



Federal Ministry of Justice

MALAMI PLEDGES FG COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENT NEW ELECTORAL ACT

The Federal Government has pledged its commitment to implement the outcome of the Senator Ken Nnamani-led Constitution and Electoral Reform Committee if it completes its duties and the reform passed into law by the National Assembly. The Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr. Abubakar Malami, SAN made this pledge in his address at the North Central zone public hearing of the constitution and electoral reform in Jos, Plateau state on Friday 10th March, 2017.

The HAGF represented by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Comrade Salihu Othman Isah disclosed in his address that the Federal Government is in full support of the Committee and would therefore ensure that whatever is contained in the new electoral Act is implemented to the letter so as to guarantee the development of the nation. This is contained in a press statement issued by the Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to the Honourable Attorney General of Federation and Minister of Justice, and made available to the Press and Public Relations Unit of the ministry over the weekend.

Malami said, “It is my honour and privilege to address this August occasion as the nation once again attempts to re-jig its constitution and electoral reforms. I am sure you will all agree that life is about constant change and that nothing in life is perfect. So is our electoral system”. “It is to this end that the present Administration of His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR decided to constitute and indeed inaugurate the Constitution and Electoral Reform Committee on Tuesday 4th October, 2016. “Let me re-state that the Federal Government inaugurated the Committee in fulfillment of Mr. President’s pledge to leave a lasting legacy in the area of electoral reform. The relevance of this exercise cannot be over-emphasized”. “Elections are what democracy entails and democracy as we commonly know is a sure and sustainable way of ensuring development. The Federal Ministry of Justice is therefore in full support of this exercise”, the AGF explained.

Malami recalled that the Committee led by the former Senate President, Senator (Dr.) Ken Nnamani was handed a clear mandate to reform the nation's electoral system and a 13 terms of reference to guide them in the performance of the task ahead. He said the mandate includes; to review the laws impacting elections in Nigeria, including relevant provision of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) and the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) to assess their impact and adequacy for the administration of elections in Nigeria. He also revealed that the Committee was tasked to review and recommend the jurisdictional mandates of the proposed Electoral Tribunal. It is equally mandated to review relevant judicial decisions on election petitions as it relates to conflicting judgment; absence of consequential orders; trying of judges' delay in issuing Certified True Copies of judgments as well as harmonising the Electoral Act in view of the judgments with a view to enhancing the electoral processes.

According to him, the Nnamani Committee will carry out review of the lessons learnt from the 2015 General Elections and make recommendations for improvement as it relates to the judicial decisions and experiences from field operations. It is also to "identify and assess international best practices on elections and electoral systems relevant to Nigeria's experience and identify best practices that would impact positively on the quality and credibility of the nation's electoral process; "Review the extent of implementation of the recommendations of the 2008 Electoral Reform Committee (ERC) headed by Justice Muhammed Uwais (Uwais Report) and advice on outstanding issues for implementation; "Advice on the implementation of outstanding recommendations contained in the Uwais Report; identify areas of the Constitution impacting on the conduct of elections that need reform and to recommend the best approach to effect prosecution of electoral offences".

The Committee will equally "consolidate the recommendations for Electoral Reform into a single Electoral Act Bill to achieve repeal of the 2010 Electoral Act and re-enactment of a new Electoral Act for the country; "Prepare and recommend a draft bill for approval of the President for submission to the National Assembly for enactment; coordinate with the National Assembly to achieve timely passage into law of the proposed bill as well as make any other recommendations deemed necessary."

The Executive Governor, Plateau state, Mr. Simon Bako Lalong who handed over the position paper of the Plateau state government on the electoral reform to the Chairman of the Committee, Senator Ken Nnamani said his government was in full support of the process. In his welcome address, Senator Ken Nnamani enjoined Nigerians with genuine interest in the growth of the nation to contribute their positions to enrich his Committee's work, adding that though it is not mandatory or constitutional to hold the zonal public hearings, it was however doing so to give Nigerians a sense of belonging by allowing them make inputs.