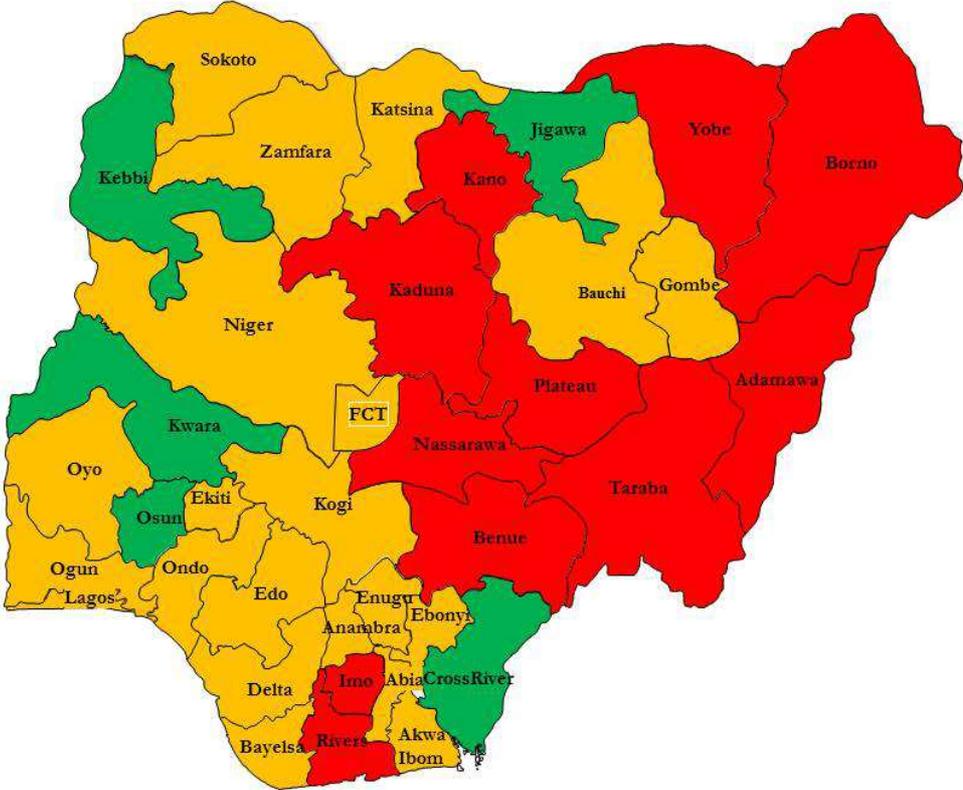# 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS SECURITY THREAT ASSESSMENT

A consolidated Analysis of periodic Security Threat Assessment Reports

January 2013 to January 2015

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Introduction

The Security Threat Assessment (STA) is an incidence mapping and reporting tool developed by the CLEEN Foundation in partnership with the McArthur Foundation. The tool was tailored to provide a panoramic view of the security situation across the country as activities build up towards the 2015 elections. Between January 2013 and January 2015, we have published nine STA reports which map the election environment over the past 25 months. Other STA reports tailored for specific states have been prepared and published for the states where staggered elections have been held. This aggregate report combines the periodic STA reports and present a weighed view of the environment for the 2015 elections. The report does not attempt to present a snapshot of most recent trends, but rather a condensed analysis of trends within the period since January 2015.

The nine STA reports published cover different time periods with the initial reports covering wider time. Closer to the election, the time gap was shortened to provide a more frequent analyses. The initial two assessments were conducted in 2013 to cover for the periods between January-June and July to December. The time frame was then reviewed for the assessment to hold more frequently as the elections draw nearer. In the first half of 2014 therefore, two assessments were conducted, once every three months, covering January to March and April to June. In the second half of 2014, the assessment was done to cover the two months period of July and August, then the period covering July to September. Subsequently, it was conducted every month subsequently until the elections. The table below captures the dates and periods of the assessment.

