

Presidential and Gubernatorial Elections in the Fourth Republic

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Introduction

One of the key features of an emergent democratic system is the institutions that are established and constitute the respective parts of the entire system. Elections and institutions that carry out electoral processes are not only central to the entire democratic system, but also attract significant attention because they facilitate the process of legitimising leadership. This they do through voting processes and through also facilitating the systematic acquisition and transfer of political power. This chapter focuses on the presidential and gubernatorial elections that have taken place since Nigeria returned to civil rule in 1999, and the governance impacts of the emergent administrations. In doing this, the chapter is divided into two broad sections with the first focusing on an overview of elections from 1999, and the second examining the impact of the civilian administrations in respect of governance.

Elections 1999-2007

Following the death of Gen. Abacha, the military strongman who seized power from the Interim National Government in Nigeria in November 1993, the pace of political change in the country became very rapid. The country witnessed the legalisation and creation of political parties, vast improvements in the level of press freedom and political competition and the completion of four rounds of elections. Indeed, the initial transition toward civilian rule, which was completed with General Obasanjo's swearing in as elected President on 29 May 1999, took less than a year from the day the transition began.

The 1998-99 transition occurred without a constitutional framework or a genuine public debate about the nation's constitutional future.

On assumption of power in June 1998, Abubakar had announced that a new Constitution would be made public before the December local government elections. It was to be based on the 1995 Constitution drafted under the Abacha administration, but never released to the public. Abubakar later announced the setting-up of the Constitution Debate Coordinating Committee (CDCC) to organise a public debate, and recommend a new Constitution. General Abubakar also handpicked the members of CDCC which conducted all of its work behind closed doors (Momoh and Thovoethen 2001:4-9).

In December, the CDCC recommended the adoption of the 1979 Constitution with some amendments based on the 1995 draft Constitution. The Abubakar administration, however, never formally announced that the CDCC's recommendations would be implemented. Calls from civil society groups and political leaders to hold a public constitutional debate were ignored. The government also dismissed widespread calls to hold a Sovereign National Conference (SNC) that would address fundamental political issues undermining the Nigerian state.

Throughout the election period the military government relied on decrees and ad-hoc regulations to guide the transition process. In August 1998, Abubakar issued Decree No. 17 which established the Independent National Election Commission. At the national level during the transition, INEC appeared to have developed some reputation for neutrality and fairness, despite the fact that its members were appointed without public input or scrutiny. At the state level however, some of its officials were seen as partisan supporters of the military government or a given political party. Also while INEC issued rules to guide the electoral process it often released rules governing each round of elections just days before the vote, and never adequately addressed many important issues (Momoh and Thovoethen 2001:19).

The first major task carried out by INEC was to conduct a national voter's registration exercise. Registration held from 5 to 19 October and experienced logistical problems which would later hamper INEC's election efforts at virtually every stage. Shortages of materials, delays in the opening of registration centres, poorly trained officials, and attempts by political party agents to manipulate the process were rife. The poor registration exercise lay at the root of many subsequent problems during the transition and created opportunities for fraud.

With respect to political parties, INEC established strict registration conditions. To compete in local elections, political parties were required to set up and maintain offices in 24 of the 36 states and demonstrate an ethnic and regional mix in each party's leadership. To continue the transition process, parties initially were required to obtain at least 10 per cent of the vote in 24 states during local government elections. This figure later changed to 5 per cent, with a caveat that at least three parties would advance to the later three rounds of elections. This

set of regulations actually set the stage for intense competition between parties to attract and retain prominent politicians, potential candidates, and financial backers, especially in parts of the country where support for the parties was weak. With no regulations for campaign finance, parties competed vigorously for wealthy, well-connected, and sometimes dubious individuals to fund campaigns out of their own pockets (Momoh and Thovoethen 2001:19).

Most of the parties were hastily formed and suffered from a general lack of experience and ideological clarity. Perhaps the lack of ideological disputation amongst them subsequently could be attributed to the fact that they all more or less subscribe to the neo-liberal ideology. As a result, carpet crossing and shifting allegiances emerged during the transition process. However, the more established parties such as the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All People's Party (APP) drew upon political machinery that were already in place from past elections to give them some advantage in mobilising financial and political support.

