

# Imo State Elections Scenarios and Recommendations

Draft Produced 17 December 2014

Disclaimer: The following analysis is based on discussions with State-level actors and so reflects their perceptions, not the view of the Peace and Security Working Group. These scenarios were produced prior to the 2014 primary elections and are thus subject to change. Where relevant, updates have been made to reflect evolving dynamics.

## Imo At-a-Glance

<b>Current Governor</b>	Rochas Okorochoa
<b>Current Ruling Party</b>	All Progressives Congress (APC); formerly APGA
<b>Key February 2015 Elections</b>	Presidential, Gubernatorial, National Assembly elections, State House of Assembly.
<b>Prognosis</b>	Imo State has been considered one of the most volatile states, placed in the highest threat level (red category) of CLEEN's latest report.

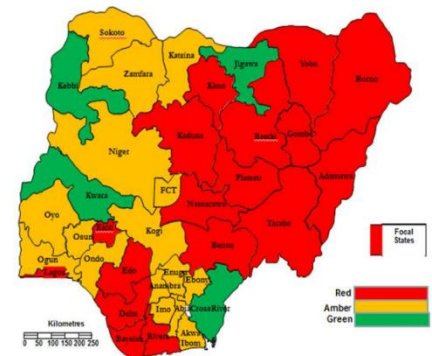


Figure 1: CLEEN Map of Hot Spots for Election Violence

## Imo Violence Data

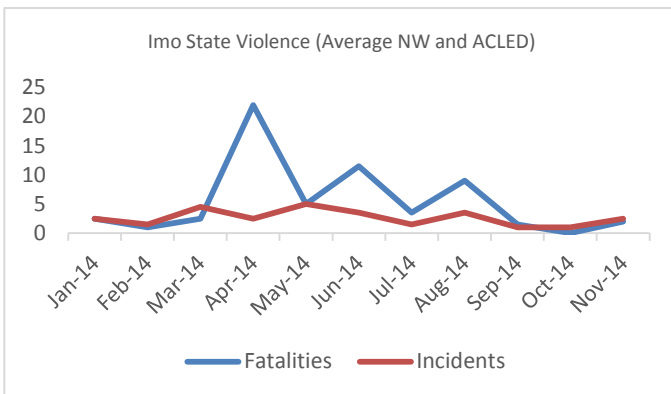


Figure 2: Peace Map ([www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org))

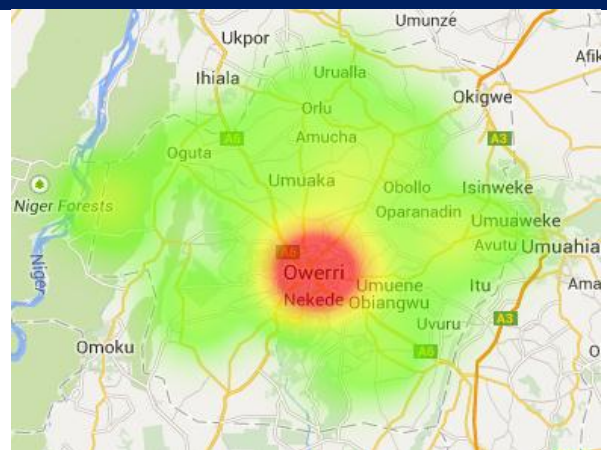


Figure 3: Violence Heat Map Jan 2009-Dec 2014



## Elections in 2011

After incumbent Ikedi Ohakim (PDP) lost the political support of the voters, (esp. Catholic Church), Okorochoa was able to narrowly defeat him in a major upset with 44.86% of the vote to Ohakim's 38.68%. The ACN candidate came in third with 14.26%. Due to the closeness of the election, violence was elevated in Oguta, Isiala, Mbanu, and Ideato South, including violent rallies, thuggery, and voter intimidation.

- **Ethnic Tension in 2011:** Inasmuch as the state is predominantly Igbo (98%), there was no ethnic polarization. Women and girls were not particularly targeted.
- **Response:** The Catholic Church played a major role in both mobilizing voters and calming the violence.

## Key Political Developments Since 2011

Before 2011, PDP Governor Ikedi Ohakim lost public support because of perceived high-handedness (eg. the flogging of a parish priest), and mismanagement, giving room to an APGA candidate Rochas Okorochoa to win the election, in a major upset. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) initially declared the election inconclusive due to reports of irregularities. Since then, Okorochoa dissolved the LG Councils, established and funded the Community Government Council (CGC), at the "Fourth Tier." Okorochoa began to lose support when he switched from APGA to APC, which is perceived to be a Yoruba/Hausa party, raising ethnic sentiment and historical grievances associated with the Biafran war. This opens up room for former political actors within the PDP to challenge Okorochoa in 2015 (including Achike Udenwa, Ifeanyi Ararume, Chris Anyanwu, Mike Ahamba etc).

## Major Political Players in Imo State

Name	Position	Elected / Appointed	Party	Additional Information
<b>Owelle Rochas Anayo Okorochoa</b>	State Governor	2011	APC	Governor Anayo Okorochoa will run for re-election in 2015.
<b>Eze Madumere</b>	Deputy Governor	2013	APC	-
<b>Chris N. D Anyanwu</b>	Senator	2007	APGA	-
<b>Hope Odidika Uzodinma</b>	Senator	2011	PDP	-
<b>Mathew I. Nwagwu</b>	Senator	2011	PDP	-

## Elections in 2015:

### Driver of Conflict:

- Hotly contested election; PDP has an opportunity to win back the state. Incumbent trying to hold it for APC.



- ✓ Update: Deputy Speaker of Federal House of Representatives, Emeka Ihedioha, was declared the winner of the PDP Governorship primaries in Imo State in December 2014 although those results are (at the time of this writing) being contested. Senator Ifeanyi Ararume, who was said to have come second with 336 votes, contends there are errors in the computation of the results.

- Proliferation of governorship aspirants
- Dissatisfaction with incumbent among former supporters has led to suspected financial and political manipulation, or vote buying.
- Mob and vigilante gangs easily mobilized for political violence and thuggery.
- High unemployment rates make gangs an increasingly attractive option for youth, particularly during election cycles.

#### **LGAs with Possible Election Violence:**

- Ohaji/Egbema
- Oguta
- Isiala-Mbano
- Ihitte-Uboma
- Okigwe
- Ngor Okpala
- Ahiazu-Mbaise

#### **Possible Types of Violence:**

- Hijacking of voting materials
- Violent rallies
- Individual confrontations
- Kidnapping
- Arson
- Political thuggery

#### **Scenario**

CLEEN Foundation's threat assessment suggests that the election will be violent. Former governor Ohakim's home was bombed in May 2014, although the motive and perpetrators remain unknown. Given Okorocho's defection to APC, there is significant grievance among some in the political establishment which could lead to violence as the campaigning gets underway. The PDP, keen to retake the state, has been accused of funnelling money and granting favours in an attempt to gain influence among disenfranchised Okorocho supporters. In addition, the existence of a significant youth population which remains unemployed or underemployed is believed to pose a threat as they may be easily mobilized to commit various acts of political violence and voter intimidation, which has happened in the past.

#### *Before election:*

- Disruptive political rallies that may lead to violence and even deaths.
- Political propaganda.
- Voter intimidation.

#### *During elections:*

- Hijacking of election materials.

IMO STATE  
ELECTION VIOLENCE SCENARIO



- Denial of voting rights.
- Thuggery.
- Kidnapping.

*After elections:*

- Manipulation of election results.
- Political party defections.
- Tribunals and court cases.