

CROSSROADS

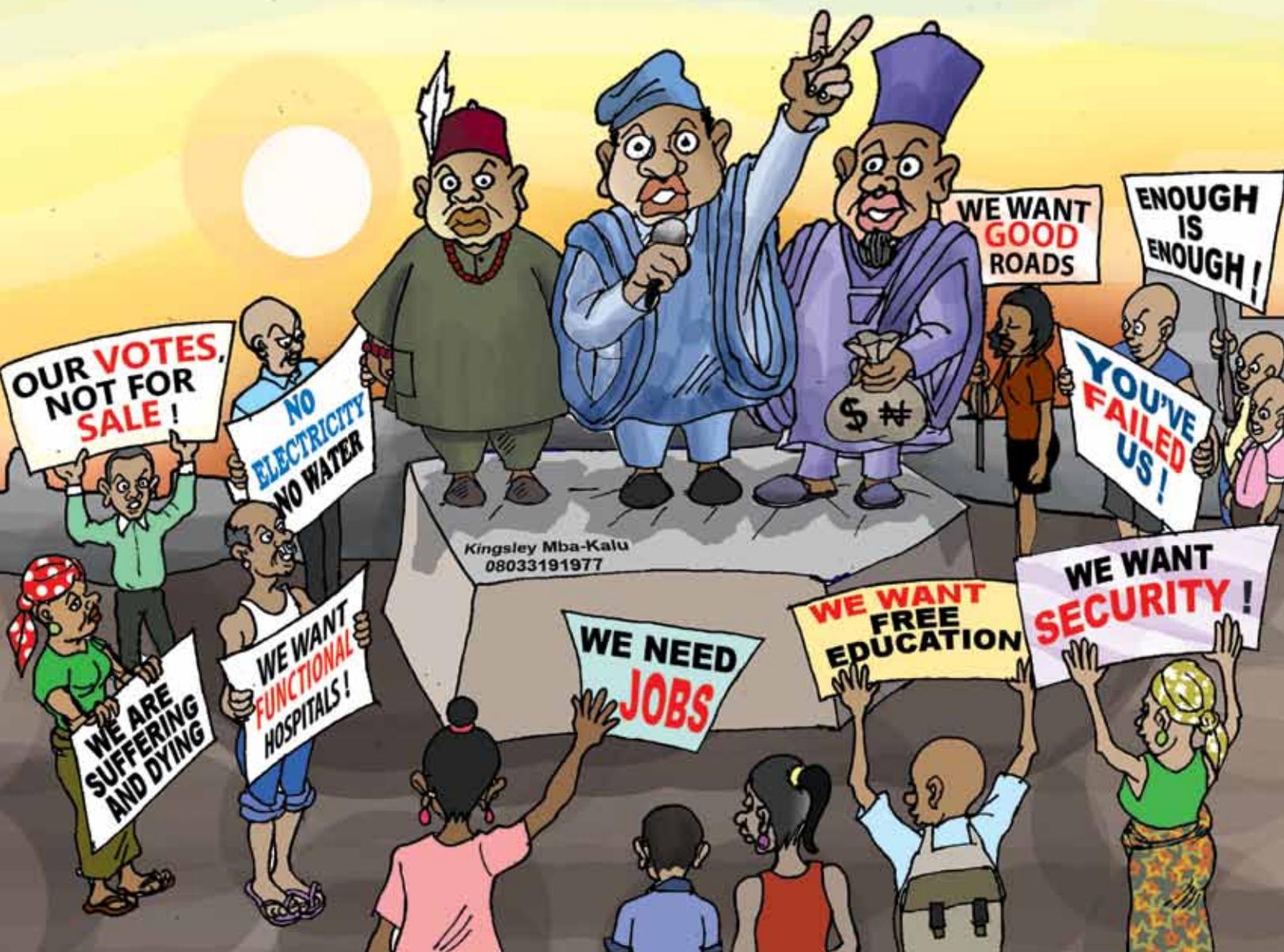
November/December 2014 Special Edition

VOL. 20
Number 3

A Newsletter of the U. S. Mission in Nigeria

On the Way to 2015...

Choices, Candidates, and Issues



Dedication of U.S. Embassy's New Annex



Left to right; OBO Director Joseph W. Toussaint, Under Secretary Patrick F. Kennedy, Ambassador Usman Baraya, and Ambassador James Entwistle dedicate the new U.S. Embassy annex on November 7 -- photo by Idika Onyukwu

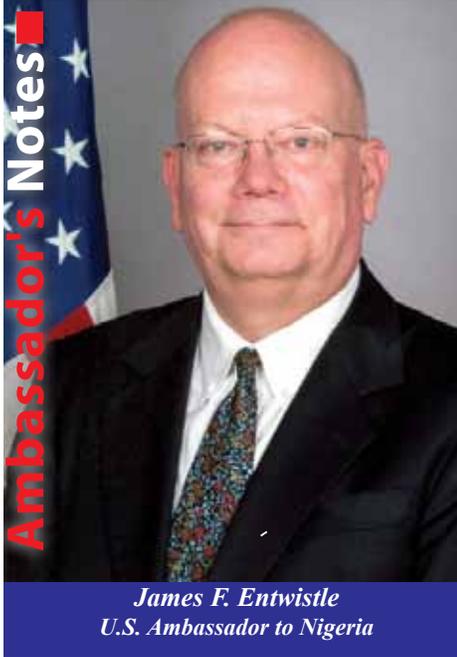


U.S. Ambassador James Entwistle presents a pair of commemoration scissors to Ambassador Usman Baraya.