1999 Gubernatorial Elections

On 9 January 1999, Governorship and Houses of Assembly elections were held nationwide. The results largely reflected the pattern that the local government elections had taken earlier in which the PDP had the vast majority of chairmanship and councillorship seats nationwide. In the gubernatorial elections, the PDP maintained its lead by winning twenty governorship seats. The APP won nine governorship seats and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) dominated the southwest by winning in six south-western states. Elections into the State Houses of Assembly also showed the same pattern of victory by the political parties.

This was followed by the National Assembly elections which took place on 20 February 1999. The PDP also maintained its lead thereby winning 69 senatorial seats and the majority of the seats in the House of Representatives elections. It was followed by the APP which won 21 senatorial seats and had a considerable number of seats in the House of Representatives. The AD maintained its third position by winning 19 senatorial seats and the least number of seats in the House of Representatives. The major upset came with the AD winning two senatorial and two House of Representatives seats in Enugu State, one of the PDP strongholds in the eastern part of the country (Momoh and Thovoethen 2001:25).

The 1999 Presidential Elections

As a result of the electoral dominance of the PDP in all the elections held, the scene was set for an easy victory for any presidential candidate presented by that party. In anticipation of this the AD and APP developed an alliance to checkmate the antics of the PDP. Chief Olu Falae was selected as the joint presidential candidate of the AD and the APP hoping that he would be the right candidate to counter the stature

of Obasanjo, the PDP flag-bearer. As it turned out, both presidential candidates were from the south-western part of the country, a novel development in Nigeria.

The presidential election took place on 27 February 1999. There was a low turnout in most parts of the country. The day after the election, international observers invited by the government to allay fears of bias estimated the voter turnout to be about 20 per cent. The election results announced by INEC, however, placed the turnout at between thirty and 40 per cent. A number of the election observer groups such as those from the United States, the European Union and the Commonwealth, reported that they observed a wide discrepancy between voters seen at the polling stations and results that were announced. Although this was indicative of rigging and inflation of voters, it was not assumed to have been serious enough to affect the overall outcome of the election.

However, the result of the presidential election confirmed the trend that had emerged since the inception of the transition programme which was the dominance of the PDP in most states and zones of the federation. At the end, the PDP candidate, General Obasanjo, won 18,738,015 votes representing 62.78 per cent of the votes cast. On the other hand, Chief Olu Falae of the AD/APP alliance won 11,140,287 votes representing 37.22 per cent of the total votes cast. An analysis of the outcome of the 1999 presidential election shows that the PDP won in five of the nation's six geopolitical zones, conceding only the south-western to the rival APP/AD alliance. This distribution did not elicit surprise, though, because in all the previous elections of the transition programme the PDP had consistently lost the southwest by a wide margin to the AD (Momoh and Thovoethen 2001:29).

In the post-election analysis, electoral observers reported a number of irregularities that had been seen. For example, observers reported instances of ballot box stuffing, including polling sites where INEC officials or party agents illegally printed multiple ballots with their own thumbs. In some states in the South South zone, actual voter turnouts were significantly lower than the official tally. In some states delegates estimated that less than 10 per cent of registered voters cast ballots, but official turnout rates for those same states exceeded 85 per cent. Many individual polling sites recorded that all 500 registered voters had cast ballots when observers actually saw fewer than 100 people there during the day.

Other significant developments included the altering of results. In many instances observers recorded low numbers of accredited voters at polling stations, sometimes less than 10 per cent of the registered voters. During the counting or collation process later in the day, they found that these same polling stations reported considerably higher numbers, sometimes even 100 per cent of the registered voters. Usually the voters at these polling stations were mainly or entirely for a single party. At many polling stations it appeared that the party agents and polling officials were involved in the malpractice. As a consequence of the numerous discrepancies

detected by observers, widespread criticism of the entire electoral process was generated. Indeed, Chief Olu Falae, using this as basis for contention, rejected the results of the election which he eventually challenged in a court of law. This did not stop the outcome of the presidential election from being upheld and General Olusegun Obasanjo from being sworn in as President on 29 May 1999 (Momoh and Thovoethen 2001:6-9; Ihonvbere 1999; Enemuo 1999:3-7).

Given the sophistication of the Nigerian electorate (Mackintosh, 1966), it could be argued that the PDP may have retained central power all these years largely through systematic, large-scale election rigging and by manipulating INEC.