STA Report	Period Covered
STA 1	January to June 2013
STA 2	July to December 2013
STA 3	January-March 2014
STA 4	April – June 2014
STA 5	July-Sept 2014
STA 6	October 2014
STA 7	November 2014
STA 8	December 2014
STA 9	January 2014
STA 10	Aggregate Jan 2013 to Jan 2015

Table 1: *Schedule for conduct of STAs*

Methodology for Aggregating the Security Threat Assessments

The STA have been compiled over a two year period, from STA 1 in January 2013 to STA 9 in January 2015, to collectively present crucial information on the mapping of the election security environment leading up to the February 2015 elections. In order to build an aggregated picture, we have transformed the qualitative colour-coding into a quantitative data by assigning scores to the colour-codes.

In this scheme, Red = 30; Amber = 20; and Green = 10. Thus for each STA, the colour of each state is represented by the corresponding figure and in the end an average is calculated. States thus end up with aggregate scores ranging from 10 to 30 which is then transposed into the corresponding colour in the 10th STA. In aggregating the scores, the following format was adopted; scores from 15 and below = Green; scores from 16 to 25 = Amber; scores from 26 to 30 = Red. Below we present a snapshot of all states as captured in all 9 STAs and show the average colour for each state in the aggregation:

Status of States in the Nine STA Reports

NO	STATES	STA 1 Jan-Jun 2013	STA 2 Jul-Dec 2013	STA 3 Jan-Mar 2014	STA 4 Apr-Jun 2014	STA 5 Jul-Sept 2014	STA 6 Oct 2014	STA 7 Nov 2014	STA 8 Dec 2014	STA 9 Jan 2015	AGGREGATE Jan 2013 to Jan 2015
1	Abia	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
2	Abuja FCT	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
3	Adamawa	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
4	Akwa Ibom	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow
5	Anambra	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
6	Bauchi	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
7	Bayelsa	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Yellow
8	Benue	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
9	Borno	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
10	Cross Rivers	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
11	Delta	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow

#	State										
12	Ebonyi	yellow	yellow	red	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	green	red	yellow
13	Edo	yellow	yellow	green	yellow	red	red	yellow	yellow	green	yellow
14	Ekiti	green	green	yellow	red	green	red	red	red	red	yellow
15	Enugu	yellow	yellow	red	red	red	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow
16	Gombe	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	red	red	red	red	yellow
17	Imo	yellow	yellow	red	red	red	yellow	red	red	red	red
18	Jigawa	green	green	green	green	yellow	green	green	green	green	green
19	Kaduna	red	red	red	red	red	red	red	red	red	red
20	Kano	yellow	red	yellow	red	red	red	red	red	red	red
21	Katsina	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	red	red	red	yellow
22	Kebbi	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green
23	Kogi	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow
24	Kwara	green	green	green	green	green	green	yellow	yellow	yellow	green
25	Lagos	yellow	yellow	green	yellow	red	red	yellow	red	red	yellow
26	Nasarawa	red	red	red	red	red	red	red	red	red	red
27	Niger	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	red	red	red	yellow
28	Ogun	yellow	yellow	green	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow
29	Ondo	green	green	green	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow	yellow

#	State										
30	**Osun**	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
31	**Oyo**	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow
32	**Plateau**	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
33	**Rivers**	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
34	**Sokoto**	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
35	**Taraba**	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
36	**Yobe**	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
37	**Zamfara**	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow

Table 2: *National aggregation of STAs*

The national aggregation of the STAs reveals that 11 out the 37 states and the FCT (representing 29.7%) are in red, 20 states plus the FCT (56.8%) are in amber and only 5 states (13.5%) are in green.
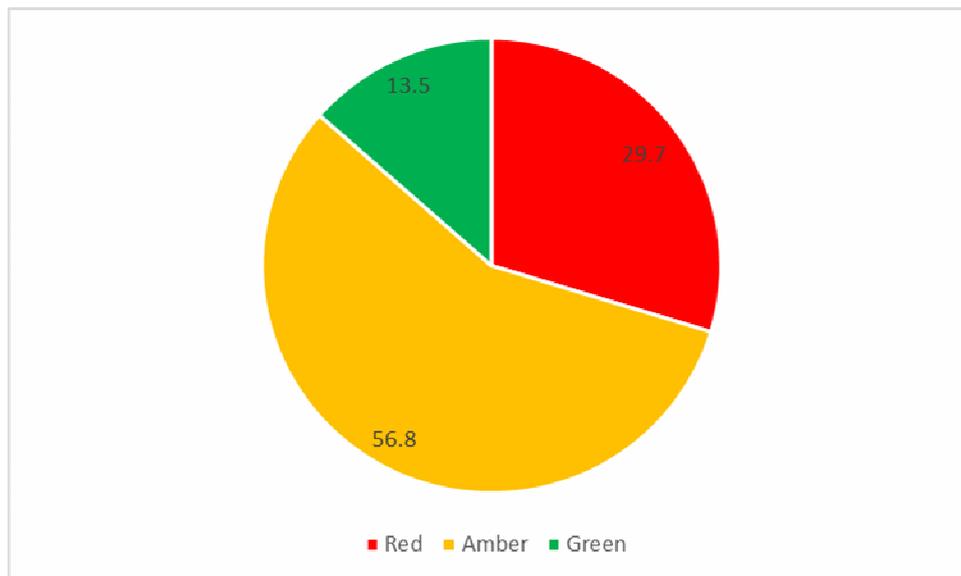
Figure 1: Representation of States in Aggregate STA

The summary of the status of the 36 states and the FCT is presented below:

- Red: Adamawa, Benue, Borno, Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Nassarawa, Plateau, Rivers, Taraba and Yobe.

- Amber: Abia, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Ekiti, Enugu, Gombe, Katsina, Kogi, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Sokoto, and Zamfara.

- Green: Cross Rivers, Jigawa, Kebbi, Kwara and Osun.

Furthermore, the states are represented and colour coded on the map below:

Consolidated Elections Security Threat Map of Nigeria

Figure 2: *Map of Nigeria reflecting national aggregation from January 2013 to January 2015*

For purposes of emphasis, it should be stated that during the conduct of the assessments, states were categorised according to the perceived level of threat using traffic light signals (green, amber and red). The general issues considered in the categorization include history of violence, degree of control by incumbent and relationship with the federal government, stability of internal state party politics, intra/inter party tensions, existence of terrorist/militant activity, state of emergency or communal/religious conflict, presence and activities of security agencies and non-state actors, bid for second term by incumbent governor, zoning arrangement, stability of affairs in state Houses of Assembly, jostle for federal and state legislative positions etc.

Thus red indicates the highest level of threat/most volatile states. These are mostly characterised by insurgency, intensity of politics, violence that has led to destruction of property or loss of lives (even one life). The amber indicates mid-level threat often with high political tension, likely to spill over into violence and should therefore be closely monitored. Green indicates stability/lowest threat states, usually anything not red or amber.

It is imperative to consider the existing threats and national outlook as we proceed into the week of the general elections. However, it would be useful to look at previously identified threats that have either been addressed or have lost their potency as risk factors with the passage of time.

Overview of Security Threats

A. Initial Security Threats

A number of the threats identified in the nine editions of the STA have been resolved, faded out of significance or overtaken by events. Some of these issues have implication for the successful conduct of the 2015 General Elections and they include:

a. *The Abuja Accord:* Particularly in the sixth STA (October 2014) we drew attention to the need for a framework which would ensure all politicians and political parties adhere to a Code of Conduct against violence in the election. Although challenges remain and there is need for caution and vigilance, the signing of the Abuja Accord by key political parties and their candidates represent a milestone in the advocacy for peaceful elections.

b. ***Merger of opposition parties and possible violent disagreement over leadership and candidates:*** The merger of the three major opposition parties

to form the APC was seem as a major game changer in the build up to the 2015 elections. There were initial fears of the possibility of rancorous contention over positions, leadership or candidates, and that some of the contentions could spiral into violence. However, they have since conducted party primaries and set up the leadership of the party, without any dispute or violence;

c. ***Zoning of Candidates:*** There were initial contentions over where the presidential candidates should come from, even within the parties. This is a continuation of the controversy that preceded the 2011 election and has continued to shape the national politics since then. Like what happened in 2011, it was feared that if the ruling elite did not manage the situation properly, it could escalate into a huge national crisis. Similar situation also emerged at the state level where senatorial districts within states demanded for a taste of the governorship. Most of these contentions were resolved at the party primaries, with minor incidents in a few cases;

d. ***Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):*** Although the full participation of IDPs in the 2015 general elections remains doubtful, the plight of IDPs and the need for reforms to enable them vote has been a recurring theme in the STAs. Although it is doubtful that all displaced persons will vote in 2015, the INEC has commenced consultations that would enable some of the displaced persons to vote and the National Assembly has also joined in the call to make provisions for IDPs to vote. The decision of INEC to shift the distribution of the PVCs of the areas facing security challenges in Adamawa State in Yola, the State capital has enabled many displaced persons to claim their voter's cards.