June 29, 2012, U.S. and Nigerian officials prepare for the ground-breaking ceremony of the new U.S. Embassy annex -- photo: Idika Onyukwu



From start to finish. In an important symbol of the U.S. commitment to and its enduring relationship with Nigeria, U.S. Under Secretary for Management Patrick F. Kennedy, U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria James F. Entwistle, and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) Managing Director for Program Development, Coordination and Support Joseph W. Toussaint, alongside local officials, including Ambassador Usman Baraya, chief of protocol for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dedicated the New Office Annex at the U.S. Embassy in Abuja on November 7, 2014. The ground breaking exercise of the complex took place on June 29, 2012.



*James F. Entwistle
U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria*

Throughout 2014, the United States and Nigeria worked together to strengthen our partnership focused on improving healthcare, security, economic growth, education, and democracy and governance. That effort will continue in the coming year.

As Nigeria looks ahead to the February 2015 general elections, let me reiterate that the United States strongly supports a transparent, credible, inclusive, and non-violent electoral process.

We call upon all Nigerians to refrain from advocating, fomenting, or condoning violence before, during, or after the elections. We also encourage all Nigerians to

come out to vote. We can all agree that incitement to violence has no place in any democracy. Moreover, the right to vote is a precious thing, and we encourage all eligible Nigerians to exercise that right.

Inside this edition, you will read about several collaborative efforts, including my support of Nigerian rap star 2face Idibia's Vote Not Fight campaign. Other stories include a workshop on youth entrepreneurship and job creation and "16 Days of Activism on the Elimination of Violence against Women." I hope you enjoy this edition. See you next year!

Ambassador James F. Entwistle

Dear CROSSROADS Readers,
Let me begin by wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

CROSSROADS

is published bimonthly by the Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Nigeria

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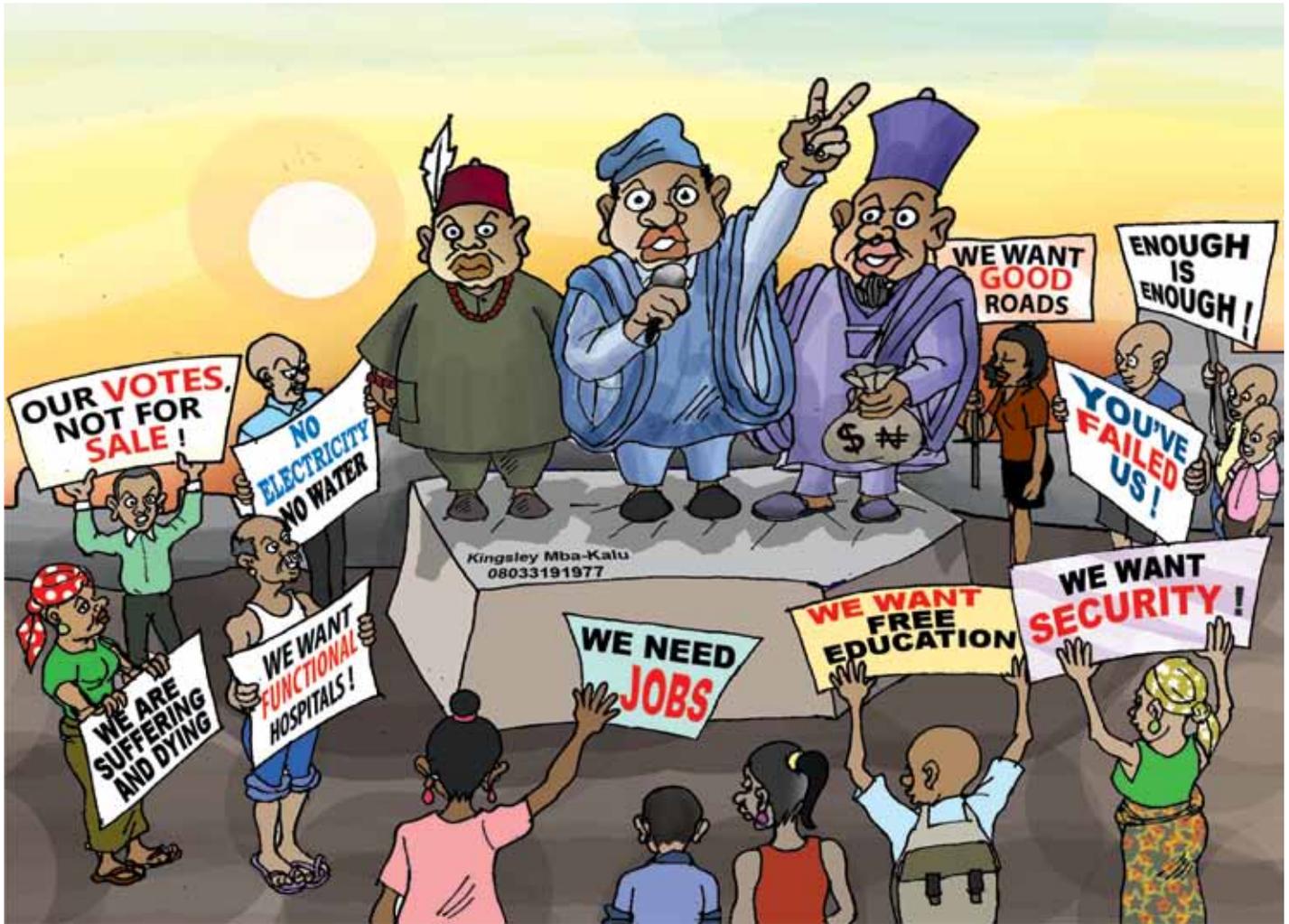
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Countering the Crisis of Credibility

As preparations for the February 2015 elections get underway, Lagos U.S. Consul General, Jeffrey Hawkins—who observed two elections in Ekiti and Osun States—cautions that the sponsorship of violence and intimidation and the rhetorical threat of violence are utterly unacceptable in any democratic society and need to be expunged once and for all from the Nigerian polity and discourse. Below is the full text of an editorial opinion.



