ADDRESS PRESENTED BY THE VISITOR TO UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA UNIVERSITY, KATSINA, HIS EXCELLENCY, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE MALAM DIKKO UMARU RADDA, PhD, AT THE 9TH – 13TH COMBINED CONVOCATION CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY HELD ON 25TH MAY, 2024

PROTOCOLS

I am thankful that Allah (SWT) has spared our lives and given me the opportunity to address this important gathering during the 9th to 13th Combined Convocation of this great University. We are here as our religious and society demand to share in the joy of our children, who have made us proud, and who will now have the chance to contribute their quota to the transformation of our dear state and country.

It will be out of place to begin my address without acknowledging the foresight and vision of the Late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, who as the

then Governor saw to it that this magnificent edifice came to life. Posterity will continue to be favorable to him and to his successors, Barr Ibrahim Shehu Shema and Rt. Honourable Aminu Bello Masari CFR, for sustaining this legacy. May Allah (SWT) reward them tenfold and forgive our visionary leader, Malam Umaru Musa.

I am happy today that Umaru Yar'adua University has decorated some notable sons and a daughter of the state with Honourary Degrees. I must admit that the gesture is long overdue. Let me, therefore, on behalf of the good people of the state utilize this medium to congratulate Alhaji Saidu Barda, CON, the first Executive Governor of Katsina State, Rt. Hon. Aminu Bello Masari, CFR, (Sen.) Ibrahim M. Ida, CON, as well as families of Hajia Hassu Iro Inko and Alhaji Garba Ammani for

this honour. It is commendable, for they have etched their names in gold.

Also worth mention here is the successful investiture of the new Chancellor to this University, (Sen.) Ibrahim M. Ida, PhD, CON, the Wazirin Katsina, a distinguished son of the state whose track-record of service speaks volume. I am certain that, it was his enviable feats that placed his name on topof the list for other distinguished individuals considered for this position. Congratulations.

Katsina State is historically known for its enviable status as a citadel of learning. I must admit that, this important position has waned over time, but I am confident that there is still light at the end of the tunnel. Katsina had produced scholars and seasoned administrators of great repute, who in many ways have shaped our history and

development. It is not too late to change our narrative. It shall be done *in sha Allah* and my administration is committed to redrawing that map.

Alhamdulillah, from its inception to date, UMYU has been blessed with committed management teams and Governing Councils that ensured that it reaches enviable heights. It is equally blessed with enthusiastic knowledge-driven academic and non-academic staffs, for without them we will not be here today. It is not easy to mould the characters of an exuberant group and still manage to instill knowledge.

Let me therefore congratulate the Chancellor, Pro-chancellor, and Vice Chancellor for the manner in which they efficiently, and with all sense of commitment, passion and forthrightness manage the affairs of

this important citadel of learning. Let me also utilize this medium to acknowledge the contributions of all those – too many to mention here – who have helped laid and nurtured this solid foundation. It is their arduous labour, selflessness, vision and steadfastness that this university enjoys in terms of teaching, research and innovation, and community service.

Immediately I took the oath of office in 2023 as the Governor of Katsina State, I made it 'evidently' clear that, we are here to restore the State's glorious days as education vanguard and agricultural hub. Consequently, we embarked on improving the standard of education by upgrading the infrastructures and facilities of our existing schools across the pockets of the state, building of new schools, recruiting additional

and qualified manpower (7, 000 teachers to be precise), and boosting the number of students enrollment.

In no distant future, also, we will embark on trainings and re-retraining of existing manpower in order to make this important sector attractive and responsive to the challenges of the modern age. We believe that, a learned society that is attuned to the demands of its epoch is a more successful one. That is why my administration will continuously commit a huge percentage of the State's budget to the education sector. Let us therefore put all hands on deck; together we can achieve this and we must do it for the benefit of our children and the generation yet unborn.

Katsina State is a part of – and fully supports – the **renewed hope agenda** of the Federal

Government under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR. Our commitment to this cause in the education sector is unwavering, as can be seen in the number of schools under rehabilitation, the upgrade in the sector to provide a more conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning, the building of new schools across the three (03) senatorial zones to attend to the surging increase in enrolment, as well as the support for the girl-child in education, so that we will have more girls' enrolment, transition, and completion of basic education, among other result-oriented agendas.

Notably, the roles being played by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund in providing funding for infrastructural development and the training and development of staff cannot go unappreciated. The Tetfund, in addition to our

financial contributions as a State, assists in supporting staff of this institution to obtain higher degrees from universities at home and abroad. The effort of the PTDF is also commendable in this regard. On our part also, we are committing huge resources to support the development of this institution, and we pledge to provide more funding despite our strained financial situation.

In order to meet up with the phased-development of this University, we are also expending humongous amount to see to the take-off of the Teaching Hospital for the Faculty of Medical Science, which at its full stage is expected to offer, among others, programmes leading to the awards of degrees in medicine, human anatomy, physiology, and community medicine. This important Faculty will *in sha Allah* fill the human

resource deficits in the State's health sector. Already, building structures to house these programmes are in place, with the needed equipment and requisite manpower. We will make sure that the Teaching Hospital is available for the good of us all.

Furthermore, the State had Alhamdulillah established the Faculty of Agriculture at the old Agricultural Training Centre at Layin Minista in Malumfashi LGA, which is also in line with the phased-development of the institution. More structures are in fact still being put up, and more will be done. This effort is coming at a time when the nation is diversifying its sources of revenue, with emphasis on agriculture that was the mainstay of the country prior to the discovery of oil.

In view of this diversification programme, I am calling on the management of this institution to continue to harness alternative means of revenue generation. Several institutions abroad and here at home have tasted the waters and proved that it is realizable; it should be replicated here. It can be done through collaborations with the private sector and other corporate bodies that support the cause. But while my administration implores on this University to diversify, we are of course committed to providing the needed support to enhance its service delivery. The management must – on its own part – ensure accountability and financial probity in the utilization of the meager resources allocated to the university.

The State Government will continue to exercise its role through prompt release of funds to

cater for running costs of the institution as well as for staff training and development. It will make sure funds are increased as the institution attains its full potentials. We will also encourage the university to expand its horizons in line with extant laws of the state that provides a level of autonomy in line with existing regulations.

May I at this point once again congratulate our graduands for being deemed worthy in character and learning to be awarded various degrees. As parents and leaders, we are proud to produce this caliber of students that can compete favourably with their counterparts. They have been tested, they have proven their mettle, and are proudly here today before us, so congratulations.

Let me however draw the attention of our dear graduates to the financial realities on ground across the world. It is no longer business as usual, so you must adjust your expectations and aspirations to these changing realities and ensure that you learn, unlearn, and relearn if you want to be relevant in the 21st century. It is expected that as graduates you should creatively deploy your trainings and skills to meet up with these new challenges instead of seeking out old ways of doing things. Create wealth, and to paraphrase the words of the 35th President of the United States, JF Kennedy, seek out what you can do for your State and Country instead of what can be done to you. I implore you to give in your best, and to make yourselves beneficial to your immediate and larger environment. Create jobs for yourself and

even to others, be enterprising because white collar jobs are not forthcoming like before.

Let me conclude my address by restating the congratulations of the good people of Katsina State to Alhaji Saidu Barda, CON, Rt. Hon. Aminu Bello Masari, CFR, (Sen.) Ibrahim M. Ida, CON, as well as families of Hajia Hassu Iro Inko and Alhaji Garba Ammani for the honour. Congratulations.

Ma’asalam.