

Statement on Elections in Nigeria

May 4, 2011

This morning I called President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria to congratulate him on his election victory and to commend the people of Nigeria for their resolve and patience during last month's historic Presidential, legislative, and gubernatorial elections. The success of the elections was a testament to Nigerian voters who waited in long lines, stayed to watch their votes counted, and were determined that these elections mark a new chapter in Nigerian history. Credit also belongs to the Independent National Electoral Commission, the National Youth Service Corps, and Nigeria's vibrant civil society, all of which must play a role in ensuring that the final results reflect the will of the Nigerian people and that Nigerian authorities investigate and address any allegations of fraud or irregularities.

While the majority of Nigerians cast their ballots free from intimidation and coercion, the postelection violence that followed the Presidential election on April 16 was deplorable. Violence has no place in a democratic society, and it is the responsibility of all Nigerians to reject it. Democracy, however, neither begins nor ends with elections. Now is the time for Nigeria's leaders and its people to come together and build the future that they deserve, a multiparty democracy that addresses the aspirations of all Nigerians, especially its youth, who did so much to make the recent elections a success and who will define the nation's future.

As Africa's most populous country, Nigeria can show what is possible when people of different parties, ethnicities, and faith backgrounds come together to seek peace, provide for their families, and give their children a better future. Today, Nigerians have an historic opportunity to move forward together and make their nation into a model for Africa. As I told President Jonathan, I look forward to strengthening our partnership with Nigeria so that this and future generations of Nigerians can live in peace, democracy, and prosperity.

Categories: Statements by the President : Nigeria, elections.

Names: Jonathan, Goodluck.

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