I have been in Nigeria for nearly two years now and visited each of the 17 states in southern Nigeria, almost all of them on multiple occasions. I have spoken with hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Nigerians about democracy, elections, and the history of your country as it relates to both. Some of the lessons I've learned from these conversations are particularly relevant as we approach



U.S. Consul General, Jeffrey Hawkins

the national elections next year.

These conversations make clear that elections in this country suffer from a crisis of credibility. There have been a few contests

particularly M.K.O. Abiola's aborted election in 1993, that have been widely viewed by Nigerians to represent the will of the people. The international community, and in particular the United States, have gone on record as saying Nigeria's 2011 elections represented a significant improvement over some earlier contests. But Nigerians have been disappointed—at the LGA, state, and national levels—by many of

the electoral cycles in the country's past. There are many reasons for such disappointment, some historical and some highly relevant to this day. Much work remains to be done—by INEC, by the nation's security services, and above all by Nigeria's political class—to build more trust in the electoral process.

Besides undermining voter faith and interest, this crisis of credibility has an additional, pernicious side-effect: it allows some politicians to refuse to accept an electoral result that was not in their favor by affirming that the election in question was “illegitimate” and to threaten and/or employ violence as a result. The electoral system's shortcomings have thus helped to provide cover for rhetoric and actions by some politicians that only further subvert the interests of Nigerians as a whole. Beyond broad systemic changes—stamping out corruption, improving transparency, enhancing internal democracy in Nigeria's political parties—fighting this trend is also a key element in improving Nigerian democracy.

It is time for Nigerians to begin to hold elections that ALL believe produce the “correct” result.

I am constantly struck by the degree to which Nigerians, on all sides of the political spectrum, assail elections that they believe were not credible, that didn't produce the result that represented the will of the voters. It seems to happen after virtually every election, regardless of whether a particular election was generally perceived to have been credible or not. While the United States strongly supports the notion that challenges to election results should be resolved through legal mechanisms, has there been

Choices, Candidates, and Issues

By Sani Mohammed
MAGAMA Editor

Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says, “Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his/her country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. . . . The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will, shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.”

The right to elect one's representatives and to influence the political direction of one's government is democracy's indispensable political foundation. Without free elections, there is neither the possibility for citizens to express their will nor the opportunity for citizens to change their leaders, address wrongs, or protest the limitation of their rights. Elections, therefore, establish the individual's political rights.

Around the world, including in the United States, millions of people have braved great challenges and obstacles, including intimidation to enforce their rights, to express their will at the ballot box. The most important element of this exercise is the right of voters to choose those

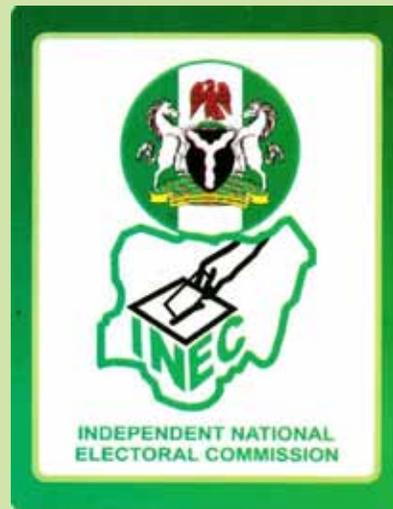
who they think will best address their concerns. The outcomes of elections are therefore issue-driven.

This process begins with the selection of candidates who political parties believe will best address the issues that their electoral constituencies are concerned about, and these issues become the reason why a candidate is either elected or rejected by the voters.

When candidates embrace and run on issues, their actions strengthen the foundation of democracy, promoting good governance and accountability. If candidates and parties address issues and embrace accountability, they willingly accept defeat as the people's decision.

The most fundamental concept of democracy is the idea that government exists to secure the rights

of the people and must be based on the consent of the governed. The United States of America was the first modern state formed around the principle of consent of the governed. The term implies that the people of a country or territory are sovereign and governance is through their consent by direct referendum or through their elected representatives – those willing to address their issues and be



an election in the last decade in Nigeria that did not result in a legal challenge by one or more of the losers? I'm sure there has been, but my point is this: Nigerian elections are almost never considered legitimate by all the participants.

I'd argue that there are lots of similarities between politicians in the United States and Nigeria in their conduct leading up to Election Day: the desire to champion one's own accomplishments and/or policy proposals, an equivalent desire to diminish those of an opponent and the projection of confidence that "the voters are with me" that is often accompanied by bold predictions of victory.

But it seems to me that the day after the election the similarities between United States and Nigerian politicians diverge. With very few exceptions, by the day after an election, the losing candidate in the United States has called his/her opponent to congratulate them, has publicly conceded defeat (at least for those elections that garner media attention), and has begun to close up their campaign offices and operations. In most cases where this hasn't happened by the day after the election, it's because the vote is too close to determine the winner without a careful recount. Otherwise, the day after the election, for losing candidates it's about "going back to normal life." In Nigeria, by contrast, for defeated candidates, the day after the election almost seems like the beginning of the real contest that of the legal challenge to the election's announced result.

I would like to raise two questions: when will Nigeria reach a point where the system has enough

credibility that losing candidates no longer regularly challenge their losses? And more importantly, what can each Nigerian do to move Nigeria closer to that moment? The latter question is especially salient. Nigerian elections are not going to be perfect this year or next year, but they have to continue to improve, and every Nigerian has to do his/her part.

For those who are stakeholders in the election process, I have three points to make as Nigeria works toward that end:

First, the sponsorship of violence and intimidation, and the rhetorical threat thereof, are utterly unacceptable in a democratic society and need to be expunged once and for all from the Nigerian polity and discourse. The United States has been deeply troubled by some of the rhetoric that has been thrown around in recent weeks and months as these elections have drawn closer. It is perfectly acceptable, and even praiseworthy, to seek to defend your vote and that of your fellow citizens who share your support for a particular candidate. It is not, however, productive or reasonable to threaten violence, even when you perceive others have been guilty of misconduct. We were deeply troubled by the threat of "rig and roast" issued by some major politicians in recent weeks. "Who benefits from that type of violent rhetoric?" we wondered. And why would any ordinary Nigerian accept such provocative language, especially considering the history of post-election violence in Nigeria and the truly horrific carnage that this country has been suffering at the hands of Boko Haram? If a candidate believes an election

accountable to them.

