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**USE OF SMART CARD READERS**

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Since the conduct of the February 23, 2019 Presidential and National Assembly elections, there has been allegations from certain quarters that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was selective in its use of Smart Card Readers (SCRs) in its conduct of the elections. These allegations have led to speculations that INEC may be forced to jettison their use in the March 9, 2019 Governorship, State Houses of Assembly and Federal Capital Area Council elections.

INEC hereby states categorically that the allegations are absolutely false and the speculations are without any basis whatsoever. The use of the Smart Card Reader is not only mandatory but its deliberate non-use attracts the sanction of possible prosecution of erring officials in accordance with the INEC Regulations and Guidelines for the conduct of elections. This is in addition to the voiding of any result emanating from such units or areas as was done in the Presidential and National Assembly elections of February 23, 2019.

The general public and all officials engaged for the elections are hereby informed that the Commission is not reconsidering the use of these Smart Card Readers which has greatly improved the credibility of our elections and instilled a high level of public trust in them.

To clear any doubt or ambiguity, we wish to state that the deployment and mandatory use Smart Card Readers in Saturday's elections will not only be uniform but also universal, and the provisions of the Regulations and Guidelines will be strictly and vigorously enforced. All Stakeholders are to note and be guided accordingly please.



Festus Okoye Esq,

National Commissioner & Chairman, Information & Voter Education Committee.