The 2003 Elections

With the 1999 elections having successfully taken place and provided a starting point for Nigerian democracy, there were heightened concerns over the prospects of an election that would constitute the basis for leadership succession given that second elections tend to be problematic on the African political terrain. Thus the 2003 elections were seen as an important step on the path towards the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

However, from inception questions were raised about the ability of INEC to accurately register millions of voters, administer well over 100,000 polling stations, and supervise and train roughly half a million election workers. This was in view of the fact that INEC had failed to make adequate use of the preceding four years, after the previous elections, to improve its organisational capabilities. INEC started late and carried out what was regarded as its most important task, that of voter registration, in a very shoddy manner. A complete computerised registry of voters which would serve as a basis for all subsequent elections in Nigeria would have been a major accomplishment in the strengthening of the country's electoral system. Instead, the entire exercise was marred with allegations of fraud, manipulation and poor organisation (IRI 2003:12 – 20).

The entire registration process was an exercise that stretched the organisational capabilities of INEC to breaking point. As at the time of the first election on 12 April 2003, INEC had yet to compile a comprehensive national voters' registry from which citizens could confirm their registration. The absence of such a registry delayed the distribution of permanent voter registration cards. Confusion, therefore, surrounded the initial registration process in September 2002, thereby leaving room for fraud, chaos and various forms of malpractices. Out of an estimated 80 million registration forms that were distributed to 120,000 registration centres, only 67 million could be accounted for at the conclusion of the process. Indeed, it has been argued that the poorly administered registration process was a contributory factor to the eventual low voter turnout in many parts of the country on election days (IRI 2003:12 – 20).

In addition to the shoddy manner of election administration, INEC could not escape accusations of not maintaining standards of impartiality. By law, INEC officials are not supposed to exhibit any particular political affiliation. According to the Federal Government of Nigeria, qualified and unbiased personnel were sought for appointment into INEC; however, given the heated nature of the political campaign period, it was difficult for INEC to escape accusations of partiality and bias in favour of the ruling political party, PDP. Matters were not helped by the fact that only a week before the National Assembly election, President Obasanjo and leaders of the PDP had a meeting with INEC officials which did not have members of the opposition parties in attendance. The absence of opposition leaders further fuelled speculation and criticism regarding the true motives behind the meeting (IRI 2003:12 – 20).

The political environment that enveloped the campaigns at that time was becoming increasingly characterised by a breakdown of public order. There were numerous incidents of criminality, ethnic and religious strife as well as acts of political thuggery. In the weeks preceding the elections, major international oil companies operating in Nigeria evacuated all their personnel from the country and shutdown nearly 40 per cent of Nigerian oil production in response to attacks by armed groups of militant youth, which continued despite the deployment of federal troops. All these were happening at the same time as communal conflicts between some ethnic groups. Newspapers regularly reported on violence between various ethnic communities that resulted in loss of lives. Some of the states within the federation were declared by President Obasanjo as being politically volatile, thereby necessitating the deployment of troops.

The fact that politically motivated forms of violence and killings persisted during the campaign period was of serious concern to many. The killing of Dr. Marshall Harry, a regional campaign coordinator for the ANPP, was an incident that shocked the country as a whole. Harry's death was one among a number of killings that were politically motivated and occurred during the period of election campaigns. Party offices were often destroyed and opposing party members hounded or killed. Quite interesting was the fact that police appeared to be completely incapable of solving the murders. It was in response to the growing incidence of violence that the Federal Government instructed that leaders of at least 23 political parties should sign an electoral code of conduct compelling the parties to refrain from engaging in electoral violence during the campaign and election. The need for such an agreement, however, was an indication of the extent to which violence had influenced and marred the country's political process (NLC 2003; Iyayi 2003; Jeter 2003; Nwabueze 2003; Akpan 2003; Yusuf 2003).

Despite the relatively unsettled political environment, the election campaign was vigorously conducted in many parts of the country. Parties advertised widely through the use of print and electronic media, regardless of the fact that many

opposition parties complained of biased treatment from state-owned media outlets. The presidential and gubernatorial elections took place on 19 April 2003. It was observed that relatively few problems emerged that were directly related to voter registration lists or voter identification. During the elections, however, cases of electoral irregularities regarding ballot box security were reported. The ballot boxes were not mechanically locked or sealed and could easily be tampered with. In a number of states, incidents of ballot box stuffing and the falsification of results were reported. The incidence of electoral malpractices continued right up to the point of collation of results where, in some cases, voting workers entirely ignored their responsibility to count their ballots and record their results, instead filled ballot boxes were delivered directly to the collation centres. Nevertheless, the results of the 19 April 2003 presidential election secured another four-year term for Obasanjo and Atiku Abubakar, his deputy. The PDP, the party under whose banner they contested, won a total of 24,456,140 votes nationwide, making up 61.99 per cent of the overall votes according to overall Presidential Election Result (*see The Guardian* of 23 January 2003).