This concept is evident in the article the United States' Declaration of Independence of 1776, which clearly states in its preamble: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

The right to withdraw consent in a democracy is through the ballot box based on the people's judgment of the performance of their elected officials. As Nigeria prepares for the February 2015, political parties must seriously consider their choice of candidate, to ensure that those they present for election will address the issues that the Nigerian electorate is most concerned about and that candidates will be accountable to the people when they are elected. The choices, candidates, and issues are critical to this election. ❖



INEC Chairman Professor Attahiru Jega

is threatened, then that candidate should be doing everything possible to see that the rules of the game are enforced properly by having party agents in the numerous locations where they are permitted, for example, to bear witness to what happens or doesn't happen. That is part of the painstaking work of participating in, and building, a democracy. Drawing on or threatening violence is an attempt to short-circuit that process for the benefit of a few but to the detriment of many.

Second, Nigeria's politicians must accept that they undermine the democratic process when they systematically deny even the possibility of defeat in a free and fair process. These politicians should repeat to themselves the following sentence, either now or sometime before election day: "It is possible that I can lose this election if it is conducted credibly." I could reel off countless examples of elections in the United States in which one candidate or party had an evident advantage or advantages and *seemingly* should have won easily. Sometimes even the toughest of



All Progressives Congress (APC) chairman John Oyegun (L), with U.S. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert Jackson and Ambassador James Entwistle during a courtesy call at the APC office.

candidates, a well-known, popular incumbent, for example, can lose, and lose badly. Going into her reelection battle in 1994, Texas Governor Ann Richards had a national political profile and enjoyed a 60 percent approval rating among Texans. But she lost by a relatively wide margin, to the Republican candidate, George W. Bush. Neither she nor anyone around her suggested that there had been cheating in the election, she was just defeated. It was that simple. Voters liked her, but they chose to go a different direction. It is a fact that even in the fairest and most credible

elections there must be a candidate who loses and if there are more than two parties, as is the case in Nigeria, you will have multiple candidates who lose. Nigerian political parties and candidates need to start accepting that their defeats are not wholly, or perhaps even partly, a result of the malfeasance of their opponent or opponents' supporters.

Nigerian democracy will grow stronger the sooner that starts to happen.

Third, and finally, Nigeria has a well-established set of rules for elections, produced by

INEC in concert with the Electoral Act and guided by the Nigerian Constitution. Abide by them. There is no process, democratic or otherwise, that can survive when its basic foundation is undermined by those seeking to use it. The Nigerian electoral process is only as good as Nigerians make it. That doesn't mean only worrying about what the other parties are doing it means also worrying about what you and your allies are doing. The fundamental question is this: does what you're doing help build and sustain an electoral process that you want your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to take part in?

Nigerians have fought long and hard to earn the democratic rights they now possess, and Nigerians want and deserve peaceful, credible elections across this great country in February 2015. That's why these elections are a critical juncture. Every Nigerian - from party leaders and candidates to average citizens - should do everything in his/her power to help meet those expectations and thereby, counter this crisis of credibility. ❖



Peoples Democratic Party National Chairman Adamu Mu'azu welcomes U.S. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert Jackson, flanked by Ambassador Entwistle, to his office -- photo by Idika Onyukwu

In 2015, Vote Not Fight

Ambassador Entwistle and 2face Team Up

On November 1, U.S. Ambassador James F. Entwistle and Mission Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development Michael T. Harvey joined Nigeria’s hip hop star and recording artist 2face Idibia at a musical campaign for peaceful elections in Nigeria. The “Vote Not Fight” campaign also has an on-line pledge for non-violence at votenotfight.org.

“We want a peaceful, free and fair election and that’s what this campaign is all about. The message is targeting young people”, said 2face. “If you want

to pass a message across to people, particularly young people, music is one medium through which you can do that successfully. Therefore, the campaign for Vote Not Fight is basically to talk to the youths to shun violence in the forthcoming elections.”

2face recognized and thanked Ambassador Entwistle and USAID Director Harvey for supporting Nigerians in their effort for credible and peaceful elections.

USAID, through the National Democratic Institute, is supporting the 2Face Foundation and a youth

NGO—Youngstars Development Initiative—in a nationwide youth get-out-the-vote campaign, “Vote Not Fight: Election No Be War,” to encourage a peaceful 2015 electoral process. By informing youth about their civic rights and responsibilities in the 2015 electoral process, the campaign seeks to inspire youth to make active, positive and peaceful contributions to the elections and to participate in the political process. ❖

Photo caption: Ambassador James Entwistle and hip-hop artist 2face Idibia at the “Vote Not Fight” concert in Abuja -- photo by Crystal Byrd-Ogbadu.





Ambassador James F. Entwistle, (third left), contributes to the discussion on volunteerism and community service at the Kukah Center in Abuja, November 13, 2014 -- photo by Idika Onyukwu



Ambassador Entwistle Encourages Volunteerism and Community Service to Help Displaced Persons

With several thousands of displaced persons seeking food and shelter in the northeast of Nigeria due to security challenges, U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria James F. Entwistle has made a clarion call for volunteers to support government efforts in ameliorating the plight of families living under the burden of a horrible conflict.

Ambassador Entwistle participated in a roundtable discussion on how to rekindle the spirit of volunteerism in Nigeria organized by the Kukah Center in Abuja on November 13. The Kukah Centre was founded by Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah in Kaduna as the Centre for Faith and Public Policy, but he changed its name and relocated to Abuja in December 2012.

