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## Press Release

for immediate release

### EU deploys Election Observation Mission in Nigeria

**ABUJA 20 January 2015** - The European Union has deployed an Election Observation Mission for the Presidential, National Assembly, Governor and State Houses elections of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, scheduled for 14 and 28 February 2015. At the invitation of the authorities of Nigeria the mission will assess the elections against national law and international principles for elections contained in regional and international law and standards.

Nine analysts of the core team arrived in Abuja from 6 January, following an advance team that was deployed during the party primaries last November and December. Thirty long-term observers arrived from 12 January. The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) is led by Santiago Fisas Ayxela, Member of the European Parliament, from Spain, who will arrive in Abuja later this week. A delegation from the European Parliament and EU diplomats in Nigeria will also join the mission on election days.

"The EU EOM's extended presence shows the EU's commitment to the conduct of inclusive, transparent and credible elections in Nigeria. We don't just focus on the election days, but on all aspects of the electoral process, including the arbitration of petitions long after voting is finished" says Chief Observer Santiago Fisas Ayxela.

The EU EOM will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the entire electoral process. This will include assessing the legal framework, the performance of the election administration, voter registration, candidates' nomination and political parties primaries, campaign activities, respect for fundamental freedoms, access to and conduct of the media, voting and the counting, the announcement and acceptance of results, and complaints and appeals.

The EU EOM is bound by a code of conduct which requires strict neutrality and no interference in the process. The mission undertakes all its work in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. The EU EOM will publish its initial findings in Preliminary Statements, which will be presented in press conferences two days after each election day. A final report will be later published which will include recommendations for improvements for future elections.

**Note to Editors:**

*The European Union was invited to deploy an observation mission by the Nigerian authorities and has signed Memorandums of Understanding with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The EU EOM is independent from any EU institutions or Member States and is committed to remain neutral and abide by the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct, as well as the laws of Nigeria.*

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