SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY, MALAM DIKKO UMARU RADDA, PhD, CON, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE DURING THE DISBURSEMENT OF BURSARY ALLOWANCES, THE SECOND PHASE OF THE KATSINA STATE GOVERNMENT AWARD OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, AND THE LAUNCH OF THE SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Protocols:

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.

It is with immense gratitude and a profound sense of responsibility that I address this gathering today as we celebrate three major milestones in our collective pursuit of educational excellence; the disbursement of bursary allowances which is the second phase of the Katsina State Government Award of Academic Excellence, and the launch of the Special Scholarship for Students with Special Needs.

Today's event is a clear demonstration of our administration's commitment to making education the cornerstone of development in Katsina State. I commend the Katsina State Scholarship Board, led by the diligent and resourceful Dr. Aminu Salisu Tsauri, for its transparency and efficiency in executing these initiatives. Dr. Tsauri's academic background and dedication have been pivotal in ensuring that these programs are impactful and inclusive.

I am also honored to receive awards of recognition from the heads of tertiary institutions. These awards are a reflection of the harmonious relationship between the scholarship board and our institutions, as well as the progress we have

collectively made in advancing education. I accept these awards with gratitude and as a call to do even more for the development of education in our state.

Our investment in education has been transformative. Through the foreign scholarship program, we have sponsored 41 students to study MBBS at Nahda University in Egypt, 33 students to study Artificial Intelligence at Xi'an Shiyou University in China, and 34 students in Biotechnology Engineering at Xuzhou University of Technology, China. Remarkably, seven of our students in Egypt were ranked among the top ten performers in the year 2023 academic session. The transparent and objective selection process ensured that children

from all backgrounds, including the masses, benefitted from these life-changing opportunities.

Additionally, we have allocated over ₦1.94 billion for bursary allowances, clearing all outstanding arrears and easing the financial burden on thousands of students. The Katsina State Government Award of Academic Excellence, first held on October 23, 2023, where I personally donated ₦50,000 to each beneficiary, continues to motivate and reward exceptional students. The inclusion of this award and the Special Scholarship for Students with Special Needs in the 2025 budget reflects our commitment to sustaining these impactful initiatives.

Beyond scholarships, we have undertaken numerous projects to improve the quality of education in the state, including:

- Recruiting 505 Security Watch Corps to secure our institutions
- Providing solar and security lights to address electricity challenges in tertiary institutions
- Guaranteeing automatic employment for first-class graduates of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University and IKCOE, Dutsinma
- Renovating classrooms, lecture halls, and hostels
- Providing water facilities in educational institutions
- Prioritizing education in the 2025 budget

- Establishing the Ministry of Higher, Technical, and Vocational Education to address the unique challenges of tertiary institutions

To our students, I urge you to embrace hard work, discipline, and entrepreneurship. Education is not just a personal achievement but a tool to transform society. As Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, “The best of people are those who bring the most benefit to others.” Let your knowledge benefit your families, communities, and the state at large.

Let me also call on development partners, philanthropists, and well-meaning individuals to join hands with us in sustaining these programs. Your support is crucial, particularly for the inclusiveness

scholarship, which ensures that no child is left behind in our quest for educational excellence.

Finally, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Vice-Chancellor of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University and the entire institution for hosting this remarkable event. To all participants and guests, I wish you safe trip back to your respective destinations and encourage you to continue supporting government initiatives for the betterment of our beloved Katsina State.

Long live Katsina State Scholarship Board, long live Katsina State Government, and long live Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Thank you.