The 2007 Elections

The 2007 elections were the third to be held since the reintroduction of democracy in 1999. The elections were considered to be very critical because, apart from providing a platform to test the commitment of the Nigerian authorities to the strengthening and consolidation of democracy, it was also the second time that power would be transferred from one civilian president to another, after the botched transfer in 1983, when General Buhari and his supporters removed Shehu Shagari through the 31 December *coup d'état*.

The build-up to the election, however, was not helped by a number of factors that featured in the polity at the time. Chief among these was the political feud between President Obasanjo and his Vice-President Abubakar Atiku which featured exchanges of accusations and counter-accusations of various forms of wrongdoing. INEC had initially disqualified Atiku from participating in the elections but this was later overturned by the Federal High Court only five days before the elections. The immediate effect was to create added logistical problems for INEC. However, with very strong political support from Obasanjo, Umaru Yar'Adua, the Governor of Katsina State, won the PDP nomination as the party's flag bearer (EU 2007; Human Rights Watch 2007; Ibrahim 2007).

The ANPP contested the elections with Muhammadu Buhari as its presidential candidate, just as it did in 2003. The presidential candidates representing the major parties all came from the north while their vice-presidential candidates were from the southern part of the country (Goodluck Jonathan for PDP from Bayelsa State; Ben Obi for AC from Abia State; and Edwin Ume-Ezeoke for ANPP from Anambra State).

As with earlier elections, organisational problems weighed very heavily on INEC. Increasingly, it became clear that INEC was not operating in an autonomous capacity, away from federal government influence. This contributed towards undermining confidence in INEC among political parties, civil society and the wider public. INEC lacked transparency and failed to provide information on a number of important issues such as the final number of candidates, the final number of voters per constituency, and the final number of ballot papers that had been printed and distributed.

The decision by the Supreme Court on 11 April to allow Abubakar Atiku to participate in the election only five days to the election meant that INEC had to print and redistribute some 70 million ballot papers before the 21 April election. Indeed, the ballot papers, which were printed in South Africa, arrived in Nigeria only one day before the election, triggering a logistical nightmare of delays, disruptions and cancellations in some wards (Iwu 2008a; Iwu 2008b).

The campaign process was quite vibrant, sending the respective candidates and their supporters to different parts of the country. An intrinsic problem with the entire campaign process, however, was the absence of a level playing field among the parties with specific access to resources. While the Electoral Act 2006, in Article 103, stipulates that 'state apparatus, including the media, shall not be employed to the advantage or disadvantage of any political party or candidate at any election', incumbent parties at federal and state levels took advantage over other political parties by using state resources that were attached to their offices to support their campaigns. The abuse of state resources covered the use of state finances, media, civil servants, aid programmes and infrastructure. The Electoral Act also provides for the allocation of annual public funds to political parties. However, it was claimed by a number of the small parties that the distribution of grants was not made in accordance with criteria specified in the law. In some cases, the claim by the parties was that they did not receive the correct amounts of money that was due to them while in others the claim was that they were not given grants at all.

In addition to the abuse of resources, violence had been a recurring decimal in Nigeria's political terrain and the 2007 elections proved to be no different in this regard. Violence was a major issue of concern throughout the election process. In several states, incidents of violence increased as the elections drew nearer. There were numerous reports of killings resulting from political violence perpetrated by thugs. Most parties were united in accusing the PDP of being the main party using the financial resources to hire thugs. However, it was in fact a practice that was carried out by virtually all the parties. Overall, however, the violence experienced in the build-up to the 2007 election seemed to be much less in terms of spread and intensity than what was experienced in the 2003 election (Makanju 2007: 65; Human Rights Watch 2007:67; Nwabueze 2007: 20 -24).

