolute commitment to choose their leaders. The peaceful achievement of millions was shadowed by the violence of a few. We extend our deepest sympathy to the families of those who lost their lives, and we urge all candidates to honor the Peace Accord they signed. All should convince those who support them to refrain from using force or violence to interfere with INEC. No one should break the law by announcing results before INEC does, or break the peace by claiming victory before the results are final. Everyone has a common interest in showing patience as INEC collates and announces the election results.

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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*