e. *Intra-party contentions:* During the build up to the various party primaries, there was intense conflict within the ruling party. This was noted as a major security threat. The series of defections that followed, including the defection of the G5 governors not only generating ripples in their states, but it is also deeply vibrating in the entire country. It was feared that if these internal conflicts are not properly managed they could escalate into violent political conflagration in 2015. However, the political forces within the party and beyond were able to manage the crisis and steady the party through the presidential and various gubernatorial primaries;

f. *Inter-party defections:* The defection of PDP members into APC, and in some cases APC stalwarts into PDP, was penned down as a possible major security concern. With the history of mutual distrust, political contentions and almost annihilative posturing of contending forces within the political class it appeared that the defections had set the stage for major national crisis. The most illustrative instance here is the defection of the Speaker of the House of Assembly to the APC and the subsequent barricade and tear-gassing of the House of Assembly.

g. *Review of legal framework*: Non completion of constitutional and electoral act amendment by the National Assembly before the general elections was noted as also a possible danger signal. It was feared that any late amendment to the plan laid out by INEC for the polls might be grossly affected.

B. National Security threats: Trends and Outlook

As Nigeria goes into the 2015 elections, a number of threats are yet to be surmounted that might impact on the peace and security of the elections. They include:

a. *Insurgency:* Most people would agree that the foremost security concern going into the 2015 election is the persisting violent extremism and attacks that have plagued three of the northeast states (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe) under emergency rule. Until this insurgency is dealt with, we cannot rule out the possibility of more attacks across the country. In recent times, almost all the states in the northeast and some parts of northwest (Kano, Kaduna and Jigawa) and Abuja have also been attacked by Boko Haram. The fear remains that these attacks might mar elections, should they hold in some of these states, but also that criminal elements and political party thugs can disguise as Boko Haram to perpetuate mayhem on opposition groups;

b. *Hate and inciting speech*: The build up to the 2015 election has witnessed intensive campaigning especially between the ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) and the main opposition, the All Progressives Congress (APC). However, with the intense campaigning has also come intense use of hate and inciting speech. These have featured on campaign ground, traditional and social media. These unguarded statements by politicians can heat up the polity, incite violence and jeopardize the peaceful conduct of the elections;

c. *Communal violence and other localized conflict*: A number of states, particularly in the North Central region are faced with communal violence. The violence is often associated with politics. In some places in other regions, like the South East, South South and South West, the conflict is localized amongst communities around the issues of zoning of the candidacy. It is therefore important to respond quickly to communal, ethnic or religious contentions before they get further entangled in electoral politics and escalate tensions around the elections;

d. *Militant groups, vigilantes and youth thuggery*: There is a proliferation of militant groups and vigilantes across the country. The increasing poverty, unemployment and youth exclusion has only exacerbated the problem. Many of these youth are exposed to drug, small and light weapons and are susceptible to manipulation and used as party thugs. Though there have been efforts to regulate or demobilise some of the groups in some states, there is however no guarantee that they will not bounce back during the election when politician will become desperate for their services. The process of demobilisation should therefore be comprehensive, in a way that the young people can be empowered through gainful and sustainable socio-economic activities;

e. *Proliferation of small arms and light weapons:* The proliferation of arms and increasing activities of armed groups is a major risk factor. With persons from some parts of the country insisting that there will be war if the outcome of the elections are unfavourable to them, the case for mopping up arms across the weapons becomes increasingly imperative;

