



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, AUGUST 14, 2026

Pre-election Statement for 2026 Osun State Governorship Election

On August 15, the people of Osun State will vote their choice of governor. Let every vote be counted, every voice be heard, and let democracy stand firm and prevail.

..The Electoral Hub urge candidates, parties and voters to Reject violence. Reject intimidation. Reject vote trading. Reject division.

.. The Electoral Hub expect that the election outcome should truly reflect the will of the people of Osun State.

Osun Le tente! Vote freely, vote safely, and vote proudly; the destiny of Osun is in your hands. Choose peace. Choose democracy. Choose the future

On **Saturday, 15 August 2026**, the people of Osun State will exercise their democratic right to choose their governor. Since the creation of Osun State August 27, 1991, Osun has been led by **four military administrators**, and **six elected governors**. Five of these six governors since 1999 making the 2026 governorship election another important chapter in the State's democratic journey. The election provides citizens with an opportunity to determine, through their votes, the direction of governance and development in the State. Conducted under the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), the Electoral Act 2026 and other relevant legal frameworks, the election presents the people of Osun with a critical opportunity to freely determine their political leadership. It is also an important test of Nigeria's continuing electoral reforms and a significant opportunity to draw lessons ahead of the **2027 General Election**.

The **2026 Osun Governorship Election** therefore demands responsibility, accountability, transparency and integrity from electoral institutions, political parties, candidates, security agencies, the media, civil society organisations and citizens. Above all, the process must ensure that the will of the people is **freely expressed, genuinely respected and faithfully upheld**. The Osun election provides INEC another important opportunity to test electoral procedures, technology and institutional preparedness ahead of the **2027 General Election**.

The pre-election environment requires urgent attention to electoral security. **73 election-related violent incidents resulting in 29 deaths¹** with Osogbo identified as particularly affected and several LGAs requiring heightened attention. These concerns must not become a reason for citizens to withdraw from democratic participation. Instead, they underscore the urgent responsibility of political actors, security agencies, INEC, community leaders and other stakeholders to **eliminate violence, intimidation and fear from the electoral process**.

¹ <https://guardian.ng/politics/osun-violence-claims-29-lives-in-73-incidents-osogbo-worst-hit-says-report/>

Citizens must be able to leave their homes, reach their polling units, cast their ballots and return safely. **No political ambition is worth a single life, and no electoral victory is worth silencing the people through fear.** The Electoral Hub therefore calls for strengthened preventive security measures, effective response to threats and strict accountability for perpetrators of electoral violence.

The Electoral Hub is concerned about the persistent underrepresentation of **women, youth, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and other historically marginalized groups** in elective and decision-making positions. The current Osun governorship contest further illustrates this gap. **Only four women appears on INEC's final list of 15 governorship and 15 deputy governorship candidates,** highlighting the continuing barriers to women's political representation. While INEC and other institutions have introduced measures to improve accessibility and participation, political parties and other stakeholders must go further by adopting deliberate and sustained measures to promote **equitable representation and meaningful participation** particularly for women, youth and PWDs.

The Electoral Hub calls for stronger affirmative-action measures, inclusive party structures, greater support for women candidates and increased opportunities for women, youth and PWDs to participate not only as voters but also as candidates, party leaders, election officials, observers and decision-makers. In accordance with **Section 14(2)(c) of the Constitution**, which provides for citizen participation in governance, **Section 42**, which prohibits discrimination, and relevant provisions of the electoral framework on accessibility, all stakeholders must ensure that **no citizen is excluded from the electoral process.**

EXPECTATIONS OF THE ELECTORAL HUB

- **Stakeholders Uphold Electoral Accountability and Integrity:** Elections are a collective enterprise involving INEC, security agencies, political parties and candidates, the media, civil society organisations and citizens. All stakeholders must uphold transparency, accountability, neutrality and professionalism throughout the electoral process.
- **Improved INEC Conduct:** INEC must ensure the timely deployment of personnel and electoral materials, effective functionality of BVAS and adherence to established procedures for accreditation, voting, counting, transparent result collation and management. Every stage of the process must be transparent, credible, accessible and inclusive.
- **Eliminate Electoral Violence and Strengthen Security:** Security agencies must remain neutral, professional and non-partisan. They must protect voters, election officials, observers, journalists and other stakeholders while preventing intimidation, violence, disruption and electoral crimes. Political parties and candidates must equally commit to ending political

violence and the use of thugs to intimidate voters. Citizens must be able to participate without fear. Osun must be a State where people can come out, vote peacefully and return home safely.

- **Protect Women and Other Vulnerable Groups:** Political parties, INEC, security agencies and other stakeholders must create an environment where women, youth and PWDs can participate safely and meaningfully. Particular attention must be given to preventing discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence including all forms of harassment, intimidation, discrimination and violence against women in political and electoral spaces.
- **Compliance with Electoral Legal Frameworks:** All stakeholders must comply with the 1999 Constitution (as amended), Electoral Act 2026, INEC Regulations and Guidelines, VAPP Act 2015, Disability Act 2018, and other applicable laws. Electoral offences must be investigated and prosecuted appropriately. No individual or political interest should be above the law.
- **Post-Election Accountability:** Political parties and candidates must demonstrate democratic maturity by accepting credible outcomes or seeking redress through **lawful** means and processes. Electoral disagreements must never become justification for violence, destruction or threats to public safety and security.
- **Respect the Will of the Voters:** The outcome must reflect the freely expressed will of the people of Osun State. Every valid vote must count, and results must accurately represent the choices made by voters at polling units without manipulation, intimidation or distortion.
- **Active Citizen Participation:** Osun voters are encouraged to participate peacefully, verify their polling information, vote, reject vote buying and inducement, and report electoral violations through appropriate channels.

The Electoral Hub calls on political parties, candidates, INEC, security agencies, the media, CSOs, traditional and religious leaders, community leaders and citizens to make the August 15, 2026 election a celebration of democracy not a contest of violence. Citizens should not allow fear, misinformation or political intimidation to deprive them of their democratic voice. Come out peacefully. Vote. Protect your vote. Respect the votes of others.

No violence. No intimidation. No vote trading. No fear at the polling unit. Let every eligible citizen vote freely and safely. Choose peace over violence. Choose integrity over manipulation. Choose democracy over division. The future of Osun belongs to all its people.

Àjọṣepò Ọmọ Osun - United Osun people

#OsunDecides2026 #OsunLeTente2026 #Ìpínlẹ̀Omoluabi
#OsunYourVoteYourPower #OsunYourVoteYourFuture
#ElectoralAccountabilityMatters #ElectoralIntegrityNG

Signed

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ABOUT THE ELECTORAL HUB

The Electoral Hub is an interdisciplinary knowledge, policy and advocacy hub committed to promoting electoral knowledge, accountability, inclusion and integrity. Our aim is to strengthen electoral governance and accountability in Nigeria, and the region through the provision of data, critical and contextualized analysis, and evidence-based solutions to improve the credibility and integrity of the electoral process. The Electoral Hub is conceptualized to complement the roles of the different institutions, stakeholders, and drivers of the electoral process and governance by providing knowledge support services to stakeholders and institutions of the electoral process.

The Electoral Hub is an affiliate of the Initiative for Research, Innovation and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD)

Knowledge | Innovation | Inclusion | Impact
#Advocacy #Results #Impact
...promoting electoral knowledge, accountability, inclusion, and integrity