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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by John Alexander Corrie and Charles Tannock

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on elections in Nigeria

European Parliament resolution on elections in Nigeria

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Nigeria,
 - having regard to the preliminary statements of the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) from 14 April, 22 April and 5 May 2003 following the National Assembly, presidential and states' elections in Nigeria,
- A. whereas parliamentary, presidential and states' elections were held in Nigeria on 12 April, 19 April and 3 May 2003 respectively,
 - B. whereas an important number of international observers had been invited to monitor the elections,
 - C. whereas serious irregularities and fraud were observed during the electoral process and the elections, and in the southern and eastern states in particular,
 - D. whereas, despite the inadequacies encountered, the elections were conducted peacefully in general and constitute a new stage in a process of democratisation,
 - E. whereas the ruling People's Democratic Party secured a clear majority in both houses in the parliamentary elections, and whereas President Obasanjo was pronounced President-elect of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on 22 April 2003 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC),
 1. Welcomes the Supreme Court ruling that annulled the INEC guidelines for political party registration, allowing for an increased number of parties in the electoral campaign;
 2. Deplores however that many newly registered parties were given insufficient time to prepare for the elections;
 3. Calls on the Nigerian Government to allow for an earlier release of funds to INEC in future elections so that its work can take place at an earlier stage and thereby facilitate the electoral process;
 4. Strongly condemns the political assassinations and the violence that took place during the election campaign;
 5. Recognises that the national law on media provides for equal opportunity and airtime for all parties in both public and private media; deplores however that this law was not fully respected in the electoral campaign but favoured the ruling party;

6. Welcomes the increase in voter participation in the elections, and in particular the high participation of female voters for the first time, as a clear sign of the attachment of the Nigerian people to democratic values;
7. Welcomes the peaceful conduct of elections in most parts of the country, facilitated by the invitation of the Nigerian Government to international election observers;
8. Deplores reports of serious irregularities and instances of fraud, in particular evidence of widespread fraud in the states of Cross River, Delta, Enugu, Imo and Rivers, resulting in a lack of credibility of the elections in these states;
9. Calls for the investigation of irregularities and fraud by the competent authorities; welcomes the ongoing process in the presidential election tribunal allowing aggrieved parties to inspect polling documents and election results with the assistance of INEC;
10. Calls on the Nigerian Government to investigate all reports of electoral violence and to prosecute all perpetrators of political violence and fraud during the electoral process;
11. Calls on the Nigerian authorities to press on with the democratisation process by taking measures to improve electoral process conditions, by implementing effective measures against corruption and in promotion and respect of human rights;
12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Commission, the Council, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly and the Nigerian Government.