Ambassador Entwistle said, “As a friend and partner of this country, and as I read about the beleaguered state of thousands of Nigerians displaced in the North-East due to a horrible conflict, which most recently reared its head in Yobe, it seems to me that this

is a clarion call—if nothing else in addition to government efforts—for a volunteer effort to do everything we can to help so that these poor people even though they have been displaced from their homes by this violence, do not go without food or shelter or be denied the right to vote in February.”

On the benefits of volunteerism, Ambassador Entwistle said, “Through community service, people can build networks and connections while acquiring useful experience or training.” The ambassador noted that volunteering also benefits businesses. It can help maintain employee engagement in a productive corporate culture, develop employee skills, and enhance their brand and reputation.

He said both Nigerians and the United States recognized the strength of volunteerism. Ambassador Entwistle

cited the National Youth Service Corps as an institution that embodies the spirit and culture of volunteerism.

The roundtable discussion also included the representative of the Sultan of Sokoto, former Governor of Ekiti state Kayode Feyemi, and Nneka Eze, a management consultant with Dalberg International, among others. The Catholic Bishop of Sokoto, Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah moderated the program. ❖



Bishop Matthew Kukah welcomes the representative of the Sultan of Sokoto to the Kukah Center, November 13. Photo by Idika Onyukwu

U.S., Nigerian Armed Forces Review Procedures for Detaining Suspects



Workshop participants pose for a group photo after discussing standard procedures for handling detainees.

U.S.-Nigerian relations received a major boost when instructors from the U.S. Defense Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS) conducted a November 18-21 workshop on how to handle suspects during times of conflict and peace in Abuja. Two-hundred thirty members of the Nigerian military, including provost marshal Major General Patrick Akem and several army principal staff officers, sailors, and air force personnel, participated in the activity.

The workshop focused on international and Nigerian law related to the detention of subjects during armed and unarmed conflicts. DIILS is the United States' lead defense security cooperation resource for professional legal education, training, and law programs for international military and related civilian authorities. In cooperation with the Nigerian military, the U.S. Embassy's Office of Security Cooperation provided resources from the California National Guard, U.S.

Army, representatives of the U.S. Provost Marshal Office, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). During the workshop, participants analyzed the application of international humanitarian law—law of armed conflict—and human rights law to a variety of domestic and international operations, including North Atlantic Treaty Organization, United Nations peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, border security, internal security, and counter-terrorism operations. ❖



A class in session during the training.



Group photo of participants on detention operations workshop in Abuja, November 2014.



Fight Gender Violence As We Fought Ebola

By *Idika U. Onyukwu, Editor*
CROSSROADS with additional reports
 from *Bene Uche in Lagos*

An imam, a pastor, two civil rights advocates, including a women’s rights advocate, headlined a panel discussion on December 3 at the U.S. Embassy, where each agreed that serious measures are needed to end violence against women. As part of the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence,” the U.S. Embassy welcomed 150 guests to take part in this important discussion.

Chief Imam Fu’ad Adeyemi of Al-Habibiyah Mosque said that people hide under religious cover to abuse women. He described it as unfair and lacking in the knowledge

of the holy Koran when women are divorced without strict adherence to



Member of the audience making contributions during a panel discussion on gender violence, Dec. 3, 2014.

Islamic tenets. The imam said divorce in Islam is not an easy process; it takes more than the mere pronouncements of three repeated statements by a man. Imam Adeyemi suggested the empowerment through solid education can protect women from violence. “Women deserve to be treated with lots of respect and humanity,” he said.

Olarenwaju Osho, a pastor at the Redeemed Christian Church of God, said that no man beats himself, so men do not have any reason or right to beat or treat women, girls or their wives with violence.

Esther Uzoma, national coordinator of Proactive Gender Initiatives, a non-governmental organization, challenged women to understand their rights and recognize that they are intelligent human beings. Relying on her experience



in handling cases involving gender conflicts, she explained the rampant trend of gender-based violence in crowded communities, such as within the Mararaba suburb of Abuja. Ms. Uzoma also advocated for a new cultural orientation in which mothers can teach and raise boys and girls as equals.

Speaking earlier, Victoria Sloan, U.S. Embassy public affairs counsellor, explained that gender-based violence takes many forms and results in physical, sexual, and psychological harm to both women and men.

“Globally, an estimated one in three women worldwide has been

beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime,” she said.

Guests of the program eagerly asked questions of the panelists and offered their own perspectives on gender-based violence in Nigeria, such as fighting it in the same way that led to

the containment of Ebola in Nigeria.

In Lagos, the Consulate General marked the International Day of the Girl Child with a film presentation and a panel discussion that featured four guest speakers, three poets, and a renowned youth photographer. The program featured the film *The Queen and the Carpet Girl*, produced by Ifeoma Fafunwa. Former World Bank Vice President and Senior Economic Adviser of the Africa Economic Development Policy Initiative Dr. Oby Ezekwesili and International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) alumna Bisi Olateru-Olagbige both spoke on education, the girl child and the Chibok girls.

Dr. Ezekwesili said educating the girl child



A panel discussion on gender violence in commemoration of 16 days of activism on ending violence against women.



A group photo of participants pose in solidarity with Bring Back Our Girls' marking the International Day of the Girl Child in Lagos. Guests included secondary students, Dr. Oby Ezekwesili, second left, and Bisi Olateru Olagbegi, second right.

by providing her with basic yet adequate learning infrastructure and also ensuring that her education is sustained and protected remains a basic human right. She noted that it was important that authorities recognize how important it is to engage traditional rulers, especially in northern Nigeria, to break the cycle of ignorance on early marriages. She advised the parents in attendance to provide equal opportunities for both male and

female children and to have an inclusive approach when raising their children. Dr. Ezekwesili advised students to see themselves as global citizens competing with other children worldwide.

