

INAUGURAL SPEECH
BY
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SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION
AT THE
INAUGURATION OF STAKEHOLDERS ON POLICY
OVERSIGHT FOR ELECTORAL INTEGRITY

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I wish to welcome you all to the inauguration of the Stakeholders Meeting on ***Policy Oversight for Electoral Integrity*** in Nigeria. I also wish to thank the organizers of this programme for their thoughtfulness and sense of purpose to advance our electoral processes. The integrity of our electoral processes is at the heart of our democratic journey. This Multi-Stakeholders Roundtable inauguration on Policy Oversight for Electoral Integrity in Nigeria is

convened by the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, in collaboration with the African Electoral Integrity Initiative, which signifies a critical milestone in our collective pursuit of a free, fair, transparent, and equitable electoral system. This gathering will elucidate the convergence of collective our interest with a shared vision to uphold the sanctity of our electoral processes.

2. We have gathered here as unified assembly of Stakeholders, representing Independent National Electoral Commission and other Election Management Bodies, Political Parties, Civil Society Organizations, Law Enforcement Agencies, Media, International Development Partners, and distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen with a common goal to hone and fortify our democracy. The deliberations that would take place hereafter, would constituted the stakes on which our democracy would subsist.

3. Our primary objective will be to scrutinize our existing electoral legislations, endeavour to identify best practices that will serve as guidelines for free, fair and transparent elections. Our rubbing of minds together will sharpen our mastery in managing the electoral processes. Technology, had revolutionize electoral processes in other clime and culture rendering the outcome free of human interference and we would welcome such progress in improving the conduct of election in our country. Technology has fast tracked voters registration, results transmission, therefore more effort would be put in place to make our elections more effective and efficient by adopting technological tools in the electoral processes.

4. We will also deliberate on the imperative of voters education and how to wax national enthusiasm in taking part in electoral processes. It is therefore imperative to explore innovative strategies to enlighten

our citizens with required information to participate fully and whet their trust in sanctity of votes.

5. Our discussions and suggestions would uplift our collective desire to fortify our democracy. Our deliberations hereafter would not be deception, however, the building blocks for free, fair and transparent electoral system for Nigeria. Let us discuss with a sense of purpose, knowing that the decisions that we would wean, would transform into policies of our future democracy. These would strengthen the policies that would safeguard the integrity of our electoral processes, ensuring that every citizen's vote is sacred and every vote counts.

6. I wish to commend Dr. Daniel Omofoman, the Director of the African Electoral Integrity Initiative, for his unwavering dedication to underpin political integrity in Nigeria, his tireless efforts have been instrumental in

guiding us towards this moment, and we owe him a debt of gratitude.

7. In closing, I want to emphasize that the responsibility for safeguarding the integrity of our electoral processes rests not only with the government but on all of us. Let us work together to uphold the principles of free, fair and transparent electoral system, for the benefit of all Nigerians and the sustainability of our democracy. Together, we shall pave the way for a brighter and more transparent electoral future for Nigeria. This Multi- Stakeholders Roundtable Meeting is hereby inaugurated today for a fruitful deliberation

8. Thank you, God bless you, God bless Nigeria.