Overview of Democratic Governance in Nigeria 1999-2009

From 1999, when Nigeria returned to democracy, 'good governance' has been the operational mantra upon which successive civil administrations, at both federal and state levels, have hinged their governance. The civilian administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo took a step towards halting social and political degradation which the country had been subjected to due to the military incursion in governance. The years of military rule were characterised by arbitrariness, massive corruption, abuse of human rights, gagging of the press, favouritism and entronement of mediocrity (Igbuzor 2005:78). In trying to do this, the new civilian administration decided to introduce a number of programmes and strategies to reform the political, economic and social spheres of Nigerian life which were in various states of decay and disintegration (Aligan 2008). There have been visible gains to the Nigerian polity as a consequence of these initial efforts. There is now increased respect for civil and political rights, improvement in the remuneration of public sector workers, improvement in some public utilities such as telecommunications, access to internet facilities, access to health care facilities through the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), improved road networks in some states of the federation, improved funding of the education sector and a sustained investment in the power sector. Others are in the areas of tackling corruption, improved economy, sustained fight against HIV & AIDS and other deadly diseases, increased level of security, increased employment opportunities, etc. Some of these issues will be discussed in turn in an attempt to give a sweeping assessment of the gains of democratic governance in Nigeria since 1999.

Since the return of democracy, the country has witnessed remarkable gains in its fight against corruption, which is not only one of the major hindrances to development in many countries but also antithetical to good governance (Adefuye 2008: 8). In its fight against corruption, the government established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2000 to combat the activities of fraudsters and public office holders who enrich themselves with public funds. This institution and others such as the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Code of Conduct Tribunal are fighting and gradually, but steadily making an impact in the anti-corruption war which has not only enhanced the credibility of the country, but has also marginally improved the quality of governance and curtailed the wastage of government resources (Aligan 2008:90).

The administration also set up its home-grown strategy for eradicating poverty by establishing the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS). These strategies were replicated at the state and local government levels as SEEDS and LEEDS, respectively, which are all aimed at improving the level of development and reducing poverty in Nigeria. However, with the benefit of hindsight, and the increase in population growth in Nigeria, this does not appear to have significantly reduced poverty in the country.

The banking sub-sector of the economy received a turn-around with the banking reforms embarked upon by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) under the auspices of the bank consolidation exercise. In this reform, the capital base of each commercial bank was increased to a minimum of N25 billion. This was aimed at increasing investor confidence in Nigerian banks and also boosting the capacity of the banks to guarantee loan facilities to both individuals and corporate entities. The insurance sub-sector also got a turnaround but with a smaller capital base of N5 billion.

Within this period the country also witnessed another round of privatisation. Series of policies were introduced such as liberalisation of the downstream sector of the petroleum sub-sector, as well as privatisation and monetisation policies. Under the privatisation policy, the telecommunications sub-sector became privatised with the licensing of three major Global Systems Mobile telecommunication (GSM) companies in February 2000. This privatisation exercise saw the subscriber base grow from about 400,000 lines to about 21 million lines (Aligan 2008:90). Other government-owned companies that were privatised saved the country money and brought money into the coffers of the government. In 2005 alone, the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE) contributed N20 billion in earnings into the Federal Government account.

In the health sector, the fight against HIV & AIDS and other diseases has received a tremendous boost since 1999. The prevalence rate of HIV & AIDS rose from 3.8 per cent in 1993 to 4.5 per cent in 1998. The civilian administration from 1999 ensured that HIV prevention, treatment and care became one of the government's primary concerns. The National Agency for the Control of HIV & AIDS (NACA) was established in the period under review, specifically in February 2000 and in 2001 the government established the HIV & AIDS Emergency Action Plan (HEAP). Through these efforts, the prevalence rate fell to the current level which is now about 2.5 per cent. This is low when seen in relation to the size of the population of the country. There has also been an increase in the number of medical centres all over the country. Health pandemics such as polio have received great attention. The government was able to mobilise international donor organisations to assist in the fight against polio with the most recent and prominent being the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This foundation pledged the sum of US\$75 million for 2009 alone for the eradication of polio in Nigeria (Daily Trust 17 February 2009).

The Security sector has also been given a boost with the establishment of the Police Equipment Fund (PEF). This fund was meant to cater for the proper equipping of the Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies. The PEF is known to have equipped security agencies like the police, military, state security service, among others with state-of-the-art equipment. These, however, have not translated into improved security for the country. In fact, in the period under review, the country witnessed high profile cases of assassinations and killings, to

the extent that an incumbent Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Chief Bola Ige, was killed in his house. Added to this list is Marshall Harry, Chief Dikibo and the incessant breach of peace and communal conflicts in Kaduna, Plateau, Kano and Bauchi States where thousands of lives were lost and properties worth millions were also destroyed. There was a reported increase in the rate of highway robberies due to the influx of small arms into the country.