Executive Director, Women Consortium Nigeria and alumna of the Young African Leadership Initiative (IVLP) Olateru-Olagbegi noted that the girl child remains a constant feature for abuse and all kinds of inhuman treatment.

She cited the predominance of girls trafficked for prostitution saying that it is time to stop trafficking in children. She said statistics show that 10 million children are not in school of which 5.5 million are girls. She concurred with Dr. Ezekwesili on the

importance of education for the girl child and the need to protect her while in school. She said Nigeria cannot move on without finding the missing Chibok girls otherwise it would send the wrong signal to terrorists.

Other speakers in the program included Adebayo Alonge, a Mandela Washington Fellowship alumnus, who gave remarks on how he was inspired by President Obama's speech while attending the YALI program on July 28, 2014.

The program also featured a photographic presentation of the "Girl Child in Nigeria" by award winning youth photographer Bayo Omoboriowo. In addition, selected poets from the Information Resource Center *Read it Loud* program rendered poems on lives of the girl child. In solidarity with the missing Chibok girls, guests held up signs, "Bring Back our Girls."❖



Dr. Oby Ezekwesili making remarks at the Lagos event.

U.S. Mission Nigeria Urges Youth to Take Action, End Unemployment



Barrister Aminu Danladi, UN Youth Assembly representative for Kano State, engages participants on job creation at the workshop on entrepreneurs in Abuja -- Photo by Idika Onyukwu

By Aliyu Mustapha

On November 11-12, the U.S. Embassy organized a two day workshop on youth entrepreneurship at Bolingo Hotel, Abuja in collaboration with LEAP Africa, the National Youth Service Corps, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), and the National Council for Women Development.

The event was led by Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Maria Brewer, who commended the organizers for the large pool of participants in her remarks. More than 180 participants were presented with certificates.

Speaking earlier, Brewer noted that in August, following the Washington Mandela conference in Washington, President Obama announced the creation of three

regional leadership centers in Africa with Ghana serving as the center for West Africa. She noted that the embassy would continue to advocate for Nigeria to be selected as the next center because Nigeria is undoubtedly Africa's most populous country and the continent's largest economy: It has by far the largest population of young people.

The DCM also said that, President Obama regularly reminds diplomats serving in Africa that "Africa is the youngest and fastest-growing continent, with young people that are full of dreams and ambition." She said as she travels throughout Nigeria, "I am constantly amazed

at the creativity and passion of young Nigerian entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs, such as yourselves."

Last October at the Fourth Global Summit on Entrepreneurship in Malaysia, Secretary of State Kerry highlighted the need for youths all over the world to focus on entrepreneurship



DCM Maria Brewer making opening remarks at the workshop -- Photo by Idika Onyukwu

and job creation. The DCM pointed out to the audience that Mark Zuckerberg was only 19 when he launched Facebook—the social media platform that has revolutionized the manner by which many of us stay in touch with friends and colleagues all over the world. She said “there is no doubt that in the audience today, there are numerous Mark Zuckerbergs with ideas that have the potential to revolutionize Nigerian society.”

The theme of the workshop was “Entrepreneurship as a Vehicle for Economic Prosperity.” The aim

development, a paradigm shift from job seekers to job creators. Resource facilitators shared individual experiences on the steps required to make the leap. Breakout sessions to identify compelling business opportunities and develop concept notes were later established. Also, a panel discussion that dwelled on how to attract support and financing systems and the structures for supporting aspiring and emerging SMEs in Nigeria were provided.

Participants were also taught

included Ndidi Nwuneli of LEAP Africa, Samuel Obafemi, a strategy and operations expert at Barnabas House Group, Ogechukwu Modie of NOI Polls, Ibrahim Dan-Halilu of Fast Track Network, Adaeze Ilounoh of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, and Olanrewaju Osho, the president of the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). Others included Mandela Washington Fellows Alumni and Study of the U.S. Institute alumni.

The message from each facilitator at the workshop was



A cross section of participants at the youth entrepreneurship workshop in Abuja -- Photo by Idika Onyukwu

of the workshop was to examine the factors responsible for the growth of small and medium-sized businesses in the United States, how it boosts the U.S. economy, and how these factors can be replicated or applied in Nigeria —the rationale behind the idea being that Nigeria and United States share common characteristics in terms of population, landmass, system of government, diversity, challenges, long standing diplomatic and people-to-people relationships.

The first two days of the workshop concentrated on entrepreneurship as a vehicle for economic growth and sustainable

different business skills including time and financial management, the act and practice of leadership, how to use leadership for change, and social entrepreneurship. To experiment on the skills taught at the workshop, participants were divided into breakout sessions to develop actionable plans for effecting change in northern Nigeria using the Boko Haram insurgency as a case study. Participants also learned how to develop good grant writing and fund raising skills, project management, and how to measure impact and success. .

Facilitators at the workshop

consistent about the need to move from job seekers to job creators as an alternative way of life. The facilitators also encouraged the participants to always believe in themselves noting that success is proportional to hard work while prayers remain constant.

Following the success recorded at the workshop, the U.S. Embassy plans to commit funds to run series of similar entrepreneurship programs within the next year. The workshops will also include business plan competitions that would help beneficiaries setup their own businesses with the support of the U.S. Embassy and SMEDAN. ❖

Embassy Announces New Visa Changes, Opens **New Visa** Collection Center in Port Harcourt

In a renewed effort to enhance customer service and offer efficient visa processing to members of the public, the U.S. Mission in Abuja on November 25 hosted a press conference led by Stacie Hankins, consular chief, announcing new changes to the non-immigrant visa process and the designation of Port Harcourt as a new visa collection center. The Port Harcourt center commenced operations on November 8.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Hankins said effective December 1, 2014, the U.S. Mission to Nigeria would require that the DS-160 non-immigrant visa application confirmation number used to schedule visa interviews match the application confirmation page that is brought to the interview. She added that “applicants who do not meet this criterion will not be interviewed and will have to purchase a new fee receipt to book another appointment.”

