

Don't Repeat Past Role in 2011, Mimiko Tells Army

As the 2011 [general elections](#) in the country draws nearer, the [Ondo State Governor](#), Dr Olusegun Mimiko has thrown a challenge to the Nigerian [Armed Forces](#) that if [Nigeria](#) must achieve credible and acceptable elections, the military must not repeat the partial role it played during the 2007 poll.

The Governor threw the challenge while granting audience to the [General Officer Commanding](#), 2 Mechanised Division of the Nigerian Army, Ibadan, [Major General](#) Mohammed Abubakar, during a courtesy visit to him in Akure.

“The Americans have predicted a break-up of Nigeria in 2015; they must have come to that prediction because of our past failed attempts to have credible elections, now we are having another election in 2011. You see, God loves this country, each time we heat up the polity and do what we are not suppose to do, He always come to the rescue of Nigeria, but we must not over-tempt God. If we want to get it right in this country, credible election is the answer.

“The security challenges facing our nation as we prepare for another political transition are enormous, as stakeholders, you must present yourselves as agents of positive change rather than been willing tools in the hands of desperate politicians.

“It is sad that the myriad of problems we have in this country were as a result of lack of credible elections in the past because desperate and selfish politicians who got [political authority](#) through the back door have been using their positions to subvert the true wishes of the people during elections.

“A classical example of this abuse of the armed forces was in the days of do-or-die politics, the soldiers at the 19th Battalion at Okitipupa, they went after our people, they maltreated them, chained them like goats and other manners of inhuman treatment, they did not release them even after getting a court order to do so, one of them was even a candidate in the election, it was a sad tale.

“Whoever tries to sabotage the forth coming elections is an enemy of the nation, so all hands must be on deck to ensure that the votes of Nigerians produce their leaders. This is when the leaders can be accountable to the people and peace, prosperity and political stability can be guaranteed” the governor said.

Dr Mimiko, while condemning the increasing rate of bomb blast in some parts of the country in the recent time, attributed it to the desire of some people to gain power at all cost.

“Our President, Goodluck Jonathan has been promising us and has said it repeatedly that he will superintend over free and fair election in this country. We believe him for his words, he is a man of integrity. All of us have our own roles to play in this regard. Both the military and the civilian must work closely together to achieve result. The result that will elevate the status of our great country before the international community.

“We must then caution those who might be planning sabotage , who are bent on scuttling the elections, that this time around, the attention of the whole world has shifted to Nigeria , so the civil society must work closely with the [security agencies](#) to curb electoral violence and other vices capable of marring the elections.

Earlier in his speech, the GOC, Major General Mohammed Abubakar, who assumed office 3 months ago, said he was in [Ondo State](#) on familiarization visit to Army formations under his supervision.

General Abubakar appreciated the state government's support for the 323 Artillery Regiment in Akure in the areas of intra-barrack road rehabilitation, barrack renovation'.

He appreciated the support of the armed forces in the state in the area of sustainable peace for development and sponsorship of some of their officers to Mecca and [Israel](#) on holy pilgrimage.

Signed

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