

Nigeria candidates urge peaceful election

Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan and leading rival Muhammadu Buhari are urging voters to avoid violence in Saturday's presidential election, which analysts say will be the tightest in the nation's history



Goodluck Jonathan, 57
People's Democratic Party (PDP)

Running mate (inset)
Namadi Sambo



■ **Background:** Former zoology professor, Jonathan is first head of state from oil-rich Niger Delta. Enjoyed meteoric rise to power after entering politics in 1998. Thrust into presidency in 2010 following death of predecessor **Umaru Musa Yar'Adua**

■ **Appeal:** Electoral support lies mainly in Christian south. Pledging to tackle corruption and continue "transformation agenda" to diversify economy, create jobs, improve transport infrastructure and deal with country's energy problems

■ **Criticism:** Administration dogged by several corruption scandals and perceived weakness in face of **Boko Haram** insurgency. Despite country's oil wealth, 70 percent of Nigerians live below poverty line



Muhammadu Buhari, 72
All Progressives Congress (APC)

Running mate (inset)
Yemi Osinbajo



■ **Background:** Retired general has unsuccessfully run for election three times – in 2003, 2007 and 2011. Buhari leads united opposition for first time in 2015, including several heavyweight defectors from ruling PDP party

■ **Appeal:** Muslim candidate remains popular among poor people of northern Nigeria. Promising to wipe out corruption, tackle poverty through shared economic growth and end Boko Haram insurgency within months if elected

■ **Criticism:** Buhari viewed with suspicion in parts of Christian south. His brief period of rule during 1980s following military coup is remembered for harsh anti-corruption campaign and alleged human rights abuses