On the new document collection center in Port Harcourt, the consular chief said visa applicants who interview in Lagos or Abuja could now choose to pick up their passports in Port Harcourt. Likewise, U.S. visa applicants can now submit their passports to the Port Harcourt collection center for processing as part of the U.S. Mission to Nigeria’s drop box renewal program.

A large section of the media both in Lagos and Abuja participated in the press conference. ❖



Consular Chief Stacie Hankins (standing) making remarks at the press conference on visa changes. Photo by Idika Onyukwu

Did You Know?

The new DHL Document Collection Center in Port Harcourt is open. Applicants who interview in Lagos or Abuja can choose to pick up their passports in Port Harcourt, in addition to existing facilities in Abuja and Lagos. Similarly, applicants can submit their passports to the Port Harcourt collection center as part of the U.S. Mission to Nigeria’s drop box renewal program.

Passport collection via the center in Port Harcourt will take one additional day. Individuals whose visa applications are approved can expect their passports within four days. Drop box applicants can expect their passports within 7-10 days.

The address for the DHL Collection Center in Port Harcourt is:

GSS Document Collection Center, DHL House, No. 82 Trans Amadi, Ella Estate, Near Bewac Junction, Port

Harcourt

DS-160 CONFIRMATION NUMBER ACCURACY

Effective December 1, 2014, the U.S. Mission to Nigeria will require that the DS-160 non-immigrant visa application confirmation number used to schedule visa interviews match the application confirmation page that is brought to the interview.

Applicants who do not meet this criterion will not be interviewed and will have to purchase a new fee receipt to book another appointment.

Full instructions on how to make an appointment for a non-immigrant visa interview are available on our website: <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov>.

Applicants with existing appointments in December and beyond should contact the CGI Call Center at +234 0144 06218 to make any necessary changes. ❖



Human Rights Is A Daily Work

By **Idika U. Onyukwu**

Advancing freedom and human rights is a daily responsibility in which everyone should participate, according to U.S. Ambassador James F. Entwistle.

Speaking at a forum to commemorate Human Rights Day at Nigeria's National Human Rights Commission in Abuja, Ambassador Entwistle said that when human rights becomes a daily task, "it is possible to produce a more perfect union and a more perfect world, where every human being lives freely and with dignity."

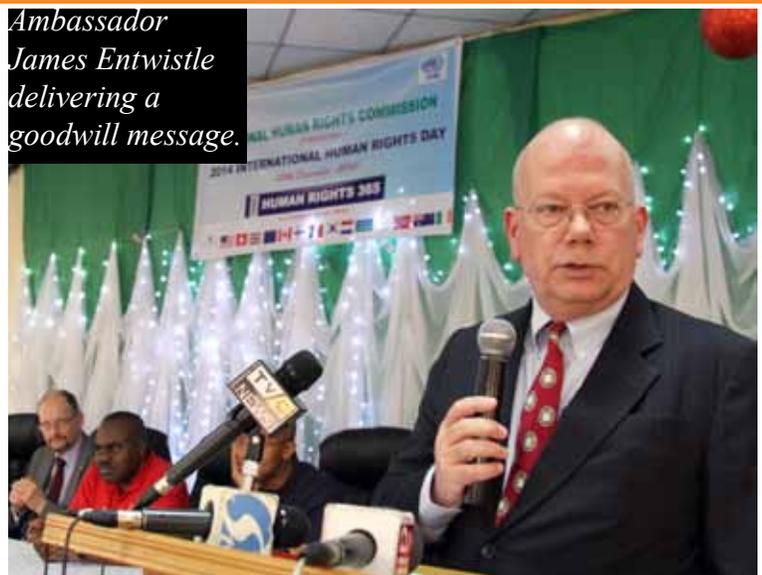
Ambassador Entwistle encouraged attendees to draw some lessons from the U.S. experience.

"In my lifetime, I have gone from seeing African-Americans in my country demonstrating for the right to vote, being attacked

by security forces to, 50 years later, an African-American president in the White House. So, all around the world, improvements in human rights are absolutely possible if brave men and women are willing to put their lives on the line to achieve them," Ambassador Entwistle said.

Prior to the forum, Nigerian government officials, members of the diplomatic community, and

Ambassador James Entwistle delivering a goodwill message.



human rights activists, including physically challenged persons, paraded down major streets in Abuja to call for greater protection of human rights 365 days per year, conforming with this year's theme, "Human Rights 365." ❖

Nigeria Positions for Global Cocoa Market



U.S. Consul General Jeffrey Hawkins, making remarks at the National Cocoa Investment Summit in Lagos.

Amidst fears of a deficit in the global supply of cocoa, Lagos has hosted a National Cocoa Investment Summit to explore ways to re-energise the country's cocoa industry in support of the government of Nigeria's ongoing effort to boost competitiveness in the industry.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), with support from the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) and Olam, organized the summit. High-level government officials, senior executives of multinational food companies, local and international players in the chocolate industry, and top cocoa growers participated in the summit.

Growing demand and falling supplies of cocoa present real challenges to the sector. The biggest international confectionery manufacturer, Barry Callebaut Group from Switzerland, recently warned that the sector should prepare for "a potential cocoa shortage by 2020," which has already contributed to cocoa prices rising a staggering 25 percent in the past year. Other key players in the industry have also warned that cocoa use will top output by about 70,000 metric tons and the deficits will persist through 2018.

While growing demand for chocolate in emerging economies, such as China and India, is raising the price of cocoa, Nigeria has experienced diminishing rates of cocoa production. Nigeria has the

potential to dramatically increase cocoa exports if public and private stakeholders adopt an aggressive strategy to raise productivity and meet international quality requirements.