The Niger Delta crisis is being addressed with the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the creation of the Ministry for Niger Delta Affairs. These two organs have increased the tempo of development in terms of infrastructure, employment and rehabilitation in the Niger Delta. Also, the recent grant of amnesty by the Federal Government to the militants in the creeks is an added bonus for democracy and good governance in the country. The amnesty granted the Niger Delta militants in particular has significantly reduced the extent of militancy in the region, and may have helped finally in charting a path to development in the region in the short term. This notwithstanding, overall, many Nigerians have not had any experience of the dividends of democracy .

In spite of the above measures characterised by the establishment of a host of new institutions, it is important to point out that in broad terms, the performance of the two civilian regimes of Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Umaru Yar'Adua did not meet the wishes and aspirations of Nigerians. Events and circumstances, such as the invasion of Odi, the continued militarisation of the Niger Delta, the killings of innocent civilians in the Jos crises, widespread poverty and unemployment have left much to be desired. The murder of innocent people, assassinations, robbery and general sense of insecurity in the country are deficiencies in the country's governance. The government needs to do more in the areas of social provisioning in terms of security, food, potable water, fuel, electricity, good transport system, and affordable education for its citizenry.

The Way Forward

For Nigeria and indeed Nigerians to feel the impact of democracy or the much-talked about dividends of democracy, certain fundamental issues need to be addressed more vigorously and sincerely. These include the following: Corruption – Corruption is perhaps the greatest problem confronting Nigeria. Since the advent of this democratic dispensation, as noted earlier, efforts have been made to fight corruption without this yielding the desired results. The establishment of the EFCC has been a step in the right direction but unless there is a sincere and sustained fight, the problem of corruption will continue to spread deep into the fabric of the Nigerian society. Indeed in many quarters there is doubt about the sincerity of the fight against corruption. The question people ask is whether the campaign against corruption is targeted against the opponents of the ruling elite or whether it is applicable to all who fall foul of extant anti-corruption laws. The

recently removed Attorney-General and Minister of Justice practically sought to paralyse the EFCC by asking it (EFCC) to obtain approval from his office before embarking on the prosecution of offenders. This gives the impression that the anti-corruption crusade is a platform for public posturing and grandstanding.

Transparency in Governance – Closely linked with corruption is transparency in governance. According to democratic ethos, the process of governance should be transparent and open. This will help to curtail sharp and unethical practices. The era in which governance is shrouded in secrecy should be done away with. In this regard, Nigerians continue to canvass that the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill before the National Assembly be passed into law despite veiled opposition from the executive itself. The FOI Bill was finally passed into law on 28 May 2011, but the challenge has remained its implementation at the various levels of governance.

Strengthening of Institutions – Because of the long years of military rule, certain institutions were affected. Worst hit are the legislature, which is antithetical to military rule and has been non-existent, as well as the judiciary. Other institutions such as the electoral commission, human rights, police and even the armed forces were severely compromised during the long years of military rule. These institutions, in addition to others that have been weakened through corrupt and unconventional practices, need to be developed to help entrench a sound system of democracy and good governance.

Infrastructure – The state of infrastructural decay all over the country is lamentable. Policies need to be formulated and implemented to solve the issues confronting the people. The era of paying lip service to these issues must stop forthwith. Words need to be matched with action. Roads, schools, transportation, security, housing and employment needs of the people must be addressed.

Conclusion

Despite the problems that have underpinned elections in Nigeria, the fact is that a democratic political system has been introduced and efforts should be made to consolidate it primarily by way of ensuring good governance. This is the only premise upon which development can be attained. Democracy upholds the tenets of good governance. These include public accountability, transparency, predictability of government behaviour, adherence to the rule of law, and the sound management of national resources, among other things (Obadan and Edo 2007: 38). So far, some of the signs, although not all, are encouraging; back-to-back elected civilian leadership, prospective educational reforms, an increasingly independent judiciary and economic gains, increase in foreign reserves, debt cancellation, rising GDP and sound fiscal management; all these are good signs, although unemployment still remains high. Also, Nigeria is strengthening the rule of law. There has been a concerted action by the government in recent times, strongly supported by the

vocal civil society, against corruption and backed by determined leadership. If these actions are sustained, then, Nigeria is on the march towards achieving good governance and reaping the benefits of democratic elections.

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