



## 10 KEY POINTS FROM THE PUBLIC LAUNCH OF THE ELECTORAL FORUM

The Electoral Forum is an initiative of The Electoral Hub, an organ of the Initiative for Research, Innovation and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD), with the support of the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA). The Forum, chaired by Professor Bayo Olukoshi, pools resource persons from electoral management bodies together with other electoral stakeholders to conceptualise solutions to the unique problems facing the electoral process in Nigeria. The public launch of The Electoral Forum was conducted on Tuesday, 31 August 2021, at Grand Pela Hotels and Suites.

### The following are ten key points from the launch of the Forum:

- 1. Senator Ovie Omo-Agege**, Deputy President of the Nigerian Senate, represented by Barrister Daniel Bwala, posited that a good electoral process can only be sustained if it is founded on an equally adequate electioneering culture. He argued that no matter how good the clauses are in our electoral laws, if the other aspects of the electioneering process are flawed, the electoral process itself will ultimately be flawed.
- 2. Professor Mahmood Yakubu**, Chairman of INEC, represented by Barrister May Agbamuche-Mbu, formally launched the Forum. He expressed a commitment that INEC would continue to improve on its processes for more transparent and credible elections, just like it did recently with the introduction of the Election Result Viewing Portal and the expansion of polling units.
- 3. Professor Attahiru Jega**, former Chairman of INEC, explained that parties should be focused on the long haul, not just 2023. He explained that change cannot be immediate, as we need incremental positive changes. He posited that if good people get together and organise well, we can begin to change the trajectory of politics in Nigeria.
- 4. Dr Kole Shettima**, Africa Director of MacArthur Foundation, stated that the Forum would be a good contribution because it provides a platform to tap into the rich knowledge and experiences of Forum members. He expressed hope that the quality of our governance will improve as members engage system and process of governance.



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**5. Dr Leonard Nzenwa**, Chairman of the Inter-Party Advisory Council, explained that the tendency to continually blame one particular stakeholder in this system will not help the political system. He argued that we are first Nigerians before becoming party members, so we need to change our mentality.

**6. Professor Adebayo Olukoshi**, Chairman of The Electoral Forum, explained that elections play an important role in democratic processes and our experience in Nigeria points to this fact. He pointed out, however, that elections have also been called into question, given the failure especially in the African continent to make a connection between elections and the dividends of democracy.

**7. Ms Catherine Angai**, Programme Manager, Democracy and Accountability, OSIWA, stated that it is important to make a link between elections, election administration and democratic progress. She posited that there is a direct link between the credibility of elections and the quality of citizens' participation.

**8. Professor Jibrin Ibrahim**, Senior Fellow, Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), explained that the story of the Nigerian political class from 1979 till date has been one of factionalism, fractionalism, fratricidal struggle, and killings. He posited that political revolution, that is, political transformation that is people-centric and issue-focused, will only come when Nigerian citizens decide to change the political class, form their own parties with people of integrity, and change the playing ground.

**9. Professor Adele Jinadu**, a Senior Fellow in CDD, stated that we must emphasise the role of intellectuals in making policy, and intellectuals must be policy engaged. He stated that beyond just changing the legal framework, we must also be concerned about the nature of society and the environment in which elections take place.

**10. Dr Otive Igbuzor**, Founding Executive Director of the African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development, argued that we have reached a level where everyone is aware of the challenges of governance. However, he explained that we need to go further and move that awareness to the level of consciousness, where people know that they can do something about these challenges.



### **About The Electoral Forum**

The Electoral Forum is an initiative of The Electoral Hub that pools resource persons from EMBs together with other electoral stakeholders to conceptualise solutions to the unique problems facing the electoral governance in Nigeria by addressing both the supply (EMBs) and demand (CSOs etc.) sides of electoral services. This project is supported by the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) and expected to run for 18months as a start.

### **About The Electoral Hub**

The Electoral Hub is a multidisciplinary strategic think tank committed to strengthening electoral governance, and accountability in Nigeria. The Electoral Hub works to enhance electoral knowledge, integrity and credibility through research, documentation, electoral education, policy and legal influencing, and impact advocacy.