U.S. Consul General in Lagos, Jeffrey Hawkins said: "the challenge is for all the actors, government and private to agree to put these pieces together in a way that enables Nigerian agribusinesses to thrive over the long term".

More broadly, in the field of economic growth, USAID is a leader in trade and investment, agriculture development, energy, and water and sanitation. As partners with the government of Nigeria and the private sector, USAID is delivering innovative solutions to foster broad-based economic growth with a view to eradicating poverty. ❖

Commemorating World AIDS Day

In commemoration of 2014 World AIDS Day, the U.S. Mission in Nigeria organized a health fair December 1 on the embassy grounds with stakeholders such as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the National Blood

audience based on their individual experiences on HIV/AIDS awareness. For instance John West (not real name) said he was born with the HIV virus but today, lives a productive and normal life.

The panel also discussed the



Blood donation during the 2014 US embassy Abuja Blood donation drive. Photo by Idika Onyukwu

Transfusion Service, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in attendance. The event focused on global efforts to deliver an AIDS-free generation. The fair highlighted the importance of family communication on health issues, including a panel discussion on how to communicate “uncomfortable issues,” such as HIV/AIDS prevention. Those who needed to do free check-ups on blood pressure, HIV/AIDS testing and sugar level testing, had a field day.

During the panel discussion led by Dr. Abiye Kalaiwo, USAID program manager, young people and parents interfaced with the

importance of family communications on sexually transmitted diseases with young people using best practices.

The annual health fair program is a U.S. Mission driven health program that partners with Nigerian health agencies to deliver healthy living among Nigerians. ❖

A panel discussing the importance of family communication on sex education with teenagers.



PEPFAR at a Glance

Since its inception in Nigeria in 2004, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has disbursed more than 3.4 billion U.S. dollars (more than 544 billion Naira!) to

support Nigeria's HIV/AIDS response.

About 540,000 men, women and children are currently on HIV treatment.

In financial year 2013 alone:

Approximately 572,000 people have been reached with community outreach programs promoting Abstinence, Being Faithful, Correct and

Consistent Use of

Condoms (ABC), and other related preventive strategies;

Nearly 6.7 million people have been reached with HIV counseling and testing services;

About 47,000 pregnant women have been provided antiretroviral drugs for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV;

Approximately 790,000 adults and children living with HIV/AIDS have received care to support quality of life, including TB/HIV care services and;

About 530,000 children orphaned by AIDS and other vulnerable children received care and support. ❖

EducationUSA/Information Resources

Abuja -- Lagos

Do You Want to Study in the United States?



The EducationUSA Advising Centers in Abuja and Lagos provide quality, timely, accurate, unbiased information about all accredited U.S. higher education institutions for persons wishing to study in the United States. For more information about EducationUSA and study opportunities in the United States, please visit:

<http://www.educationusa.state.gov>

Educational Advising Center Locations:

Abuja:

Embassy of the United States of America,
Plot 1075 Diplomatic Drive, Central District Area
Abuja. Telephone: 234-09-4614251/4241/4257
Fax: 234-09-4614334/4010; E-mail: eacabuja@state.gov. Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/educationusa.abuja>

Lagos:

U.S. Consulate General, Public Affairs Section
2 Walter Carrington Crescent; Victoria Island-Lagos
Telephone: 01-460-3400/2724/2725/3801/3802
E-mail: lagos@educationusa.info

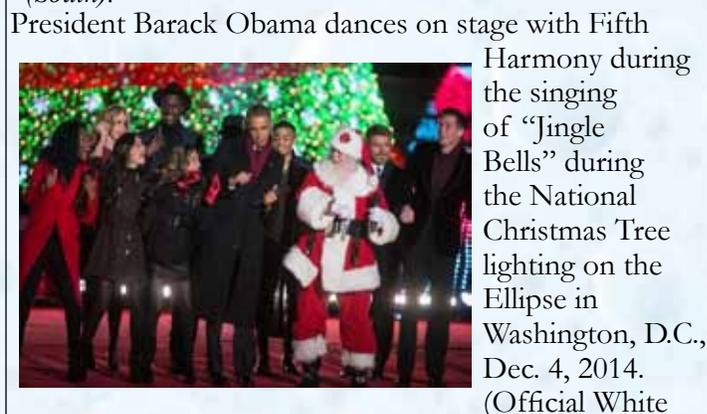
EducationUSA Hosts College Connect for Students



More than 850 undergraduate and graduate students attended the 15th annual College Connect at

the Federal Capital Territory Pavilion on October 8 and 9, 2014. The fair was organized by the U.S. Mission to Nigeria's EducationUSA Abuja center. Visit: http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/pe_10162014.html

The resources highlighted below are available at the Information Resource Centers in Abuja and Lagos. To register as a member, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/ircregistration> and for all enquiries, please write to: ircabuja@state.gov (North) and wyllagos@state.gov (South).



House Photo by Lawrence Jackson)

Quotes From the President You Won't Want to Miss: "It is a story dear to my family as Christians, but its meaning is one embraced by all peoples across our country and around the world, regardless of how they pray, or whether they pray at all. And that's to love our neighbors as ourselves."

Election Day: Democracy in Action



Election Day in the United States often arrives dressed as a carnival, ready to attract attention and excite voter interest.

Read more: <http://1.usa.gov/1yUmGUi> (online).
Download a copy at <http://1.usa.gov/1sllC5U> (750KB pdf)

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Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy
Plot 1075 Diplomatic Drive Central District Area
Abuja, Nigeria
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Visit us at: <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov>
Open
9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

Whitney M. Young Information Resource Center
Public Affairs Section, U.S. Consulate General
2 Walter Carrington Crescent, Victoria Island, Lagos Nigeria
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E-mail: wyllagos@state.gov

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9:00 a.m-3:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday
9:00 a.m.-12 noon Friday

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