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Imposing Visa Restrictions on Nigerians Responsible for Undermining the Democratic Process

PRESS STATEMENT**MORGAN ORTAGUS, DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON**

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The United States is a steadfast supporter of Nigerian democracy. We commend all those Nigerians who participated peacefully in the February and March 2019 elections and have worked to strengthen Nigerian democratic institutions and processes. As Nigeria marks the twentieth anniversary of a return to democratic rule this year, we remain committed to working together to continue to advance democracy and respect for human rights and achieve greater peace and prosperity for both our nations. We condemn those whose acts of violence, intimidation, or corruption harmed Nigerians or undermined the democratic process.

In a January 24 statement, the U.S. government said that we would consider consequences – including visa restrictions – for individuals responsible for undermining the Nigerian democratic process or for organizing election-related violence. To that end, the Secretary of State is imposing visa restrictions on Nigerians believed to be responsible for, or complicit in, undermining democracy in Nigeria. These individuals have operated with impunity at the expense of the Nigerian people and undermined democratic principles and human rights.

The Department of State emphasizes that the actions announced today are specific to certain individuals and not directed at the Nigerian people or the newly elected government. This decision reflects the Department of State's commitment to working with the Nigerian government to realize its expressed commitment to end corruption and strengthen democracy, accountability, and respect for human rights.

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