



# Transition Monitoring Group

(A Coalition of Human Rights, Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organisations)  
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## PRESS STATEMENT

The attention of the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) has been drawn to a campaign of Calumny and character defamation launched against it over the weekend by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in a futile but desperate attempt to prevent the TMG and other domestic election observer groups from monitoring the April general elections in Nigeria.

INEC had on Saturday, March 24, 2007 circulated to the media information to the effect that member organizations of the TMG and Alliance for Credible Elections were at war with each other over distribution of Three Hundred Million Naira allegedly given to them by Vice President Atiku Abubakar to disrupt the April elections if he was not allowed to contest.

We wish to state that this allegation is not only laughable, baseless and Irresponsible, but also highly unbecoming of a public institution entrusted with the historical task of organizing elections at a period Nigeria cannot afford an electoral crisis with all its destabilizing consequences. It is the latest in the well known efforts of the Prof. Iwu led INEC to prevent credible domestic monitors from taking part in the elections having tried unsuccessfully to float a parallel coalition of fictitious groups under the name of National Solidarity Network.

We advice INEC to pay more attention to its core function areas, which it has so far woefully failed to carry out. These are:

- Producing and publicly displaying comprehensive voters register so that registered voters can cross-check whether their names are correctly entered and are placed in the neighborhoods where they would want to vote;
- Recruiting and training the over half a million ad hoc staff it needs to

conduct the elections so that we would not have a repeat of the 2003 situation where many of them did not know what they were expected to do.

- Producing and distributing electoral guidelines to all role players in the April general elections including domestic observer groups
- Printing of ballot papers and boxes and distributing them to the 120, 000 polling booths that would be used for the elections.
- Creating awareness among the electorate on how it plans to conduct the elections, whether the voters register (when it is produced) will be electronically verified before voting or manually done.
- Improving the very low public confidence on its ability under Prof. Maurice to conduct credible elections come April 2007.

The TMG through support from UNDP and European Union will be deploying 10, 000 observers across the 36 states of Nigeria and Abuja in each of the two strands of elections scheduled in April. We are also coordinating with other domestic elections observer groups in the use of common checklists, issuing of joint preliminary statements and data management.

Innocent Chukwuma

Chair, TMG