f. *Performance of security institutions*: There are a few concerns about the capacity and neutrality of security agencies going into the 2015 elections. On one hand, there are insinuations of partisan control of security institutions by the federal government and ruling party in the country. This has played out in the harassment of opposition officials and facilities. The feeling of political repression could be major risk factor and might inspire the opposition to seek avenues of countering the influence of security institutions. On the other hand, there are also concerns about the levels of preparedness of the security institutions to deal with the myriad of challenges around the 2015 elections

across the country. The elections will stretch their resources thin. Issues as to logistics, welfare of officials and interagency coordination have played out in several electoral instances since 2011. If they are not effectively addressed going into the 2015 election, they will undermine the effective performance of security institutions and impact on the overall provision of security for the elections;

g. *Fear of electoral manipulation:* – Vote rigging or perceived rigging will be a major trigger of violence around the 2015 elections especially the gubernatorial and Presidential elections. Levels of awareness are especially high amongst voters going into the election, therefore there will be a strong disposition towards mandate protection and eagerness to resist any form of electoral manipulation, whether perceived or real;

h. *Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):* Massive displacement of people on a scale never witnessed before has led to a humanitarian crisis in the North East region and most of these people might be disenfranchised in 2015. This possibility of exclusion is a major risk factor. The camps might be penetrated by insurgent groups as recruitment grounds. Cases of the radicalisation and use of children and young girls for suicide bombings have already been reported in parts of the north;

i. *Distribution of Permanent Voters Card (PVCs)*: INEC has tried to address some of the challenges encountered with the distribution of the PVCs. However, the number of PVCs not yet distributed and collected remains quite high. The inability of electorates to obtain their Permanent Voters Card is a tinder box that could cause violence during the general elections.

j. *Postponement of the elections*: Though the elections planned for 14 and 28 February are surrounded by a number of challenges, most of which have been highlighted here, it is believed that any effort to postpone the election would be violently resisted. The international community, local groups and INEC are in agreement on this score.

Recommendations

i. Efforts to contain the insurgency in the northeast, and stop its spread into other regions and states should be intensified;

ii. The government, NEMA and security agencies should set up rapid response strategy in the event of a crisis, both humanitarian and security, especially around flash point areas;

iii. All political parties and candidates should be encouraged to focus on the issues around the election and avoid hate or inciting speech. They should be persuaded to adhere to a peace memorandum, showing their commitment to eschew violence and work peacefully before, during and after the election. In the light of this, there should be effective monitoring to ensure that parties and candidates abide by the Abuja Accord;

iv. The existence and prevalence of informal police groups such as vigilantes across the country underscores the need for collaboration between the formal and informal policing groups in the country, provided there is a framework for such collaboration and partnership. Mapping, identifying and capacity building for informal policing groups should be considered in order to strengthen community participation in election security management. There is a need for development of a code of conduct for these groups and issues such recruitment, training, accountability needs to be addressed in the Code of conduct;

v. The Federal and state governments and security agencies should work to disband cults and militias, and regulate vigilante groups that are often hired to intimidate voters and opposing party supporters. The mobilizing capacity

of political parties and elites as they engage the services of youths as political thugs and vigilantes will be a key defining element of the general elections in the run up to 2015. This must be checkmated more proactively by the INEC and the relevant security agencies. This should also be complemented by efforts to mop up small arms and light weapons across the country;

vi.   The Inter Agency Coordinating Committee on Election Security (ICCES) must be seen to have synergized response and approach to the perceived threats to security during the election. They should pay special attention to the violence hotspots with a view to ensuring that adequate resources are directed towards contain them. It must also ensure that security officials deployed on election duty are provided with adequate logistics, welfare and are also held accountable for their performance;

vii.   INEC should work with key institutions such as the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and civil society organisations to sensitizing the electorate on the need to eschew violence and work for credible elections. The use of traditional media, particularly radio, is encouraged to reach those in rural areas;

viii.   INEC should be more aggressive in its distribution of the PVCs and deadlines for collection should be extended as much as practicable;

ix.   INEC and security agencies must work assiduously to ensure that IDPs are able to exercise their franchise as much as is practicable, and that the location of their camps are well secured throughout the process;

x.   INEC should maintain transparency in its organisation and conduct of the elections. Where it encounters challenges capable of impacting the electoral process, this should be communicated promptly to stakeholders and immediate measures taken to address the challenge.