

PRESS RELEASE

Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-general for West Africa and the Sahel concludes a two-week pre-electoral mission to Nigeria, calls on all actors to uphold their commitments for peaceful, free, fair and credible elections in February and March 2019

Abuja, 01 February 2019- The Special Representative of the Secretary – General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mohamed Ibn Chambas, concluded on Thursday 31 January a two-week pre-electoral mission to Nigeria.

The mission, which took place from 21 to 31 January, included extensive discussions with Nigerian stakeholders in several States including Benue, Kaduna, and Kano where the UN and the National Peace Committee in collaboration with state institutions organized state level fora to create sensitization and awareness, facilitate exchange and build synergy among stakeholders as part of the United Nations' efforts to support peaceful, free, fair and credible elections in February and March 2019, with focus on potential hotspots States.

During this third pre-electoral mission, Mohamed Ibn Chambas had important discussions with stakeholders and key actors involved in the preparation of the elections. He met with security services, Civil Society Organizations, members of the Diplomatic Corps, members international elections observation missions, and relevant political actors.

To all his interlocutors, the UN Special Representative conveyed the support of the United Nations and the international community to all efforts aiming to consolidate and strengthen Nigeria's democracy, and called on all candidates, political parties, state institutions, and citizens of Nigeria to abide by their commitments to ensure free, credible, and peaceful 2019 elections.

He commended the preparatory work conducted by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), civil society organizations, and security agencies to ensure that citizens across the country can exercise their constitutional rights without fear of intimidation or reprisals within an environment respectful of human rights and the rule of law.

He encouraged each camp to uphold its commitments and refrain from any action that could incite confrontation and violence. He called on all citizens to firmly reject all undemocratic and negative voices that seek to promote conflict between Nigerians and disrupt the elections.

He expressed optimism that the successful conduct of free, credible and peaceful elections would strengthen its leadership position and consolidate democracy in West Africa.

The UN Special Representative reiterated his call on all stakeholders to do all in their endeavor to make the 2019 elections a success in the interest of the country, the sub-region and the continent.

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