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Restraint urged amid Nigeria election unrest

The Nigerian military must not use excessive force to quell riots and demonstrations taking place around the imminent announcement of presidential election results, Amnesty International said today.

“We are extremely concerned about the escalation of violence in northern and central Nigeria by protestors and urge the Nigerian authorities to ensure that excessive force is not used against protesters,” said Tawanda Hondora, Amnesty International’s deputy director for Africa.

“Political leaders on all sides must act responsibly and tell their supporters to stop all acts of violence and human rights abuses.”

Rioting and violent attacks have been reported in the north and centre of the country, including Kaduna, Kano, Gombe, Adamawa, Bauchi and Plateau states and the Federal Capital Territory.

“The security forces’ response to this unrest must not lead to further human rights violations. The police and military must respect human life and use proportionate means to police demonstrations,” said Tawanda Hondora.

Presidential poll results show incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan is set to win.

Amnesty International recently issued a report highlighting how hundreds of people have been killed in politically-motivated, communal and sectarian violence across Nigeria ahead of presidential and parliamentary polls.