



Press Release

EU Launches Election Observation Mission to Nigeria

Abuja, 9 March 2011 - The European Union (EU) has officially launched today an Election Observation Mission (EOM) to observe the National Assembly, Presidential, Governor and State Houses elections in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, scheduled for 2, 9 and 16 April. The European Union was invited by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to observe all aspects of the electoral process, and assess compliance with domestic law and international, and regional commitments to elections.

The EU EOM is led by Chief Observer Alojz Peterle, a Slovene member of the European Parliament. "It is a privilege to lead the European Union Election Observation Mission to Nigeria. I hope these elections will contribute to a peaceful future of the country. It is important that citizens can exercise their right to vote and that candidates are able to campaign freely in an inclusive democratic environment", said Peterle.

The European Union will deploy a total of over 120 observers from 27 member states as well as Norway and Switzerland throughout the country to observe the electoral process before, during and after the elections. They will be meeting government and electoral officials, candidates and representatives from political parties, civil society and the media.

The Mission will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the electoral process based on a long-term observation and a methodology developed by the EU over many years. This analysis will include aspects such as the legal framework, the work of the election administration, the campaign activities of the candidates and political parties, the conduct of the media, the voting and the counting, the complaints and appeals process, and the announcement of the results.

The Mission will be joined by a delegation of the European Parliament during the election days.

The Mission is independent from any EU institutions or member states. The EU EOM will issue a preliminary statement shortly after the elections. A final report - with technical recommendations for future elections - will be published later.

Note to Editors:

The European Union has signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Independent National Electoral Commission, guaranteeing freedom of movement to all EU EOM members and access to all polling stations and related sites and bodies and to all relevant information. This Mission is independent from any EU institutions or Member States and is obliged to remain neutral and abide by the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct, as well as Nigerian laws.

For Media enquiries, please contact:

Press Officer: Eberhard Laue

Mobile Phone +234 (0)81 3505 2217, email: eberhard.laue@eueom-nigeria.eu